



Letter from the Editors

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This issue brings pieces independently submitted to SPECTRA together with a specially edited collection of pieces curated by Leah Ramnath, distilled from a course on kinship taught by Drs. Amaryah Armstrong, Andrea Baldwin, and Balbir Singh at Virginia Tech in the spring of 2022. Our initial call for papers for SPECTRA issue 9.1 centered around themes of rupture and resettling in the wake, a concept that emerged from this moment of conjuncture, as Stuart Hall would put it, in which the world has decided to move on from a pandemic that is still very much ongoing, and which continue to disproportionately impact our most marginalized communities. The pieces written as part of this course, entitled “Kin: Feminist Theories in Race and Reproduction,” emerged and unfolded, too, in this historic moment.

When Leah came to us with her idea for this special edited issue, it felt rather serendipitous - the convergence of the edited collection with pieces responding to the call for papers felt immediately natural. We’d had a few pieces drop out for one reason or another, and the themes explored in the pieces she proposed and ultimately published here fit well with the two pieces we had selected for publication in this issue: Connor Grogan’s “My Father, The Outside, Technologies of Seeing: Notes Towards a Cabinet of Faces,” and Reed Byg’s review of Eduardo Kohn’s *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology Beyond the Human*. Themes such as kinship, rupture, resettling, relational collectivities, navigating normative power structures through the self and nonhuman connections alike, networks of care permeate all of the pieces published in this issue. The “arborescence” explored in Vasiljije Mesarovic’s “Incest: Miscegenation, and (Non)Linear Time” bounces generatively off of the presence of arborous ecologies between the human self and non-human in Byg’s review of Kohn’s text. The non-linear temporalities of Mesarovic’s piece are also woven throughout Leah Ramnath’s “Prophetic Past, Presents, and Futures,” while the familial relations of her piece are found, too, in Grogan’s poetic prose and in Casey Anne Brimmer’s “Kin Are the People Who Still Pick Up the Phone.” The “bloodline” facet of these familial ties is also present in Sabrina Harris’ “Multiracial Bodies, Multiracial Reproduction” and John Bernardi’s “From ‘Bon’ to ‘Bond’: The ‘Tragic Mulatto/a’ and the Repetition of the Plantation Mythology,” specifically in the context of racialization and mixing of blood. The cover art by Aline de Souza, commissioned by Leah for the special issue, visually ties the themes present in each of these pieces together - both human and nonhuman kinship, belonging, struggle within structure, the roots that tie us to one another, at once constraining us and creating possibilities for connection.

We are very pleased with the way this issue came ultimately together. We feel that these pieces meet the urgency of our present moment and offer generative responses which reckon with the stakes, risks, and possibilities presented by it while offering lucid analyses of the practices, networks, and communities of care which might help to build a different world.

COMMENTARIES



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As we conclude our tenure as editors of the SPECTRA Journal with issue 9.1, we welcome Leah Ramnath and Samuel Beckenhauer as the incoming editors. We have full confidence that they will continue SPECTRA's important tradition of critical interdisciplinary work. We also extend our gratitude to all authors, reviewers, advisory board members, and VT Publishing for contributions to this issue.

Sincerely,
Jordan Fallon and Maddie Tepper, co-editors

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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4

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