

Nature in Pop

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Call for submissions for an anthology on pop culture and nature
edited by Johannes Springer, Thomas Dören and Jochen Bonz

Looking back on the first decade of our century, various characteristics of this time turn up as self-evident in everyday life. Without any doubt, the notion of nature is representing such a topos. Over the last years symbolic inscriptions into nature have become apparent in tremendous cumulation: in literature, music, visual culture and other social and cultural activities and movements.

Thus, full beards have been adopted in a reflexive play with naturalness and masculinity. Swarming collectives have improvised hypnotic free-jazz in Canadian forests. Countercultural counterurbanisation is weightily back on the (research) agenda. Like nature as sonic resource is reliving an inflation, hiking is promoted zealously in hip fanzines. But productions and studies of popcultures are not the only domain, where a palpable move towards nature is detectable: this impetus seems to capture all societal scopes.

This can be exemplified in the humanities and social sciences. Explanation patterns determined by social categories are increasingly displaced by natural justifications. In such a way conceptions of humans have changed from thinking them as social beings to interpret them in terms of need satisfaction. Still dominating the 1990s in its multifaceted and contradictory manifestations, poststructuralist constructivism (Foucault, Derrida, Lacan, Butler) is largely detached today - for instance by actor-network-theory, which tends to substantialize the actor and is furthermore monading the social. Instead of thinking motivations of individuals via their identifications with social conventions, today they are comprehended as affects - skipping comparable collective validity. Accordingly, collectivization is to a lesser extent understood by means of symbolic orders, but through animalistic-instinctual operations like swarming. These are just a few examples for a dispositif, to use Michel Foucault's term for the signs of a time: the motivation of

individual, corporeal, psychic, and also collective, social, political, if nothing else economic relations.

Our book aims to investigate the popcultural open strips, that have been cut towards nature, and respectively through the thicket of naturalization in recent years. Pop seems to be an eminently appropriate parameter to examine the dispositive nature to us, because it has continuously excelled as an intriguing double function over the last 50 years. On the one hand, pop has appeared as an exceptionally subtle seismograph, which has indicated societal developments by culminating them into explicit exposure. And on the other, popculture has produced alternatives, for instance the big subcultures like mods, hippies and punk and their countercultural articulations and values. Encouraged by irritating ways of dealing with nature - like the literature of Dietmar Dath, the fashion of Cosmic Wonder, the photographs of Mark Bothwick, the musical and social experiments of New Weird America or Jewelled Antlers, Peter Coffin's installations, the films of Ben Rivers, Kelly Reichardt, Michel Gondry, Spike Jonze, Charlie Kaufman, cassette labels like Sloow Tapes or multimedia-phenomenon Will Oldham - we assume in the relation of pop with nature generally an accordant double function. And correspondingly: a specifically multilayered, idiosyncratic and complex interaction with the phenomenon.

Submissions are solicited on issues related to any of these topics:

Nature & Utopia
Nature & Heterotopy
Nature & the Body
Nature & Fashion
Nature & the Idyllic
Nature & Authenticity
Natur & the Sonic
Natur & the Supernatural
Natur & Fear
Natur & the Dionysian

Scholars from a wide variety of disciplines including geography, media and communication studies, cultural studies, film studies, sociology, gender studies, anthropology are invited to present reflections in the form of full length articles and shorter essays on these topics at the example of filmic representations, photography, music, lyrics, performances, cover artworks etc.

Contributions are welcome in both German or English language.
Fully detailed CFP (also in German) on request.

Please submit proposals for contributions until April 1, 2010 to:
doeren@gmx.net

Notification of acceptance of proposals: April 30, 2010.

Deadline for submission of manuscripts for accepted proposals:
1 September 2010.

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Reference:

CFP: Nature in Pop. In: Arthist.net, Mar 10, 2010 (accessed Sep 17, 2025),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/32466>>.