

Call for Papers

“Radioactive Empires: The Nuclear Relations of Coloniality”

Editors: Rebecca Macklin (University of Edinburgh), Laura M. De Vos (Radboud University), Sonja Dobroski (University of Manchester), and Susanne Ferwerda (University of Utrecht)

Deadline for Abstracts: 15 February 2023

We invite contributions to a Special Issue on **“Radioactive Empires: The Nuclear Relations of Coloniality.”** This issue draws its title from the landmark 1986 article, “Native America: The Political Economy of Radioactive Colonialism” by Winona LaDuke and Ward Churchill, in which the authors posit colonialism as having a radioactive quality: everything it does cannot be undone, and in its doing, it imperils “everyone alive and who will be alive.” Over 30 years on, we seek to reflect on this work by mapping the cross-temporal and cross-cultural impacts of the nuclear relations of coloniality, attending to the place of nuclear weapons in colonial histories and contemporary realities, as well as the impacts of nuclear energy production, storage, and waste on Indigenous territories. This expansive focus allows us to bring together diverse contexts that might include (but are not limited to): uranium mining on Indigenous territories across the US, Canada, and Australia; the storage of US nuclear weapons in Europe; the legacies of US, British, and French nuclear testing in the Pacific; and nuclear waste radiation and contamination in Palestine. Putting these ostensibly distinct incidences of extraction, energy production, and militarization into relation allows us to map the significance of nuclearity in the dynamics of colonial projects.

Through tracing the intercultural resonance of nuclear materialities and cultures, this Special Issue will develop a deeper understanding of the global interconnectedness of modern coloniality, in addition to exploring the transnational networks of solidarity and resistance that have been brought into being through shared experiences of radioactive colonialism. In doing this work, we build on Lou Cornum’s concept of the “irradiated international” (2018), which argues for a reformulation of the relations between individuals “whose lives are crossed by uranium and other radioactive weapons [or] materials.” While this Special Issue is inspired by and indebted to recent scholarship in Indigenous studies and Pacific studies that rethinks nuclear geographies and anti-nuclear solidarities (Cornum 2018, Na’puti 2019, Huang and Rapongan 2021), **we welcome contributions exploring these topics across diverse regions and colonial contexts.** We invite pieces that account for the place of nuclear materialities or cultures in colonial histories and/or contemporary practices; contributors might also theorise emerging, contemporary forms of nuclearisation through a framework of coloniality. We are also interested in the way that authors, artists and activists have sought to document these activities and rethink relations in striving to bring about more just futures. Through comparative or mapping work that explores relations between contexts,

contributors are encouraged to render visible transnational relationships between sites of nuclear activity that are often presented as discrete and disconnected.

Contributions will be peer-reviewed and can take a range of shapes: interventions in the form of scholarly articles (5,000-9,000 words), provocations (5,000-6,000 words), and critical reflections on practice (3,000-5,000 words). **We hope this range of formats will create space for a broad scope of contributions and perspectives but feel free to contact us if you have an idea but aren't sure if (or where) it might fit.**

In recognition of the interdisciplinary nature of this project, scholars working in multiple fields are encouraged to participate. Possible topics could include:

- Literary or artistic responses to the aftermath of nuclear projects
- Settler colonialism, land dispossession, and/or resource exploitation
- Gendered dimensions of any aspect of nuclearity
- Resistance and/or expressions of anti-nuclear solidarity
- Multispecies justice approaches to nuclear histories or post-nuclear futures
- Medical humanities perspectives on the intersecting health impacts of radioactive colonialism
- Comparative or multi-local explorations of nuclear spaces
- Nuclear energy projects in the context of climate change and energy transitions
- Theoretical or empirical interrogations of uranium in colonial systems
- Critical reflections on artistic, civic, or pedagogical approaches to sites of nuclear materiality
- Critical reflections in dialogue with artists, activists, or community practitioners

Please submit an **abstract of 300 words** outlining your proposed contribution, noting which type of submission it is (article, provocation, critical reflection), and a short bio.

Abstracts due: 15 February 2023

Notification of acceptance: 15 March 2023

Full articles due: 15 September 2023

Abstracts should be submitted to Laura M. De Vos: laura.devos@ru.nl

Any general queries should be sent to Sonja Dobroski at sonja.dobroski@manchester.ac.uk.