

Letter from the Editors

How we conceive of white space in our art and society, how we challenge it, embrace it, and revolt against it transforms the state of our practices. As academics and writers, we are constantly faced with the intimidation of the yawning white space of the page. In Joe Bray's reflections on concrete poetry and prose, he argues that: "It is as if the white space trumps the linguistic attempt to represent silence; it achieves what words cannot. Its dominance over language in the poem is also suggested by the way it dwarfs the text on the page, surrounding and diminishing it." White space then finds meaningful exploration in our own creative works and in the texts we consume. The Western notions of racial whiteness add yet another element to the meaning of white space. In our daily lives, our social identities, which are shaped by racial hierarchies, create challenges, barriers, and battles in which we are constantly pushing against the structures of whiteness. Lisa Corrigan and Anjali Vats advocate that: "Although, as Darrel Wanzer-Serrano reminds us, 'the overwhelming whiteness, both embodied and intellectually, of rhetorical studies is not new,' we must offer new and sustained scholarly attention to the way that racial investments structure protest cycles within the communication field and the possibilities that exist for effectively resisting them." Contemporary critical work in response has adopted lenses of inclusivity and diversity to fight back against the whiteness of academia and publishing.

In the call for papers for our 2023 issue, *Pivot* invited critical and creative work which approaches white space in an infinite variety of ways. Whether it be a poem experimenting with white space as a stylistic technique, a paper displaying deep racial awareness, or even discussions on the process of staking claim on the blank space of the page in our work, we encouraged any and ALL interpretations. The call provoked questions to consider such as: How does the implementation of white space in creative and critical works contribute to the way that we understand silences and other contextual reverberations in the work? How does the whiteness of the institutions we exist in shape our criticisms as sites of cultural representation and cultural inscription? How is the whiteness of space represented in tales of immigration or voyages and travel literature? How do artists confront the intimidation of the blank white page, and continue to dare to keep creating? Topics which deal with "Voyages: Traversing the White Space" could range from addressing the utilisation of white space as an experimental tool in creative writing to critical reflections on race in the literary canon. The work which is represented in this issue brings to life a wide range of approaches to the subject including visual art and photography that play with colour and white space, academic essays examining the systems of whiteness in literary texts, analysis of erasure poetry, and wielding of white space in creative works.

The pieces in this issue confront the concept of traversing white space through representations and recreations of race, voyages, immigration, diversity, inclusion, and much, much more. Some authors approached the topic and corresponding themes directly, taking on white space and traversing it without deviation, while others adopted a meandering attitude to it. The poetry, critical essays, a fictional story, digital and visual oeuvres of art presented in this issue all come together to encapsulate the multiplicity of interpretations white space offers.

We would like to extend our gratitude to our contributors for the daring they demonstrated in sharing their work, and for their refusal to allow genre or form to restrict them. Our thanks to our volunteers, Tamara, Braedon, Anjalee, Theo, Zohreh, and Nicola for their time and assistance in bringing this edition together. To Angie for designing our beautiful cover, and Sandra for all her expertise, thank you. This edition would not have been possible without the collaboration of all these and many more entities, and more importantly without you, our reader. We are incredibly thankful for your time and commitment to engaging with our work critically and with care.

Yours truly,

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Pivot Journal