

CAPACITIES TO: AFFECT UP AGAINST FACISM

Call for Papers and
Artistic Responses
editor@imbricate.press

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Open access (online) and print on demand for purchase

Key Elements:

- 1) Every submission must use the words 'capacities to' (or some minor variation thereof: see below) somewhere/somewhat in its essay title.
- 2) The unifying theme for this project is that each entry (essay, artwork, intervention) will address how theories of affect respond to this ongoing fascist moment in world history with creative/experimental and/or critical-theory oriented approaches and how we—a differential, aspirational, capacious we—endeavor to persist/resist /insist/exist through the pal-pable now and into the foreseeable future.

The world's steady sloping toward 21st century fascism took an even more precipitous slide with the US electoral victory of Donald Trump in this fall's election. There is no way to fully capture where different folks are at in their (dis)orientation to this unfolding fascism—physio-psycho-socio-affectio-logically—but feeling grief, rage, numbness, disgust, despair, flattened, scattered, scared, and intermixtures of all these (and many more) are surely in the running as immediate but inadequate visceral descriptors for this moment.

What's to come? What's already long been? What's to be done? What might be undone? From out of the very midst of our shared and individualized reelings, we must find the means to wrestle with such questions in spite of or, rather, because of their seeming unfathomability, their dangerous portents, their already very, very real palpabilities. Our hope: such palpabilities can do something more than merely gesture to an elsewhere, an otherwise. They can serve to open up shimmers of gut-level insight about how we might re-route around what, right now, appears stymied. Palpabilities can sometimes provide glimpses that, if sustained long enough, allow us to feel-out and toward those inventories and inventions making particular affective tactics and strategies more and more available.

If fascism offers, at one level, a response to the question “What can a body do?” by replying: “Let's cleanse the aggregate body-politic of otherness, of difference, of ‘contaminants’, of they/ them, and, hence, rid ourselves—once and for all—of the threats and fears refracted through each and every one of these,” then, as affect theorists, one of our chief tasks, as Spinoza reminds us, is to trace effects back to their real—not imagined, not self-projected—causes, to their impersonal and transcorporeal affects (no matter how overdetermined, ordinary, and ongoing they are). Only then might we find the embodied-living ‘capacities to’ stitch together and generatively bootstrap disparate clusters of passively endured sad affects into a collective singularity of becoming(s)-active.

While crafting, carrying forward, and sustaining political and poetic projects of joy—of increases in capacities to affect and be affected—are undoubtedly urgent, other affective states and their attendant range of capacities (from undaunted to diminished) deserve accounting and attention. The global spread of fascism distributes unwellness, disability, and debility of various sorts across entangled registers: body-mind-spirit-land-water-air... That is, ‘capacities to’ are always more than shadowed by, indeed can be swarmed over and criss-crossed by, ‘incapacities to’. We should not neglect these viable and vital aspects of capacitation that necessitate a role too for diminished, suspended, thwarted, imposed, calculative, cultivated (and more) incapacities.

It matters, then, how we come to act together in order to foster along and share various practices and styles for-making/unmaking/refusing-a-world that will always push and pull at our capacities and incapacities to adequately think, rethink, unthink, out-think what a body or bodies can do (or are supposedly not allowed to do): especially when these bodies are deemed as terrifyingly out-of-bounds because they're trans, because they're migrant-and-alien, because they're other-than-re-productively oriented. The fascist affects have clearly spoken! And they're winning. (Note: we welcome diagnostic approaches to fascism's own ‘capacities/incapacities to’ as well.) We must work to claw such corporeally-disaggregating discourse away from its calamitous trajectories and, instead, steer them toward decidedly different and radically integrative ends. Standing affect theory up against fascism requires not only a vibrantly visceral literacy but, even further, a capacity-to: compose/decompose/declaim/profane/make kin/raise a din (please insert your own word or phrase here) as our most forthright and capacious counter-tactic.

So, this is where we need all of your energies, inventories (gleaning key lessons from struggles against fascism in other geographical locales and historical moments), and inventions. Namely, what/where/ when/how does one (or several) unlock those ‘capacities to’ that dwell within the creases and along the cusp of fascism’s fearsome futurity, those capacities and incapacities that provide the uniquely situated opportunities for embracing otherness as joyful and open-ended, for recognizing contamination and messiness as life-giving and not life-draining, for convincing bodies-minds that they/them is ultimately we/us? How do we get there while also bringing others along? That’s the aim of this project: to forge a place where we can gather up our respective orientation/disorientations and capacities/debilities to... intervene in, mess with, fuck up, turn over, probe and prick and deflate a furiously expanding fascism.

So, then, will this be a book? a zine? a manifesto? a glossary? a manual for living? Maybe all of these, and something yet unforeseen.

Basics for Submission: Every submission must use ‘capacities to’ (or some variation) somewhere / somehow in their essay’s title.

Length of Submissions: 100 words to 1500 words, inclusive of endnotes (keep them sparse please) and bibliography (if any).

Proposal: Please send a working title and opening paragraph or short overview to editor@imbricate.press by December 10, 2024. We can head off any significant overlap of themes/topics but also this allows us to see how the volume is shaping up, to see what’s missing, to figure out how to frame and introduce the pieces, etc.

While we’d much prefer to read your abstract and offer any necessary revisions on the abstract or a completed submission as early as possible, you can also submit your paper for review on December 31 without having submitted an earlier abstract.

Final submissions are due December 31, 2024. Everyone will be notified about whether their submission has been accepted for publication (or not) by no later than Wednesday, January 8. Because time will be tight, if the editorial team determines that your paper requires significant revision, you’ll have to wait for a possible Volume 2 (if there is such a thing).

Types of Submission: Beyond more usual written submissions, we are also very interested in visually oriented essays and artistic works.

Poetic, experimental, and prose-mixed modes of writing are welcome.

Submissions from non-US/North American and non-European countries are especially encouraged.