

COVID-19 and an Emerging World of Ad Hoc Geographies

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Background

Most of us are following the daily news about this pandemic and reflecting about what geographers and others in related space, place and environment disciplines and fields can/might contribute to our understanding. I believe that geographic perspectives play a very useful and important role in our understanding about “what is happening where and why.” Thus, this proposed volume. Maps, especially innovative maps, on various topics will also be an important feature of many chapters.

Proposal

I propose to edit an interdisciplinary and international book on the causes and impacts of the coronavirus on populations, economies, politics, institutions and environments. The contributions will come from those in the humanities and social/policy science disciplines as well as emerging transdisciplinary fields including sustainability, gender, aging, health care and epidemiology, security, interfaith dialogue, art, music, theater, visualization (cartoons, websites, film, news reporting), economic and social well-being, law, borderland studies and even climate change. Professionals in these fields, and others, have much to contribute to our understanding of the emerging geographies of human welfare and environmental settings at local and international scales.

Potential Authors

This statement is sent to selected global friends asking if they (1) wish to contribute an original chapter on some topic or issue related to the virus and (b) will share the announcement with colleagues and friends in other fields/disciplines and countries. The volume will include chapters about the virus in the Global North and South written by scholars from all continents and world regions. Some may have longstanding interests in health/environment issues; others may wish to use their systematic, regional and technical skills to explore a new subject at some personal/local or transborder/global scale. Now I am collecting names of potential authors. In a few months I will ask for tentative titles and abstracts.

Chapters Content and Deadlines

Chapters (4-6000 words (would be original and due in late 2020/early 2021 after the virus (we hope) has subsided. Some may wish to write about early stages, others when at its peak, and still others once it has run its course. Perhaps some are gathering materials for a chapter or lectures; others might begin soon. Authors are encouraged to work with friends across disciplines, fields and even continents.

Preliminary Sections and Chapters

Below are listed the tentative sections and chapters.

1. Introduction
2. Origins (myths and realities): From Localization to Globalization

3. Media Coverage and Reporting (print, visual, internet; fake and real news)
4. Visualization (photos, tv coverage, cartoons, ghost-scapes, “closed” signage; govt warnings)
5. Mapping the Causes, Effects, Impacts – local and global, “ghost-scapes,” diffusion, boundaries (personal, community and political), diffusion, networks, impacts and impacted places and populations, restrictions, delivery of services, closures, responders, WHO networks, laboratories, manufacturers, etc.
6. Daily Living (children, elderly, the poor, unemployed, distraught, marginalized, vulnerable)
7. Health Care
 - a. Medical Supplies and Demands (populations and areas)
 - b. Vaccinations
 - c. Social Distancing
 - d. Immediate and Delayed Response: response health care/medical teams, etc.
 - e. Priorities and Funding (populations *and* areas – who gets what?)
8. Impacts
 - a. Daily Life and Living (shopping, working, transport, shopping, on children, households, health and welfare, streets, restaurants, leisure spaces)
 - b. Institutions- Winners and Losers (regions, places, economies): education, hospitality, airlines, stock markets, corporations, health, courts, public welfare
 - c. Communities: education, faith, health, ethnic, leisure, arts and entertainment
 - d. Cancellations of Elections, Events, Sports, Conferences, Religious Services, Holidays, etc.,
 - e. Rescheduling: elections, megaevents, surgeries, construction projects
 - f. Travel Restrictions (local and international) and Tourism
 - g. Border Security (including refugees)
9. Alternate Worlds
 - a. Teaching and Learning (close and distance-learning; creative alternatives)
 - b. Parenting and Caregiving
 - c. Traveling
 - d. Shopping
 - e. Human Behavior (activity spaces, alternative travels, emergency networking, etc.)
 - f. Worlds of Silences (the visible (ghost-scapes), workplaces, malls, streets and the invisible)
10. Political, Organizational and Transboundary Responses
 - a. Initial and Follow-up Worlds: denials and revelations
 - b. Setting Priorities: preparedness and ill-preparedness
 - c. Assistance, Leadership and Messaging: countries, WHO, CDC
 - d. Sharing and Cooperating NGOs: professional and volunteer organizations aiding victims

Editor’s Interests and Experiences

Broad interests in human and human/environmental geography and publications in major journals, chapters and edited books in the past half-century. A subset includes “ad hoc geographies” or the impacts of unexpected events including the Three Mile Island nuclear accident in 1979, Hurricane Andrew in 1992, the 9/11 terrorism acts, and recently the impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.