

Call for Papers

[Geographica Helvetica](#) - a European multilingual free open-access journal of geography - invites contributions to the

Theme Issue Policing the academy: Contributions from and experiences in geography

Geography as an academic discipline is called upon to help make sense of the multiple political, social and ecological crises. At the same time, it is increasingly coming under attack by actors seeking to delegitimize and police knowledge production in geography and adjacent disciplines. Attempts to delegitimize and police geography stem from *within* and *beyond* academia and *on* and *off* campus and cut across the political spectrum. In this Theme Issue, we invite contributions that critically engage with the delegitimizing and policing of geography under the guise of critiquing perspectives, theories and fields that many geographers adopt in their work, such as post-, settler-, and decolonial studies, gender and race studies, racial capitalism and critical race theory, political ecology, critical physical geography, etc.

The current anti-scientific climate in society has a longer history and can be placed in the wider context of cultural politics of gender and diversity, memory and identity, history and science (denialism). The more recent rise of right-wing, authoritarian and diagonalist political movements (Klein 2023, Amlinger and Nachtwey 2022, Callison and Slobodian 2021, Daggett 2018) coupled with current geopolitical events, such as the wars in Gaza and Ukraine, have further led to a rapidly shrinking space for critical academic speech - in Europe, North America, and elsewhere. These attempts have not only led to personal attacks on geographers and geographic institutional spaces, but also to self-policing within the discipline.

With this Theme Issue we seek to contribute to much needed debates on the impacts of the current anti-scientific climate on academia. This call for papers invites contributions from different linguistic communities in European geography and beyond to critically reflect on the ongoing attempts to delegitimize and police academic speech and knowledge production, with a particular focus on geography:

On the one hand, we are interested in contributions that engage specifically *with* geographic scholarship, research and teaching in and across specific national contexts: (How) Do geographers experience shrinking spaces for academic speech and knowledge production in geography departments, seminars, classes, and journals? What aspects of geographic knowledge production (e.g. certain theoretical approaches and traditions, empirical sites, academic and civil society networks, syllabi, etc.) are particularly affected and how? In how far are the ways that geographers are exposed to attempts to delegitimize and police critical scholarship different from other disciplines? What role does technology play in the (self)policing of geography, for instance, through presence on social media or in the classroom? How do institutions and associations navigate the climate of policing and (self)censoring? What kind of political alliances are forged to undermine free speech and knowledge production in geography and how do geographers resist attempts of delegitimization and policing? What spaces for solidarity exist and are being built, and how do geographers defend their academic freedom?

On the other hand, we call for contributions *from* geography and associated disciplines about academic speech and knowledge production more broadly: What can a critical geography contribute to help make better sense of the various attempts of delegitimization and policing of academic speech and knowledge production, not limited to the discipline of geography? What does a geography of delegitimizing and policing academic speech and knowledge production look like? How does campus politics become increasingly transnational in the context of a growing anti-science climate in society? How do different actors contribute to the politicization of academic speech and knowledge production? What would the ultimate broader effects of the politicization of academic knowledge production and speech and the transnationalization of campus politics be?

Seeking to assemble a wide range of different national, linguistic and theoretical traditions, this call for papers invites contributions from early-career and senior scholars. Contributions to this Theme Issue can be submitted in different formats (peer-reviewed standard articles up to 8000 words excl. references, peer-reviewed short interventions, book reviews, non-peer-reviewed creative forums) and in four different languages (English, German, French, Italian). They will be handled by members of the Editorial Board: [Jevgeniy Bluwstein](#), [Ottavia Cima](#), [Hanna Hilbrandt](#), [Nadine Marquardt](#), [René Véron](#) and [Alexander Vorbrugg](#).

About [Geographica Helvetica](#):

Geographica Helvetica offers a platform for empirically grounded and theory-driven research and debates in all fields of geography as well as in neighbouring disciplines. The journal is particularly committed to exploring and fostering situated and internationalist perspectives on the manifold connections, disconnections and differences within Europe, and between Europe and other parts of the world. This agenda derives from the specificity of Swiss geography as a meeting ground for different geographical traditions and languages. In addition to standard research articles published in and outside of theme issues in English, German, French and Italian, we also publish a range of shorter and experimental [formats](#) and book reviews. All articles are published open access, without APCs.

Timeline for the Theme Issue:

- 30. October 2024: deadline for submitting an abstract to express interest in being part of the Themed Issue (incl. abstract of up to 300 words, author bio including career stage and affiliation). Please name the format of the contribution you would like to submit.
- 30. November 2024: we inform applicants if their abstract is accepted and invite them to submit a full manuscript for consideration.
- 30. May 2025: deadline for submitting a full manuscript for consideration with *Geographica Helvetica*.
- we expect the publication of the Theme Issue end of 2025. Articles within the same Theme Issue are published on a "online first" principle.

References

- Amlinger, C., Nachtwey, O. 2022. Gekränkte Freiheit. Aspekte des libertären Autoritarismus. *Suhrkamp*
- Callison, W., and Slobodian, Q. 2021. Coronapolitics from the Reichstag to the Capitol. *Boston Review*. <https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/quinn-slobodian-toxic-politics-coronakspeticism/>
- Daggett, C. 2018. Petro-masculinity: Fossil Fuels and Authoritarian Desire. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 47(1), 25-44
- Klein, N. 2023. Doppelgänger: A Trip into the Mirrow World. *Farrar, Straus and Giroux*