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Hacking the Anthropocene:  
Do-It-Together (DIT)

issue 10 • fall 2021

## sur\_faces

Hira Sheikh and Kavita Gonsalves

*Humans are a destructive force on this planet: exclusive, authoritarian, and up to man's whimsy. Glimpses of human vulnerability exist in the form of environmental agents, such as allergens, but they have not had a considerable impact on human living. In this piece, the COVID-19 virus is juxtaposed with allergens where the virus has had consequences beyond human life. The virus is an invisible threat: looming between touch, surfaces, and breath. This auto-ethnographic photo essay explores the ways the virus hijacked human interaction with their environment—a shift that the discourse on Anthropocene has been trying to inspire.*

We acknowledge the Turrbal and Yuggera people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this work was made. We recognize the continuing connection to lands, waters, and communities of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We acknowledge the people, creatures and spirits of the lands that we have lived on and will live on. We pay our respects to Elders: past, present, and emerging.

**SUR**  
**FACES**

surfaces

on faces

sur\_faces



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"Cleanse me with hyssop,  
and I will be clean; wash  
me, and I will be whiter  
than snow."

THE BIBLE  
Psalm 51: 7 (2021)

Imagine humanity  
eradicated by their  
collective stupidity  
because they refuse to  
sanitise their hands.

Everything feels surreal.

sur\_real.

Grocery shopping has  
become a biweekly,  
coordinated affair:  
I head out to war  
with limited ammunition  
to the invisible.

in-visible.

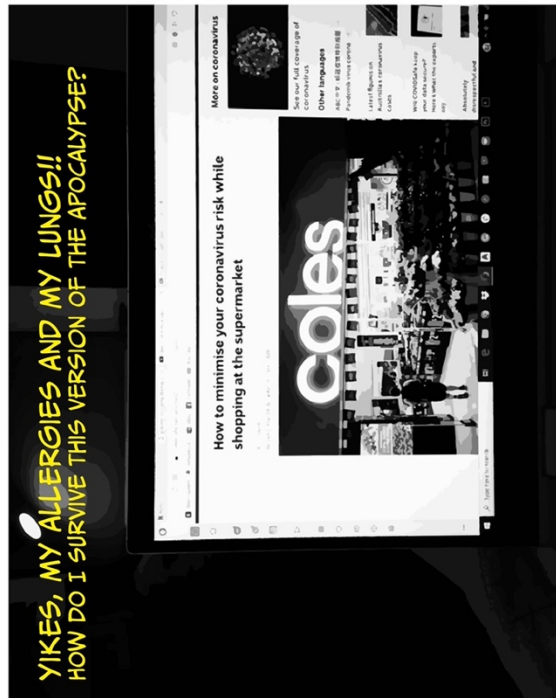
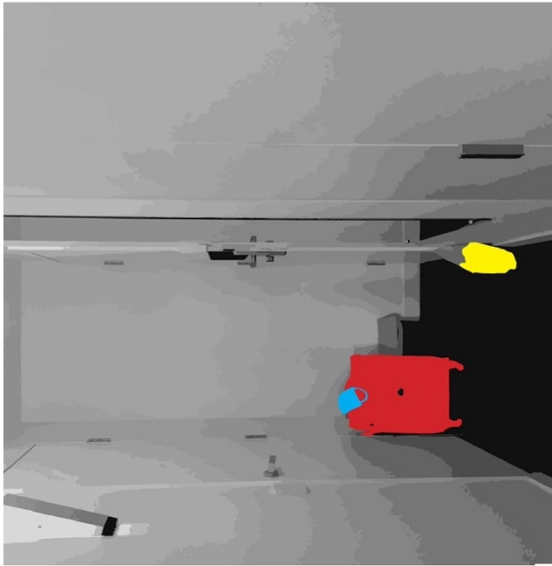
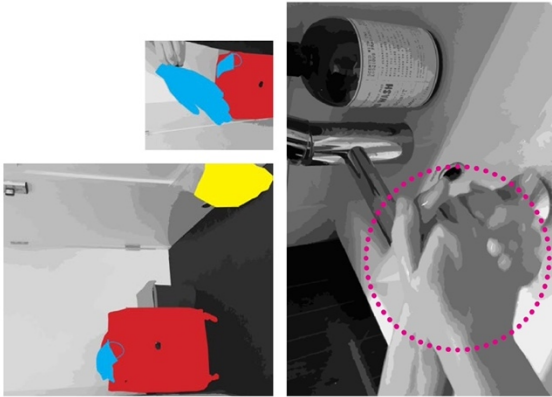
Our bodies have been  
hijacked before.  
Hay fever, flu, SARS.  
Consequences across  
planetary affordances.

hi-jacked.

MUSINGS OF A BROWN  
BODY

COVID-19 PANDEMIC  
SURVIVAL ENABLERS

- Sanitary Wipes
- Sanitising Hands
- Washing Hands
- Masks & Gloves
- Suitcase



YIKES, MY ALLERGIES AND MY LUNGS!!  
HOW DO I SURVIVE THIS VERSION OF THE APOCALYPSE?



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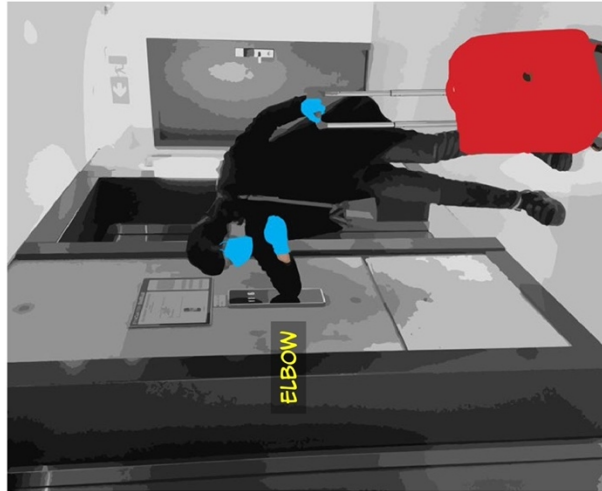
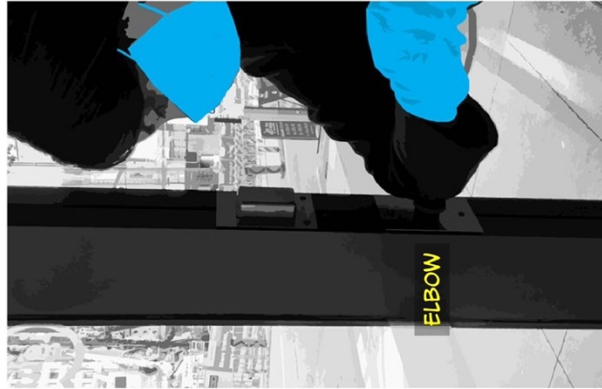
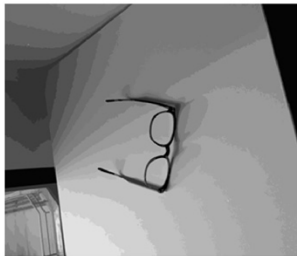
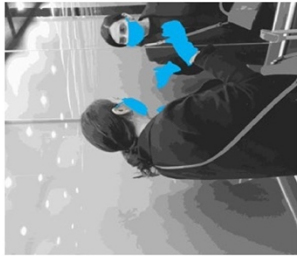
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"Touch. It is touch that is the deadliest enemy of chastity, loyalty, monogamy, gentility with its codes and conventions and restraints. By touch we are betrayed and betray others [...] an accidental brushing of shoulders or touching of hands ... hands laid on shoulders in a gesture of comfort that lies like a thief, that takes, not gives, that wants, not offers, that awakes, not pacifies. When one flesh is waiting, there is electricity in the merest contact."

WALLACE STEGNER  
Angle of Repose (2006, 494-495)



### SURVIVAL TOOLS OF COVID-19

- Sanitary Wipes
- Sanitising Hands
- Washing Hands
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**DISTANCE**



**1.5m**

**KEEP**







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"Butane, propane  
and lungful of diesel.  
I did not stand a chance.

Always with poison  
breath, bill, responsibility:  
a man with rote hands."

JOAN KANE  
Epithalamia (2016, 365)

If the body sneezes-  
it's not just a sneeze.  
A brown body has  
sneezed.

Consider the  
repercussions-  
front page news  
affirming the barbaric  
pigment as diseased and  
dirty  
Mostly diseased.

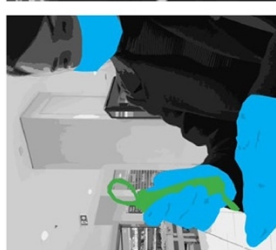
I do my best to keep it  
together---  
filter the virus  
but the fibers...  
trigger, irritate,  
suffocate.

If this body gives in to  
the allergies---  
A brown body has  
sneezed.

## MUSINGS OF A MASK

C19 PANDEMIC SURVIVAL  
ENABLERS

- Sanitary Wipes
- Sanitising Hands
- Washing Hands
- Masks & Gloves
- Suitcase





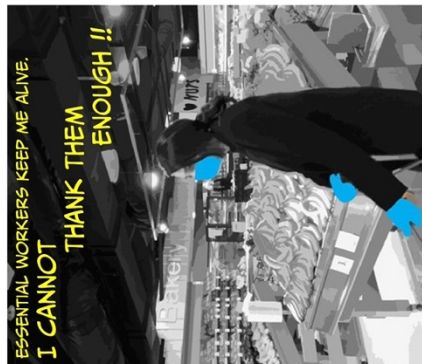
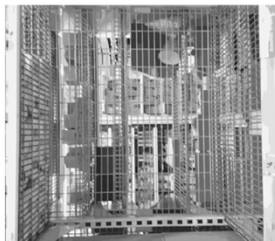
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ESSENTIAL WORKERS KEEP ME ALIVE.  
I CANNOT  
THANK THEM  
ENOUGH !!



95% alcohol.  
1 problem.  
The pressure is on.  
Keep those infections at  
bay.  
At every sight line.  
With signs- so that  
noone forgets.  
One cannot stop a  
pandemic.  
Takes a village.  
Systemic Care.  
95% alcohol.  
1 problem.  
MUSINGS OF A HAND  
SANITIZER

HOW TO SURVIVE C19  
PANDEMIC  
Sanitary Wipes  
Sanitising Hands  
Washing Hands  
Masks & Gloves  
Suitcase



HOW DO I DO  
THIS WITHOUT  
TOUCHING?  
ANYTHING?







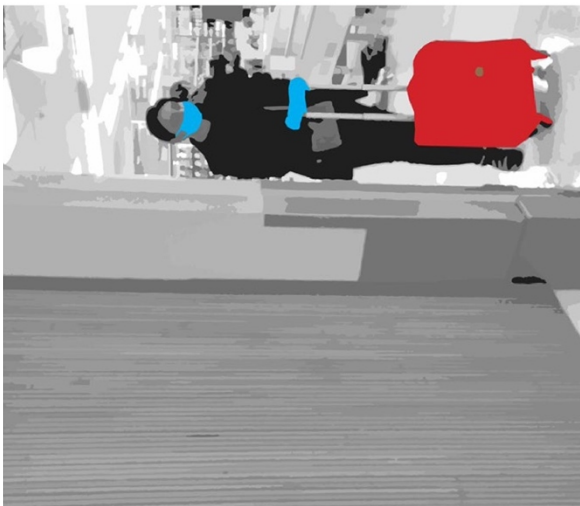
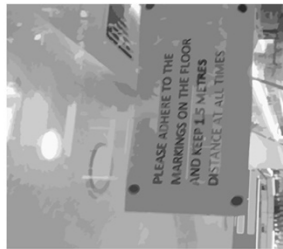
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"That year there were many deaths in the village. Germs flew like angels from one house to the next and every family gave up its own. Mothers died at their mending. Children fell at school. Of three hundred twenty, there were eleven left."

LOLA HASKINS  
Grandmother Speaks of the Old Country (2004, 14)



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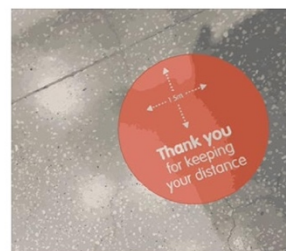
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"Dropping napkins, corks, and non-compostables into the trash, I see that friends have mistaken my everyday chopsticks for disposables,

helpfully discarding them alongside inedibles: pork bones, shrimp shells, bitter melon."

ADRIENNE SU  
After the Dinner Party (2021, 14)



## DUMMIES GUIDE TO SURVIVING C-19

- Sanitary Wipes
- Sanitising Hands
- Washing Hands
- Masks & Gloves
- Suitcase





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issue 10 • fall 2021

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WASH

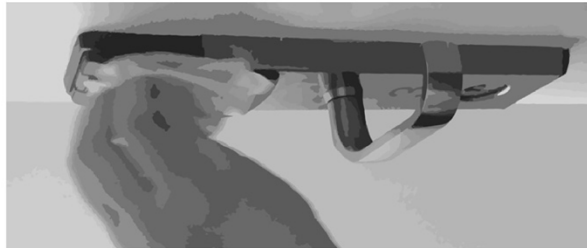


I take everything off me.  
my hair scrubbed-  
my body rubbed.  
naked. disconnected, disinfected.  
the only touch now possible is  
mine.

MUSINGS OF A BROWN BODY



WASH



WIPE

WIPE





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