



Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.



## Bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure: Assembling the Philippine Government's disciplinary quarantine response to COVID-19

Nico A. Canoy<sup>a,\*</sup>, Augil Marie Q. Robles<sup>b</sup>, Gilana Kim T. Roxas<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Psychology, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines

<sup>b</sup> Division of Social Sciences, University of the Philippines Visayas, Miagao, Philippines

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Keywords:

Politics of waiting  
Body  
Urban political ecology  
Non-mobility  
Disciplinary quarantine

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to advance the concept of bodies-in-waiting as an everyday infrastructure to explain the shifting nature of 'pandemic cities' in response to the changing dynamics of infection control in urban spaces. While previous literatures have been 'sanitized' to emphasize the importance of managing optimal physiological health and safety, we would like to argue that keener attention is needed to rethink the constitutive role of bodies in co-producing a city's sociopolitical ecologies at this time of crisis. The main body is divided into three sections. The first section introduces the political dimensions of pandemic response by various governments with an emphasis to experiences of middle to low income countries. Our intention is to show how these studies bring into light the role of local politics of pandemic response *within* countries, and that actual governance mechanisms in cities are shaped and contested by shifting power blocs and emergent affinities. The second section forwards an embodied urban political approach that conceptualizes bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure. In this view, bodies-in-waiting is produced and reproduced by complex social-material flows and transformation rooted in variegated matrices of power through which urban spaces are (re)assembled. The last section demonstrates a sample case that shows how bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure are understood using Twitter-sourced data associated with the Philippine government's disciplinary quarantine measures which started March 12, 2020 in the NCR. At its core, bodies-in-waiting as infrastructures populate a politically affirmative urban imaginary of bodies living on despite the existence of an accelerated and mutating virus in slower moving cities.

The biosecurity discourse of infection control conveys an adaptive and consistent governance model of testing, treatment, and isolation of COVID-19 positive/negative bodies in cities globally. The current situation, however, reflects a mixture of neoliberal and illiberal forms of infectious disease governance; a combination of vertical and horizontal exercises of control which generated greater community participation, such as activating the crucial role of private sector in curbing infection in order to augment the scarcity of resources and services as well as responding more effectively in relation to state inadequacies, failure, or 'absence' to manage the impact of the pandemic (Lim and Sziarto, 2020; Ortega and Orsini, 2020). And while cities are considered the nexus of infection control (Biglieri et al., 2020), effective governance of vulnerable bodies varies based on existing public health infrastructures, national and local policies, and urban density, among others. In terms of rolling-out local COVID-19 vaccination programs and the replenishment of critical medical supplies, for instance, some bodies are made to

wait and even let die, especially in Southern cities, because of the continuing challenges in the development of safe and effective vaccines, its supply and dissemination globally, and the process of vaccine deployment within countries (Forman et al., 2021).

Attention to the complexity of pandemic-related urban health governance must be met with a similar sensitivity and energy to understand the vibrant nature of bodies in the city that is always already more than the state rendering of bodily health, security, and shared fate. While previous literatures have been 'sanitized' to emphasize the importance of managing optimal physiological health and safety (e.g., Allam and Jones, 2020; Wilkinson, 2020), we would like to argue that keener attention is needed to rethink the constitutive role of bodies in co-producing a city's sociopolitical ecologies at this time of crisis. Specifically, we aim to conceptually expand the discourse these literatures enable through a mode of critical inquiry that problematizes non-mobile bodies in relation to the characterization of urban spaces as a contested

\* Corresponding author. Department of Psychology, Ricardo and Dr. Rosita Leong Hall School of Social Sciences, Ateneo de Manila University, Katipunan Avenue, Room 308, Loyola Heights, 1108, Quezon City, Philippines.

E-mail address: [ncanoy@ateneo.edu](mailto:ncanoy@ateneo.edu) (N.A. Canoy).

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114695>

Received 30 March 2021; Received in revised form 30 August 2021; Accepted 28 December 2021

Available online 31 December 2021

0277-9536/© 2021 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

and hybrid moral field. Writing from a perspective of critical urbanism through insights gleaned using the approach of embodied urban political ecology, this article offers an innovative entry point to city-level pandemic governance in ways that interrogate how ‘stuck’ or inert bodies (i.e., bodies-in-waiting) can be understood differently beyond a binary framing of activity/passivity or mobility/non-mobility as well as to challenge the use of a Foucauldian designation of docile, compliant, and governable bodies vis-a-vis the presence of ubiquitous social structures. Situated in the contested urban political ecologies of pandemic cities<sup>1</sup>, we argue that *bodies-in-waiting are everyday infrastructures* that disrupt and animate how urban spaces are (re)assembled. Our intellectual intervention provides a timely and much needed breathing space by considering how bodies-in-waiting invoke a specific form of moral urbanism, or “the discursive and affective construction of particular cities as imbued with moral characteristics” (Darling, 2013, p. 1785) in which ethico-political possibilities of encountering the city are revitalized.

This article is divided into three main sections. The first section introduces the political dimensions of pandemic response by governments with an emphasis on experiences of low to middle income countries. In light of the hyper-proliferation of studies that fall under this thematic scope, we do not aim to conduct an exhaustive review of these studies nor reiterate their substantive results. Instead, our intention is to show how these studies bring to light the role of local politics of pandemic response *within* countries, and that the actual governance mechanisms in cities are shaped and contested by shifting power blocs and emergent affinities (i.e., eliminating a singular and vertical ‘source’ of power to structure urban realities). Here, we use the Philippines as a sample case of generating paradoxical urban imaginaries that are shaped by fragmented and uneven ‘covidscapes’ in the country (Aguilar, 2020). In view of the Duterte administration’s implementation of top-down disciplinary quarantine measures, local bodies are morally demarcated between those embodying ‘good citizenship’ and the ‘pasaway’, a ‘perpetual enemy of health and order’ (Hapal, 2021; Kusaka, 2020). Working through this polarizing moral field, wisdom ‘from the ground’, however, also show that communities as a reconstituted and differentiated collective body are sustained by multi-scalar and multi-actor networks that facilitate mutual aid from the national and local governments, non-government and private agencies, faith-based organizations, and by individual efforts of anonymous citizens.

The second section builds a critical lens to an embodied urban political approach that conceptualizes bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure. Here, we fundamentally shift the view of life in these cities towards the perspective of a body-city (Gandy, 2005, 2006a), and away from a recapitulation of a nineteenth century hygienic regime of the bacteriological city (Gandy, 2006b) or a Foucauldian model of a city as mirroring a collective homogenous body (Füller, 2016). Specifically, we extend this assertion in view of non-mobile or sedentary bodies structured by complex social formations, and that these seemingly inert bodies themselves course in and through power (Bissell, 2007, 2010). Using the conceptual metaphor of the body-city, bodies-in-waiting are produced and reproduced by uneven social-material flows and transformation rooted in variegated matrices of power through which urban spaces are (re)assembled. As such, this concept provides a grammar to appreciate and enliven bodies in pandemic cities as populated by, and inhabiting the precarity and unevenness of the urban, including the moral urbanisms that constellate its socio-spatial temporalities.

The last section demonstrates a sample case that shows how bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure are assembled in urban spaces using Twitter-sourced data associated with the Philippine government’s disciplinary quarantine measures, which started March 12, 2020 in the NCR. Here, we present photos with text captions<sup>2</sup> sampled through a larger data set of an ongoing research project to demonstrate conceptual features that redefine the political infrastructural ecology of pandemic cities as a contested and hybrid moral field. Since mobility and access to public spaces are highly restricted in the country (e.g., Metro Manila is yet

subjected to another heightened lockdown from August 6 to 20, 2021 because of rising COVID-19 cases), online social media platforms such as Twitter are one major source of publicly available information for many. In fact, Twitter is the fourth most popular SNS in the Philippines (Stat Counter, 2020), with an estimated 10.4 million Filipino users (Statista, 2019). As a “conduit for a global stream of consciousness” (Murthy, 2013, p. 51), Twitter data allows researchers the opportunity to examine multiple shifting public discourses and cultural interpretations of events in “real time” (McCormick et al., 2017).

## 1. Politics of pandemic cities and moral urbanisms

The socio-political landscape of pandemic cities show a hybrid infrastructural and morally fragmented urban space. Ever since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in March 2020, countries worldwide continue struggling to keep their economies afloat by establishing international and local alliances in order to curb the rates of local infection. However, far from the recommendation of an adaptive and centralized pandemic governance led by the WHO, most countries are observed to secure their own ‘national interest’ over the call for global solidarity to end the pandemic (Gostin et al., 2020). In what has been described as a fractured global health ecosystem, low to middle income countries suffer the most, as their leaders are embattled to sustain cities and its various communities in light of highly fragile health systems and infrastructures, neoliberal policies to health care, and existing social inequities such as race, gender, or social class (Bambra et al., 2020; Roder-DeWan, 2020; Williams et al., 2021; Zhou, 2021).

Notwithstanding the changing relations of interstate politics and border control, pandemic cities are shaped by the intensifying local politics of urban governance amongst existing state and non-state actors as well as emergent collectives. In such a volatile and divisive context, the consolidation of hybrid forms of governance structures – a mixture of vertical and horizontal relations of power – permeate and restructure the production of urban spaces. Typically to augment health and economic provisions provided by the national government, strengthening partnerships with the private sector, faith-based organizations, and other local and international non-government groups are seen as beneficial to expand and sustain care in hard-hit cities (Lim and Sziarto, 2020; Park and Chung, 2021; Seddighi et al., 2021; Vilakati et al., 2020). These collaborative efforts are envisioned to buffer the immediate and chronic impacts of the pandemic as well as to foster a stronger sense of solidarity by enabling mutual and agile aid across affected communities. As case in point, the different modes of networking (e.g., state-private, local governments and non-government institutions) greatly contribute in addressing the everyday needs of local communities in Southern regions like India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, or Pakistan, that are continuously beset by compounding health and financial challenges (Ahmed et al., 2020; Balsari et al., 2020; Djalante et al., 2020).

Due to the instability and rupture of conventional communal norms and practices amid the pandemic, these collective endeavors toward unified action are mired with differentiated lines of moral fragmentation. In this context, a moral splitting of body classification exists which constructs bodies as primarily un/safe, non/dangerous, un/clean, or un/disciplined (Kusaka, 2020; Lasco, 2020; Reny and Barreto, 2020; Todd-Gher and Shah, 2020). Specifically, a morally dichotomous ordering of bodies can be understood as a specific form of moral urbanism or the symbolic-affective construction of cities (Darling, 2013). In other words, we posit that bodies are produced in a complex amalgam of socio-material meanings and processes that is integral to city-making (Gandy, 2004, 2005). And while previous literatures on pandemic response have been ‘sanitized’ to reify the biomedical construction of the body in the discourse of managing optimal physiological and psychological health (e.g., Fullana et al., 2020; Robertson et al., 2021), we further argue that keener attention is needed to rethink the constitutive role of bodies in co-producing a city’s sociopolitical ecologies in crisis

mode.

In this article, we use the Philippines as a sample case of generating contested urban imaginaries that are shaped by fragmented and uneven ‘covidscapes’ in the country (Aguilar, 2020). According to the Department of Health, the total recorded COVID-19 cases in the country is around 1,765,675 (as of August 17, 2021), wherein the largest concentration of cases (599, 964) is found in the National Capital Region (NCR), while cases in regions outside the metropolis, such as in the Central and Western Visayas, are on the rise (Department of Health Philippines COVID-19 Tracker, 2021). Compared to other countries in Southeast Asia like Indonesia or Malaysia, the total cases during the earlier phase of the COVID-19 outbreak in the Philippines was relatively lower (Bueza, 2020). However, as of mid-August 2021, the average number of deaths reported each day in the country increased by 44% from its previous peak three weeks ago (Reuters COVID-19 Tracker, 2021). As of August 15, 2021, only around 13–14% of the country’s population had received the first of two doses of the vaccine since the vaccination program started last February 2021 (Rappler, 2021). With more severe cases of viral mutations are reported in the country (e.g., Delta variant), Philippine hospitals continue to struggle in coping with the threat of rapid and large-scale surges (Morales and Lema, 2021).

The Philippines has also experienced one of the world’s longest and strictest community quarantine lockdowns (See, 2021). President Rodrigo Duterte, despite allegations of human rights violations directed to his government’s ‘war-on-drugs’ national policy, continues to extend a war storyline in addressing the threat of COVID-19 in the country. In a televised announcement at the wake of the initial outbreak last March 2020, Duterte was quoted stating that “*we [Filipinos] are at war against a vicious and invisible enemy. One that cannot be seen by the naked eye. In this extraordinary war, we are all soldiers*” (Petty and Morales, 2020). In view of the Duterte administration’s implementation of top-down disciplinary quarantine measures, local bodies are morally demarcated between those embodying ‘good citizenship’ and the ‘pasaway’, a ‘perpetual enemy of health and order’ (Hapal, 2021; Kusaka, 2020). Whilst the idea of a morally charged social construction of the body is nothing new (e.g., Canoy and Ofreño, 2017; Miller et al., 2017; Rich and Evans, 2005), its bio-necropolitical loadings in the context of existing regimes of health governance need to be further fleshed out as these can fuel moral panic, deep seated prejudice, and violence directed toward certain groups, especially amid the pandemic (Chakraborty, 2021; Rose, 2021; Sandset, 2021). For example, in another televised address, Duterte was quoted saying, “*my orders to the police and military ... if there is trouble and there’s an occasion that they fight back and your lives are in danger, shoot them dead*” (Reuters, 2020).

Working through this polarizing moral field, we further observed that these complex urban realities surrounding the local pandemic response seldom reflect a more nuanced theoretical work that challenges an often rigid vertical/structural approach to power/resistance. For example, most studies that analyzed the nexus of power/resistance in understanding societal relations in the production of urban spaces (e.g., Legg, 2008; Garmany, 2010; Certomá, 2015; Füller, 2016; Oakes, 2019) had strong influences from Foucault’s work on biopolitical power and governmentality (Foucault and Burchell, 2008, 1991). And while contemporary social analysis has moved ‘beyond Foucault’, such as the politically engaged work by Rose (2007), Puar (2017) or Mbembe (2019), potential insights from these bodies of work have yet to be fully taken up in studies on urban health governance, in particular, on the ways that ‘messy’ everyday realities amid the pandemic are understood and reflected upon. Conversely, examining these realities may contribute to generating more robust and innovative theories or models of governing urban spaces post-pandemic. As such, we view our main intellectual contribution as situated within the dynamic relations between the social theory and practice of body politics in light of the contested and shifting urban political ecologies of COVID-19.

## 2. Bodies-in-waiting and the shifting ecology of the body-city

Our choice to focus on non-mobile bodies stems from our own observations and personal experiences of waiting since the first community quarantine lockdown last March. In this context, an episode of waiting – having made to wait for something (e.g., vaccination schedule, next Presidential elections in May 2022) or to wait with others (e.g., falling in line in the vaccination facility; getting our lives back to ‘normal’) – is an emotionally intense and perplexing embodied experience. It also does not help that some countries, at this point, have already started conversations on COVID-19 booster shots, while our country’s vaccination program leaves its unvaccinated citizens to wait indefinitely or that some people still choose not to get vaccinated at all. Although not all cities are on the same boat pre- and peri-pandemic, citizens of some Southern countries like India or South Africa (including the Philippines) have had to experience chronic waiting due to the politicized bureaucratic system of the state (Carswell et al., 2019; Oldfield and Greyling, 2015). However, most especially during the pandemic, for most people in our country and perhaps elsewhere in the world, cities have indeed transformed into complex political spaces of waiting.

Previous literatures on the politics of waiting are discussed in relation to contexts of extended precarity, social conflict, and political instability of the state. Some bodies that experienced waiting or have had no choice but to wait for a long time belong to marginalized groups such as immigrants (Bélanger and Candiz, 2020), the unemployed (Ozoliņa-Fitzgerald, 2016), asylum-seekers (Mountz, 2011), or women (Wick, 2011). Similar to disciplining the *pasaway*, the embodied experience of waiting by these groups is marked with prolonged agony or ‘slow death’, including punctured episodes of violence. In this context, the body’s urgency (e.g., to move, to connect, to survive etc.) ‘is cast as subjective and impulsive, while larger scales, such as the region, state or society, emerge as the scale of a rational ethics’ (Olson, 2015, p. 520). Insofar as the foregoing literatures which we identified above are concerned, bodies-in-waiting are typically contained in a ‘micro’ and/or individual scale by strong political forces imbricated in more ‘macro’ and socio-structural scales like the city.

Recent literatures on urban political ecology (UPE) have moved beyond its initial thesis on the urbanization of nature (see recent review of Tzaninis et al., 2021). One key assertion of contemporary UPE scholarship is viewing the category of the ‘urban’ as a set of socio-material metabolic processes and flows, networks, or assemblage. From this perspective, the city’s vibrant social infrastructures and its symbolic registers produce and reproduce how human and non-human spaces are understood, experienced, and transformed. The relationalities that the urban enable, for instance, provide deeper insights to the ethico-political encounters amongst stakeholders with competing interests involving communal issues such as everyday environmentalism (Loftus, 2012), green spaces (Chung et al., 2018), housing (Perkins et al., 2004), or resource production (Saguin, 2018), to name a few.

This article draws from a growing strand of UPE scholarship that problematizes body relations in the city (Andueza et al., 2020; Canoy, 2021; Doshi, 2017). In this specific body of work, bodies are agential and vibrant socio-materialities that co-constitute and populate urban forms and spaces. Moving away from notions of the body as either a passive vessel of macro political forces or a humanist trope of personal control and volition, an embodied UPE recognizes the ‘multiple, interconnected relations of difference and power’ (Doshi, 2017, p. 126) that shape how bodies are made to appear and be recognizable, disgruntled and bemoaned, punished and pleased, or even violated and erased. Thus, the body’s materiality and the space it inhabits are kept in place, not only by the city’s mega-infrastructure, but by ‘the social codes and relations that keep the body connected to infrastructure, or demand particular types and/or certain divisions of labour, often reinforcing or remaking gendered, classed and/or racialized lines’ (Ramakrishnan et al., 2020, p. 2).

Within the frame of an embodied UPE, the entangled relations

between the city and the body – a body-city – are key to understanding urban health governance and space reproduction. Building from the earlier work of Matthew Gandy on rethinking urban metabolic flows in a neo-organismic model of the cyborgian city (2005), the body-city, by contrast to the hygienic or ‘sanitized’ regime of the bacteriological city (Gandy, 2006b) or a Foucauldian model of a city as analogous to a collective homogenous body (Füller, 2016), accommodates blurred and intersecting fields of power, like how pandemic cities reforge their existing affinities, recalibrate limited resources, and reinstitute bordering mechanisms to manage viral transmission. However, unlike ‘ordinary’ time pre-pandemic, pandemic cities are highly reactive networks of hypervigilant bodies. Rearticulating Gandy’s (2006a) description of neoliberal and politically unstable cities, pandemic cities ‘are increasingly characterized by ‘marked bodies’ rather than citizens in a reprise of twentieth-century fascism so that landscapes of paranoia become interwoven with longstanding structural inequalities to produce volatile topographies of hatred and mistrust’ (p. 507).

In reading the foregoing passage taken from Gandy’s discussion of complex bio-political contestations in urban spaces, bodies are not subservient to human will nor inferior to the urban body itself. Rather, bodies themselves *are* vital infrastructures in the city (Andueza et al., 2020). Specifically, we extend this assertion in view of non-mobile or sedentary bodies structured by complex social formations, and that these seemingly inert bodies are themselves course in and through power (Bissell, 2007, 2010). In relation, bodies-in-waiting are everyday infrastructures ‘defined by the (non) *movement* or patterning of social form. It is the living mediation of what organizes life’ (Berlant, 2016, p. 393; emphasis added).

As a social infrastructure in the body-city, bodies-in-waiting are produced and reproduced by uneven social-material flows and transformation rooted in variegated matrices of power through which urban spaces are (re)assembled. In other words, bodies are not mirrors nor passive conduits of social processes. Rather, as constitutional to the relations of the becoming urban, bodies always exceed their ‘exchange value’ (Andueza et al., 2020). Thus, bodies-in-waiting as everyday infrastructures cannot be fully abstracted by the capitalist machine because these bodies don’t just occupy or are commodified in space, but rather are rightfully viewed as fundamental to the differentiated worlding of urban life. As such, this concept may provide a grammar to appreciate and enliven bodies in pandemic cities as populated by and inhabiting the precarity and unevenness of the urban, along with the moral urbanisms that constellate its socio-spatial temporalities. In the next section, we present a sample case to demonstrate bodies-in-waiting as infrastructures in the context of assembling the Philippine government’s disciplinary quarantine response to the pandemic.

### 3. Case: bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure in the context of disciplinary quarantine

The disciplinary quarantine measures implemented by the Duterte administration are consistent to an overarching war storyline enshrined in the current national government’s drug war campaign. Even pre-pandemic, the drug war has tremendously shaped the nature of urban spaces in the country, with the large concentration of deaths reported in the NCR (Atun et al., 2019; Warburg and Jensen, 2020a). Urban poor communities, often tagged as drug ‘hotspots’, struggled the most, as deaths linked to police crackdowns generated an atmosphere of ambiguous fear and mistrust which fundamentally destabilized and reconfigured social relations between the state and members of the community (Ofreneo et al., 2020; Warburg and Jensen, 2020b). Specifically, the bio-necropolitical governance of these urban spaces reinforced a morally crystallized construction of a dangerous other that justifies the use of violence towards certain groups (e.g., drug user/addict) as legitimate (Lasco and Curato, 2019).

Here, we need to consider the urban realities that the Philippine drug war enabled to better situate the implementation of disciplinary

quarantine measures as a distinct feature of local pandemic response. For the purpose of this article, we argue that it is not only about the continuity of a spectacular display of military force to eradicate the ‘enemies’ of the state, nor to say whether the government’s pandemic response is indeed effective or not, which takes the ‘central’ rationale of presenting such a case. Rather, it is to point to the specific constructions of everyday bodies that should be problematized in relation to the (re) production of urban spaces in pandemic cities which may be related, yet remain distinct to the bodies constructed in a drug war context. Definitely, we are not generalizing that all bodies in every city around the world experienced and are experiencing the same set of conditions. Nevertheless, we still contend that there are critical similarities across cities. For example, we see that the responsibility (even perhaps in terms of accountability to a certain degree) of sustaining various communities in these cities is often diffused and volatile, enacted by multi-actor networks – whether coordinated or not, regardless if a city has adequate resources or not. In other words, the power to sustain life in pandemic cities is not solely reliant on the stability and performance of *formal* national and/or local urban health governance structures, but rather the exercise of governmental power in these cities is *more* distributed (not flat) and shared (not always mutual) with other non-state actors through strategic partnerships and alliances.

We build on this premise of a more distributed urban health governance to rethink the nature of ‘disciplining’ in disciplinary quarantine. Fig. 1 shows the extensive and modified disciplinary spaces (e.g., streets, borders, basketball courts) that regulate bodies (e.g., stop/restrict/contain movement), especially those that violate community lockdown protocols (e.g., strict curfew, mobility of essential goods, services, and workers etc.). In contrast to the policing agents of the state, bodies-in-waiting as everyday infrastructures are always in excess of the state’s power to smoothen and flatten such bodies’ capacities to disentangle moral codes and transgress legal protocols with the least ‘resistance’. As a vibrant infrastructure of pandemic cities, bodies-in-waiting *live on* and not just ‘resist’ state surveillance through acts of deviance or acts of human resilience. What seems contradictory to these photos of bodies-in-detention or impassable bodies in Fig. 1 is the more-than-representational quality of these bodies to skid through lines of differentiation and spaces of containment. In pandemic cities, the number of bodies ‘contained’ in institutionalized spaces and passages like quarantine facilities, hospitals, inter-city checkpoints, airports, or funerals do not clearly indicate the ‘success’ or ‘failure’ of a pandemic response measure as indexed by the capacity to hold/release something or to facilitate/impede movement. Rather, it is more important to examine in how momentary, provisional or chronic clustering of the infrastructural body assembles and animates relations, meanings, affects, and other material processes in a particular space/passage. For example, quarantined bodies in a facility are not only construed as being subdued by its walls and rules, but rather as infrastructures coursing in and through a surplus of meanings/memories/powers. These bodies can indeed sustain, amplify, or resuscitate a facility’s limits, capacities, and affective registers.

The everyday animation of bodies-in-waiting is clearly demonstrated in public marketplaces in the city (see Fig. 2). Similar to groceries found in commercial malls, partitioning of bodies through physical distancing measures (i.e., left panel) in public marketplaces suggests the assumption of clear cut and divisible spaces that allow bodies to ‘fall-in-line’ and take turns to purchase food and other everyday needs. However, we posit that the reproduction of space in public marketplaces, at least in the Philippines, is actually enlivened by the ‘non-thematization’ of lived bodies that constitute the mundane chronopolitics – nexus of mobilities and non-mobilities – and democratic entanglements of assembling public marketplaces for most Filipinos. As seen in the right panel of Fig. 2, *Divisoria*, a locally popular public marketplace in Metro Manila, is observed to be populated by shoppers from diverse walks of life and a multitude of sellers (i.e., formal/informal vendors), even at the earlier phase of the pandemic outbreak in April 2020. Again, we are not saying



**Fig. 1.** Figure 1. Everyday Spaces and Borders of Disciplinary Quarantine Policing.  
 Note. Copyright 2020 by Punong Barangay Lourdes A. Fortaleza of Barangay Poblacion- Valenzuela City, AFP / Alex Badayos and Philippine Star News, Grig C. Montegrando and Philippine Daily Inquirer



**Fig. 2.** (Un)Restrained Movement in Public Marketplaces.  
 Note. Copyright 2020 by Philippine Star News, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila PIO, and Carlo Molina

that this depiction of bodies-in-cramped spaces is acceptable or not – certainly the risk of COVID-19 transmission is very high in these kinds of places. Rather, we are saying that the prosaic nature of the complex labyrinth of *Divisoria* disrupts any ordered partitioning of bodies (especially early morning or at night) because policing conditions on the ground are more ‘loose’ and open (even pre-pandemic) to negotiated networks of disjunctive urban governance (see also article by Recio (2020) on street vending in Baclaran district, Metro Manila).

*Divisoria* as an embodied infrastructural ecology also shows complex relations of bodies-in-waiting that trouble the capacity of the body to wait in relation to intersecting everyday temporalities (i.e., bodies while waiting to get vaccinated, also cannot wait to move and feed its thirst and hunger). As such, the disciplining of bodies-in-waiting via strict quarantine measures is like ‘the tussle between the demands of

abstraction and concrete processes of social reproduction plays out’ (Andueza et al., 2020, p. 12). In other words, bodies-in-waiting as (im) mortal infrastructures can be viewed as both complicit and resistant in their constitutive role of reproducing differentiated and liminal urban realities, wherein simple binary classifications are always already blurred or transgressed. The shifting duality of bodies-in-waiting also invokes and energizes urban spaces contrary to the despondent and muted imaginary of urban ‘death worlds’ (e.g., Chakraborty, 2021) because it challenges any full enclosure, over-determination, and extremization of deploying particular social categories (e.g., poor, women, etc.) that may deny the ontological condition changing bodily existence, mutations, and agential entanglements of human and non-human bodies. And while the pandemic disproportionately impacted certain bodies over others (e.g., some bodies indeed die

because of state negligence), it has also made instabilities, fluidities, ruptures, and alternate futures *more* normative rather than the exception to governing everyday urban life.

Bodies-in-waiting are politically engaged infrastructures. As Andueza et al. (2020) posited, ‘it is not only the rule of capital that needs to be articulated on the permanently shifting cultural grounds that give social reproduction its multiple meanings, but it is also from these grounds that any possible political composition of resistance must emerge’ (p. 13). The left panel in Fig. 3 demonstrates a collective protest of bodies gathered in the auspices of a local public university against the state’s endorsement of an anti-terrorism act (the Republic Act no. 11479 was passed on July 18, 2020). Moreover, it is also around this time that the country’s largest media and broadcasting firm was shut down due to the state’s non-renewal of its operating franchise. Despite the threat of viral transmission, the mobilization of these public protests signified the continuity of efforts to protect and fight for the people’s right to free speech and due process. Here, we can observe an iconic representation of human non-mobility invoking the strong refusal to move (on) and be removed from an accelerated political storyline of state censorship.

Furthermore, the apparent continuity of protest activities also encompasses political discontinuities of ‘broken’ infrastructural bodies. The bodies-in-waiting in the middle and right panel of Fig. 3 show the ‘new’ and ‘old’ bodies embodying relations of repair and decay which demand redemption and justice stretching beyond the pandemic storyline. The middle panel shows bodies of jeepney drivers that are pushed to ask for alms in the streets. This is one example of a hard-hit group during the pandemic in light of the limited public transportation in Metro Manila. Despite overwhelmingly difficult circumstances, some jeepney drivers have been denied or was asked to modify their franchise for being non-compliant with the Public Utility Vehicle (PUV) Modernization Program (De Torres, 2021). The PUV modernization program, which started around 2017, is part of the government’s flagship program ‘which envisions a restructured, modern, well-managed and environmentally sustainable transport sector where drivers and operators have stable, sufficient and dignified livelihoods while commuters get to their destinations quickly, safely and comfortably’ (Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, 2021). Ironically, Duterte’s promise of ‘dignified’ livelihood for transport workers in the country was short-lived when he was quoted in one press conference saying, “Mahirap kayo? Putang ina, magtiis kayo sa hirap at gutom, wala akong pakialam (You’re poor? Son of a b\*\*\*h, suffer hardship and hunger, I don’t care). It’s the majority of the Filipino people. Huwag ninyo ipasubo ang tao (Don’t endanger the public)” (Ranada, 2017).

The phasing-out of traditional jeepneys in 2017 and its eventual non-

essential use during the pandemic meant that some jeepney drivers have to continue the painful laboring of their bodies on the streets just to survive another day. In this context, the pandemic has accelerated and further exposed (Metro) Manila’s necroburban spaces – deceptive and violent urban spaces – wherein the bodies of jeepney drivers, together with bodies of the homeless (right panel of Fig. 3), constitute a neglected and severely disenfranchised urban imaginary deserving of everyday brutalities (Ortega, 2020). For instance, the homeless or informal settlers are easily to blame for the city’s disaster-related problems like flooding (Alvarez and Cardenas, 2019) or the production of empty socialized housing programs by the government (Arcilla, 2018). While the pandemic’s more chronic impact is still unknown, the issue of homelessness is (once again) further pushed back to the urban fringe through prioritization of other ‘essential’ bodies. In Berlant’s (2016) words, ‘we can see the glitch of the present [pandemic] as a revelation of what had been the lived ordinary, the common infrastructure’ of the city’s hauntingly unmappable bodies-in-dispose (p. 403; emphasis added).

Bodies-in-waiting as infrastructure always belong elsewhere, but also nowhere. To buffer economies from complete melt-down, the ‘embodied circulation [of ‘essential’ bodies] is necessary to produce capitalist value and facilitate local exchange’ (Andueza et al., 2020, p. 6; emphasis added). However, like in the case of jeepney drivers, the permission, denial, or urgency of bodies to move back to their places of work are shaped by existing inequalities (Dobusch and Kreissl, 2020), and anchored to a country’s specific amalgam of urban imaginaries. The left and right panels in Fig. 4 show a cluster of bodies-in-waiting constituting the stream of local migrations in cities (i.e., inter-city/city-province movements). Aside from the need to satisfy the economic reproduction of bodies, the experience of waiting, which includes being made to wait indefinitely (i.e., waiting in daily commute, stranded and waiting to return home), is primarily a question of belongingness to a city’s shifting urban imaginary. In this context, the classification of bodies as either ‘essential’ or ‘non-essential’ produces a different set of moral qualities in defining who is (not) deserving of the city, who are able and worthy to provide (continuous) financial, health, and social care to others, and who are given the privilege and responsibility to reimagine the city for oneself and for/with others.

On the flip side, the ‘depopulating’ of capitalist infrastructures (e.g., commercial buildings, business districts) are re-casted as hollow, empty or ‘ghostly’ grounds (see Fig. 4’s middle panel). This means that bodies which previously occupied and animated these spaces are elsewhere doing work-from-home arrangements. In relation, the technological affordances of bodies working remotely (at least those who have the access to do so) also meant the invasion and transformation of care



Fig. 3. Re-assembling Bodies-in-Protests.

Note. Copyright 2020 by Philippine Star News and Boy Santos, Philippine Star News and Michael Varcas, MovePH and Russel Loreto



**Fig. 4.** Congestion and Absence of (Non)Mobile bodies in streets.  
 Note. Copyright 2020 by The Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Richard A. Reyes, Rappler and Ben Nabong

spaces at home. While work-from-home arrangements are also disproportionately experienced, for instance, by the intensification of unpaid work of women (e.g., Chauhan, 2020), the political infrastructural ecology of the home itself is transformed by the further partitioning of domestic space in order to maintain ‘healthy’ psychological boundaries between ‘work’ and ‘non-work’. Furthermore, these bodies-in-waiting are also stretched temporally as the notion of time is also ‘essentialized’ and redistributed in light of a reconstituted home assemblage and the changing wider home-city relations.

**4. Conclusions**

The pandemic city as a space of waiting is a political space characterized by the intense ebbs and flows of human and non-human bodies across national and local borders in light of the continuing suppression of viral transmission. While the dominant discourse of infection control has been to classify bodies as either COVID-19 positive/active or not (i. e., infectious or not), the article’s main intellectual intervention is aimed to distinctly reconceptualize bodies-in-waiting as everyday infrastructures which are always already in excess of the state’s rendering of bodily health, security, and shared fate. Drawing on insights from scholarship on critical urbanism and embodied urban political ecology, we have advanced ways to rethink the constitutive role of bodies in co-producing cities’ sociopolitical ecologies at this time of the pandemic. Working through a city’s contested and hybrid moral field, we have demonstrated salient examples of interrogating how ‘stuck’ or inert bodies can be understood differently beyond a simplistic binary framing of activity/passivity or mobility/non-mobility. Furthermore, we have also highlighted the relative porosity, existing negotiated networks, and disjunctive reanimation of everyday urban life that challenge the flattening of how bodies are categorized in discourses of urban health governance. What is at stake in this kind of intellectual work is it offers a generous critique to the pervading urban imaginaries and its moral discontents under the conditions of an evolving crisis. It seeks to provide a revitalizing discourse on the ethico-political possibilities of encountering and reimagining the city, and to expand the ways bodies become more-than representational, more-than material, and more-than human.

Our focus on bodies-in-waiting, however, is not meant to romanticize suffering or presuppose a different kind of distant ‘gaze’ – *very far from it*. As you might have personally observed or experienced, the everyday discourse of bodies are almost completely ‘codified’ through powerful framings of urgency, vulnerability, and passivity in light of the much-needed integrated public health and social care interventions. We don’t disagree with *this* reality. As an unintended effect, however, there is also a danger of *nominalizing bodies* as either COVID positive or

negative, living or dead, winning or losing, vaccinated or not, stuck or mobile, and so on. As Olson (2015) notes: “insisting that a suffering body, now, is that which cannot wait, has the ethical effect of drawing it into consideration alongside the political, public and exceptional scope of large-scale futures. It may help us insist on the body, both as a single unit and a plurality, as a legitimate scale of normative priority and social care” (p. 523). Theorizing bodies-in-waiting as ‘infrastructural’ does not imply reducing the value of bodies into a material substrate. Rather, we are that careful attention is needed to unpack the bodies’ transforming socio-material relations in (re)producing (post)pandemic cities, which can further strengthen the call towards securing ‘life-making’ infrastructures, instead of bolstering a purely technocratic and ‘profit-making’ infrastructural (post)pandemic response (Leach et al., 2021; Jaffe, 2020).

Bodies-in-waiting as infrastructures are bodies enacting moral agencies via strategic collective action while also maintaining strong ‘rootedness’ to a sense of personhood. By contrast to viewing bodies as mere technologies of circulation, (in)visible bodies in the photos are real entities that ‘exist within broader social formations in which meanings are constructed, in which love, care, anger and repair are all felt, experienced and acted upon’ (Andueza et al., 2020, p. 8). That is why bodies-in-waiting do not lie ‘outside’ representational and structural power, but rather these bodies’ socio-material relations are situated in ‘practical, embodied consciousness in the world – that is, an ‘interworld’ where meaning and materiality are inseparable’ (Simonsen, 2013, p. 6). In this context, bodies-in-waiting are realised in in-between spaces of perpetually reproducing themselves while at same time transgressing the abstract machinery that designates its use value.

To conclude, we would like to recognize the efforts of scholars who continue contributing to the ‘thickening’ critical scholarship of understanding the contextually complex and multifaceted pandemic response of cities from their own conceptual and locational vantage points. We hope that our intellectual intervention can modestly contribute to these ongoing discussions. Asserting that the discourse of the COVID-19 pandemic is not solely about the virus or vaccines, we assert that potential insights gleaned from our distinct conceptualization of bodies and urban space are applicable and transferable to cities which are governed by hybrid logics and competing everyday practices of caring for and with local communities. At its core, bodies-in-waiting as infrastructures populate a politically affirmative urban imaginary of bodies living on despite the existence of an accelerated and mutating virus in slower moving cities.



## Notes

1. We used this term similar to Fuller's (2016) discussion of the biopolitical effects of changing infection control in post-SARS Hong Kong, but also encompass modes of living beyond a Foucauldian gaze of the city.
2. Sample photos used in this article are sourced from online local news platforms.

## Credit author statement

Nico A. Canoy: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. Augil Marie Q. Robles: Software, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Visualization. Gilana Kim T. Roxas: Software, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to recognize the contributions of Mr. Tristan Gama-linda in co-writing the earlier drafts of the sample case presented in this paper.

## References

- Aguilar, F.V., 2020. Covidscapes: the pandemic in the Philippines. *Philippine Stud.: Historical Ethnographic Viewpoints* 68 (3/4), 287–299. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.488891918499104>.
- Ahmed, S.A.S., Ajisola, M., Azeem, K., Bakibinga, P., Chen, Y.F., Choudhury, N.N., Yusuf, R., 2020. Impact of the societal response to COVID-19 on access to healthcare for non-COVID-19 health issues in slum communities of Bangladesh, Kenya, Nigeria and Pakistan: results of pre-COVID and COVID-19 lockdown stakeholder engagements. *BMJ Global Health* 5 (8), e003042. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2020-003042>.
- Allam, Z., Jones, D.S., 2020, March. On the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and the smart city network: universal data sharing standards coupled with artificial intelligence (AI) to benefit urban health monitoring and management. *Healthcare* 8 (1), 46. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare8010046>. Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute.
- Alvarez, M.K., Cardenas, K., 2019. Evicting slums, 'building back better': resiliency revanchism and disaster risk management in Manila. *Int. J. Urban Reg. Res.* 43 (2), 227–249. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12757>.
- Andueza, L., Davies, A., Loftus, A., Schling, H., 2020. The body as infrastructure. *Environ. Plann.: Nature Space*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848620937231>, 2514848620937231.
- Arcilla, C.A.C., 2018. Producing empty socialized housing: privatizing gains, socializing costs, and dispossessing the Filipino poor. *Social Transform.: J. Global South* 6 (1), 77–105.
- Atun, J.M.L., Mendoza, R.U., David, C.C., Cossid, R.P.N., Soriano, C.R.R., 2019. The Philippines' antidrug campaign: spatial and temporal patterns of killings linked to drugs. *Int. J. Drug Pol.* 73, 100–111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2019.07.035>, 0.
- Balsari, S., Sange, M., Udawadia, Z., 2020. COVID-19 care in India: the course to self-reliance. *Lancet Global Health* 8 (11), e1359–e1360. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(20\)30384-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(20)30384-3).
- Bambra, C., Riordan, R., Ford, J., Matthews, F., 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and health inequalities. *J. Epidemiol. Community Health* 74 (11), 964–968.
- Bélangier, D., Candiz, G., 2020. The politics of 'waiting' for care: immigration policy and family reunification in Canada. *J. Ethnic Migrat. Stud.* 46 (16), 3472–3490. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech-2020-214401>.
- Berlant, L., 2016. The commons: infrastructures for troubling times. *Environ. Plann. Soc. Space* 34 (3), 393–419. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1592399>.
- Biglieri, S., De Vidovich, L., Keil, R., 2020. City as the core of contagion? Repositioning COVID-19 at the social and spatial periphery of urban society. *Cities Health* 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2020.1788320>.
- Bissell, D., 2007. Animating suspension: waiting for mobilities. *Mobilities* 2 (2), 277–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450100701381581>.
- Bissell, D., 2010. Vibrating materialities: mobility–body–technology relations. *Area* 42 (4), 479–486. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4762.2010.00942.x>.
- Bueza, M., 2020, October 16. COVID-19 in Charts: where Does PH Stand in ASEAN, World? *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/data-documents/coronavir-us-charts-where-philippines-stands-asean-world>.
- Canoy, N., 2021. Towards an embodied political ecology of fat masculinities. *Geoforum* 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2021.03.014>, 0(0).
- Canoy, N.A., Ofreneo, M.A.P., 2017. Struggling to care: a discursive-material analysis of negotiating agency among HIV-positive MSM. *Health* 21 (6), 575–594. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363459315628040>.
- Carswell, G., Chambers, T., De Neve, G., 2019. Waiting for the state: gender, citizenship and everyday encounters with bureaucracy in India. *Environ. Plann. C: Politics Space* 37 (4), 597–616. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263774X18802930>.
- Certomà, C., 2015. Expanding the 'dark side of planning': governmentality and biopolitics in urban garden planning. *Plann. Theor.* 14 (1), 23–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095213506202>.
- Chakraborty, D., 2021. The "living dead" within "death-worlds": gender crisis and COVID-19 in India. *Gen. Work. Organ.* 28 (S2), 330–339. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12585>.
- Chauhan, P., 2020. Gendering COVID-19: impact of the pandemic on women's burden of unpaid work in India. *Gen. Issues* 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-020-09269-w>.
- Chung, C.K.L., Zhang, F., Wu, F., 2018. Negotiating green space with landed interests: the urban political ecology of greenway in the Pearl River Delta, China. *Antipode* 50 (4), 891–909. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12384>.
- Darling, J., 2013. Moral urbanism, asylum, and the politics of critique. *Environ. Plann.* 45 (8), 1785–1801. <https://doi.org/10.1068/a454441>.
- Department of Health, 2021, August 18. COVID-19 Tracker Philippines. <https://doh.gov.ph/covid19tracker>.
- De Torres, A., 2021, January 20. When Covid Meets Climate Injustice: Phasing Out Jeepneys and Driving Unemployment in the Philippines. *Dissent*. <https://medium.com/just-transitions/when-covid-meets-climate-injustice-phasing-out-jeepneys-and-driving-unemployment-in-the-b084bbf56d5b>.
- Djalante, R., Lassa, J., Setiamarga, D., Sudjatma, A., Indrawan, M., Haryanto, B., et al., 2020. Review and analysis of current responses to COVID-19 in Indonesia: period of January to March 2020. *Prog. Disaster Sci.* 6, 100091. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pdisas.2020.100091>.
- Dobusch, L., Kreissl, K., 2020. Privilege and burden of im-/mobility governance: on the reinforcement of inequalities during a pandemic lockdown. *Gen. Work. Organ.* 27 (5), 709–716. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12462>.
- Doshi, S., 2017. Embodied urban political ecology: five propositions. *Area* 49 (1), 125–128. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12293>.
- Forman, R., Shah, S., Jeurissen, P., Jit, M., Mossialos, E., 2021. COVID-19 vaccine challenges: what have we learned so far and what remains to be done? *Health Pol.* 125 (5), 553–567. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2021.03.013>.
- Foucault, M., 2008. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège De France 1978-1979* (G. Burchell, Trans.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Foucault, M., 1991. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. University of Chicago Press.
- Fullana, M.A., Hidalgo-Mazzei, D., Vieta, E., Radua, J., 2020. Coping behaviors associated with decreased anxiety and depressive symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. *J. Affect. Disord.* 275, 80–81. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2020.06.027>.
- Füller, H., 2016. Pandemic cities: biopolitical effects of changing infection control in post-SARS Hong Kong. *Geogr. J.* 182 (4), 342–352. <https://doi.org/10.1111/geoj.12179>.
- Gandy, M., 2004. Rethinking urban metabolism: water, space and the modern city. *City* 8 (3), 363–379. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360481042000313509>.
- Gandy, M., 2005. Cyborg urbanization: complexity and monstrosity in the contemporary city. *Int. J. Urban Reg. Res.* 29 (1), 26–49. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2005.00568.x>.
- Gandy, M., 2006a. Zones of indistinction: bio-political contestations in the urban arena. *Cult. Geogr.* 13 (4), 497–516. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1474474006cgj3720a>.
- Gandy, M., 2006b. The bacteriological city and its discontents. *Hist. Geogr.* 34, 14–25.
- Garmany, J., 2010. Religion and governmentality: understanding governance in urban Brazil. *Geoforum* 41 (6), 908–918. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2010.06.005>.
- Gostin, L.O., Moon, S., Meier, B.M., 2020. Reimagining global health governance in the age of COVID-19. *Am. J. Publ. Health* 110 (11), 1615–1619. <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/full/10.2105/AJPH.2020.305933>.
- Hapal, K., 2021. The Philippines' COVID-19 response: securitising the pandemic and disciplining the pasaway. *J. Curr. Southeast Asian Aff.* 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1868103421994261>, 0(0).
- Jaffe, S., 2020, April 2. Social Reproduction and the Pandemic, with Tithi Bhattacharya. *Dissent*. [https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online\\_articles/social-reproduction-and-the-pandemic-with-tithi-bhattacharya](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/social-reproduction-and-the-pandemic-with-tithi-bhattacharya).
- Kusaka, W., 2020. Duterte's disciplinary quarantine: how a moral dichotomy was constructed and undermined. *Philippine Stud.: Historical Ethnographic Viewpoints* 68 (3/4), 423–442.
- Lasco, G., 2020. Medical populism and the COVID-19 pandemic. *Global Publ. Health* 15 (10), 1417–1429. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2020.1807581>.
- Lasco, G., Curato, N., 2019. Medical populism. *Soc. Sci. Med.* 221, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2018.12.006>.
- Lim, S.H., Sziarto, K., 2020. When the illiberal and the neoliberal meet around infectious diseases: an examination of the MERS response in South Korea. *Territory, Politics, Governance* 8 (1), 60–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21622671.2019.1700825>.
- Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, 2021, August, 23. PUV Modernization. Department of Transportation. <https://lfrb.gov.ph/puv-modernizati-on-2/>.
- Leach, M., MacGregor, H., Scoones, I., Wilkinson, A., 2021. Post-pandemic transformations: how and why COVID-19 requires us to rethink development. *World Dev.* 138, 105233. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105233>.

- Legg, S., 2008. *Spaces of Colonialism: Delhi's Urban Governmentalities*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Loftus, A., 2012. *Everyday Environmentalism: Creating an Urban Political Ecology*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Mbembe, A., 2019. *Necropolitics*. Duke University Press.
- McCormick, T.H., Lee, H., Cesare, N., Shojaie, A., Spiro, E.S., 2017. Using Twitter for demographic and social science research: tools for data collection and processing. *Socio. Methods Res.* 46 (3), 390–421. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124115605339>.
- Miller, P.R., Flores, A.R., Haider-Markel, D.P., Lewis, D.C., Tadlock, B.L., Taylor, J.K., 2017. Transgender politics as body politics: effects of disgust sensitivity and authoritarianism on transgender rights attitudes. *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 5 (1), 4–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2016.1260482>.
- Morales, N., Lema, K., 2021, April 20. Philippine Hospitals Struggle to Cope as More Severe COVID-19 Wave Hits. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippine-hospitals-struggle-cope-more-severe-covid-19-wave-hits-2021-04-20/>.
- Mountz, A., 2011. Where asylum-seekers wait: feminist counter-topographies of sites between states. *Gen. Place Cult.* 18 (3), 381–399. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2011.566370>.
- Murthy, D., 2013. *Twitter: Social Communication in the Twitter Age*. Polity Press.
- Oakes, T., 2019. Happy town: cultural governance and biopolitical urbanism in China. *Environ. Plann.: Economy Space* 51 (1), 244–262. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X17693621>.
- N. Ofreneo, M.A., Martinez, L.M., Fortin, P., Mendoza, M., Yusingco, M.P., Aquino, M.G., 2020. Remembering love: memory work of orphaned children in the Philippine drug war. *J. Soc. Work*, 1468017320972919.
- Oldfield, S., Greyling, S., 2015. Waiting for the state: a politics of housing in South Africa. *Environ. Plann.* 47 (5), 1100–1112. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X15592309>.
- Olson, E., 2015. Geography and ethics I: waiting and urgency. *Prog. Hum. Geogr.* 39 (4), 517–526. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132515595758>.
- Ortega, A.A.C., 2020. Exposing necroburbia: suburban relocation, necropolitics, and violent geographies in Manila. *Antipode* 52 (4), 1175–1195. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12629>.
- Ozoliņa-Fitzgerald, L., 2016. A state of limbo: the politics of waiting in neo-liberal Latvia. *Br. J. Sociol.* 67 (3), 456–475. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12204>.
- Park, J., Chung, E., 2021. Learning from past pandemic governance: early response and Public-Private Partnerships in testing of COVID-19 in South Korea. *World Dev.* 137, 105198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2020.105198>.
- Perkins, H.A., Heynen, N., Wilson, J., 2004. Inequitable access to urban reforestation: the impact of urban political economy on housing tenure and urban forests. *Cities* 21 (4), 291–299. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2004.04.002>.
- Petty, M., Morales, N.J., 2020, March 16. Duterte Puts Philippines under Quarantine, Says 'we Are in the Fight of Our Lives'. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-philippines-idUSKBN2130W4>.
- Puar, J.K., 2017. *Terrorist Assemblages*. Duke University Press.
- Ramakrishnan, K., O'Reilly, K., Budds, J., 2020. Between decay and repair: embodied experiences of infrastructure's materiality. *Environ. Plann.: Nature Space*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848620980597>.
- Rappler, 2021, April 1. TRACKER: the Philippines' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/data-documents/tracker-covid-19-vaccines-distribution-philippines>.
- Ranada, P., 2017, October 17. Duterte to Jeepney Drivers, Operators: Modernize by Year-End or Get Out. Rappler. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/duterte-jeepney-driver-s-modernize-get-out>.
- Recio, R.B., 2020. Street entanglements: contestation, collaboration, and co-optation in Manila's informal vending spaces. *J. Urban Aff.* 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2020.1798242>.
- Reny, T.T., Barreto, M.A., 2020. Xenophobia in the Time of Pandemic: Othering, Anti-Asian Attitudes, and COVID-19. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, pp. 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2020.1769693>.
- Reuters, 2020, April 2. 'Shoot Them Dead' - Philippine Leader Says Won't Tolerate Lockdown Violators. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-philippines-dutert-idUSKBN21K0AY>.
- Reuters, 2021, August 18. COVID-19 Tracker Philippines. <https://graphics.reuters.com/world-coronavirus-tracker-and-maps/countries-and-territories/philippines/>.
- Rich, E., Evans, J., 2005. 'Fat ethics'—the obesity discourse and body politics. *Soc. Theor. Health* 3 (4), 341–358. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.sth.8700057>.
- Robertson, M., Duffy, F., Newman, E., Bravo, C.P., Ates, H.H., Sharpe, H., 2021. Exploring changes in body image, eating and exercise during the COVID-19 lockdown: a UK survey. *Appetite* 159, 105062. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2020.105062>.
- Roder-DeWan, S., 2020. Health system quality in the time of COVID-19. *Lancet Global Health* 8 (6), e738–e739. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(20\)30223-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(20)30223-0).
- Rose, J., 2021. Biopolitics, essential labor, and the political-economic crises of COVID-19. *Leisure Sci.* 43 (1–2), 211–217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2020.1774004>.
- Rose, N., 2007. *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century*. Princeton University Press.
- Saguin, K., 2018. Political ecologies of urbanizing natures in Southeast Asia. In: *Routledge Handbook of Urbanization in Southeast Asia*. Routledge, pp. 355–365.
- Sandset, T., 2021. The necropolitics of COVID-19: race, class and slow death in an ongoing pandemic. *Global Publ. Health* 16 (8–9), 1411–1423. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2021.1906927>.
- Seddighi, H., Seddighi, S., Salmani, I., Sedeh, M.S., 2021. Public-private-people partnerships (4P) for improving the response to COVID-19 in Iran. *Disaster Med. Public Health Prep.* 15 (1), e44–e49. <https://doi.org/10.1017/dmp.2020.202>.
- See, A.B., 2021, March 15. Rodrigo Duterte Is Using One of the World's Longest COVID-19 Lockdowns to Strengthen His Grip on the Philippines. <https://time.com/5945616/covid-philippines-pandemic-lockdown/>.
- Simonsen, K., 2013. In quest of a new humanism: embodiment, experience and phenomenology as critical geography. *Prog. Hum. Geogr.* 37 (1), 10–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132512467573>.
- Stat Counter, 2020, November. Social Media Stats Philippines. <https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/philippines>.
- Statista, 2019. Number of Twitter Users in the Philippines from 2014 to 2019. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/490561/twitter-users-philippines/>.
- Todd-Gher, J., Shah, P.K., 2020. Abortion in the context of COVID-19: a human rights imperative. *Sexual Reproductive Health Matter.* 28 (1), 1758394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2020.1758394>.
- Tzaninis, Y., Mandler, T., Kaika, M., Keil, R., 2021. Moving urban political ecology beyond the 'urbanization of nature'. *Prog. Hum. Geogr.* 45 (2), 229–252. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132520903350>.
- Vilakati, P.N., Villa, S., Alagna, R., Khumalo, B., Tshuma, S., Quaresima, V., et al., 2020. The neglected role of Faith-based Organizations in prevention and control of COVID-19 in Africa. *Trans. R. Soc. Trop. Med. Hyg.* 114 (10), 784–786. <https://doi.org/10.1093/trstmh/traa073>.
- Warburg, A.B., Jensen, S., 2020a. Policing the war on drugs and the transformation of urban space in Manila. *Environ. Plann. Soc. Space* 38 (3), 399–416. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775818817299>.
- Warburg, A.B., Jensen, S., 2020b. Ambiguous fear in the war on drugs: a reconfiguration of social and moral orders in the Philippines. *J. Southeast Asian Stud.* 51 (1–2), 5–24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022463420000211>.
- Wick, L., 2011. The practice of waiting under closure in Palestine. *City Soc.* 23, 24–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-744X.2011.01054.x>.
- Wilkinson, A., 2020. Local response in health emergencies: key considerations for addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in informal urban settlements. *Environ. Urbanization* 32 (2), 503–522. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247820922843>.
- Williams, O.D., Yung, K.C., Grépin, K., 2021. The failure of private health services: COVID-19 induced crises in low- and middle-income country (LMIC) health systems. *Global Publ. Health* 16 (8–9), 1320–1333. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2021.1874470>.
- Zhou, A., 2021. Limits of neoliberalism: HIV, COVID-19, and the importance of healthcare systems in Malawi. *Global Publ. Health* 16 (8–9), 1346–1363. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2021.1940237>.