

# Introduction

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**W**hat is space? Bruce Baugh asks the question in “Space and Place: Walking through Kamloops,” an essay in this issue that, through the author’s experience of walking through the small Canadian city of Kamloops, British Columbia, examines walking itself as “a privileged mode of encountering space and place.” The title word *space* enters Baugh’s essay in multiple ways: space is quantitative and measurable, he explains; is empty, symmetrical, and reversible; impersonal and anonymous, neither mine nor yours. But such abstract space is merely a derivation of “lived space,” Baugh suggests, citing Heidegger, and it is living and moving through the space of Kamloops, rather than just mapping or measuring it, that interests Baugh in this essay. To formulate his philosophical meditations on the ever-changing spatial-temporal organization of Kamloops, Baugh needs to “get out walking.”

Something that fascinates me again and again as I edit *Mosaic* is the way in which a given word, in this case *space*, will appear several times, and in markedly varied ways, throughout the issue—as if threading the issue together in a weave of differences. Always unplanned, these differences, provoked by one and the same word, come as a surprise. As for space, this *Mosaic* issue, in a certain way, takes the word for granted; in another way, the reader of this issue may well be left with the question “what is space?” unanswered.

As distinct from Bruce Baugh’s essay, Deric Corlew’s “The Mind and the Nervous System: Synaptic Space in the Poetry of William Carlos Williams,” for example, approaches space by way of Williams’s understanding of mind as dispersed throughout the body. Denying traditional divisions of mind from body, as well as theories that localize mind in the “brain,” Williams “views the mind as always composed of a series of elements separated by what I will refer to as ‘synaptic space,’” Corlew writes. “This space mirrors the action of the synapse: its division maintains separate identity and function but also allows communication and connection. By approaching Williams’s

vision of space as synaptic, I show how his work challenges and redefines abstract compartmentalizations such as that of ‘mind’ and ‘body,’ bridging potentially divisive spaces to form new systems of meaning.”

In “Impossible Subjects in Maxine Hong Kingston’s *China Men: Thoughts on Migrancy and the State of Exception*,” a third example of the different ways “space” figures in this issue, Jutta Gsoels-Lorensen “aims to trace an embodied migrant subjectivity from the complex interaction between law, language, and the body-in-transit in the limit zone of the physical and phenomenal border situation.” Here, with specific reference to Chinese American immigration history, border space emerges as a realm of enforced law, where “impossible subjects” (immigrants and migrants occupying a liminal space or zone, both inside the polity and as outsiders to it) are made to “suffer tremendously from the violence of law unleashed upon them as perceived ‘border-crossers’ even when they are (naturalized) United States citizens.”

Space is at stake in this issue even when it is not named: in Patrick Lenta’s “Discipline in *Disgrace*,” for instance, which examines Coetzee’s critique in *Disgrace* of disciplinary power in today’s corporate university; in Kristel Thornell’s study of two film adaptations of Jane Austen’s *Emma* as “an overlaying” of discourses of submission and agency; and in Laura Zebuhr’s “Sounding *Walden*,” where Thoreau’s text is said to challenge self-identification in favour of “spacing,” of an opening to “the other self.”

**S**hortly after this issue appears, *Mosaic*’s third international conference will begin: *Freud After Derrida*, a remarkable event to be held from October 6 to 9 at the University of Manitoba. Visit the conference website ([www.umanitoba.ca/mosaic/freud](http://www.umanitoba.ca/mosaic/freud)), and look forward to the proceedings in an upcoming issue.