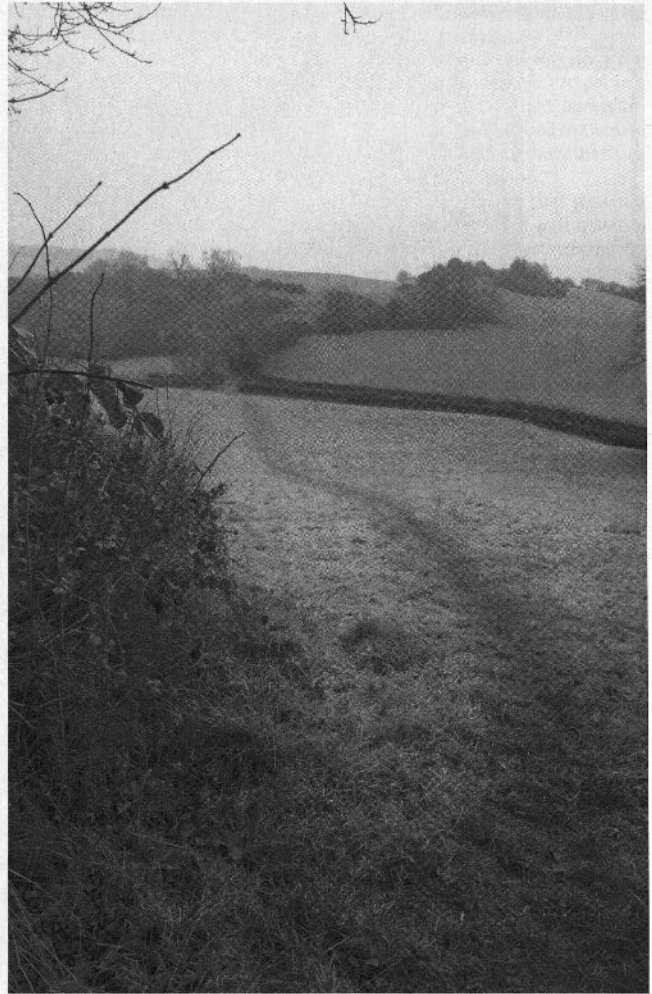


Intellect



## GALLERY

*Photography by*

**SAM CONTIS**

**We make the path by walking.** Where animals tread first, people tend to follow. Desire lines form, the natural routes made by creatures large and small, taking the shortest way from one point to another. Eventually, a path emerges.

Desire lines, stiles, fences, dry stone walls and hedges are the focus of photographer Sam Contis's latest book, *Overpass*. The work

is about walking: how we move through the landscape and try to tame it. "I was interested in the experience of being able to walk across private land on a public footpath," Contis tells me. "The network of public rights of way in the UK has always struck me as extremely interesting."

The work reveals something subtly subversive about our access to the countryside. "These [stiles]

are structures designed for facilitating movement, not preventing it, while of course at the same time implying a system of borders and barriers."

The stiles themselves can be hard to make out in Contis's photography. Humans and animals are present but not shown. It often seems like we are looking at a scene just after a character has departed. "Even though you never

see a figure in the photographs," says Contis, "the portrait format, for me, is suggestive of the bodies that have moved through these environments."

Did you see that stag, that hare? No? You just missed it. **FI**

Words by Josh Lustig. *Overpass* is published by Aperture and on show at Klaus von Nichtssagend Gallery, New York, until December 16