

The new materialisms



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The role of matter has often been marginalised in much of philosophical thought. Rapid scientific and technological advances in the twentieth century, however, have since heightened the awareness of our place in the world as embodied human beings. This has revealed a pressing urgency to confront the ethical and political implications of our material practices within the dynamic terrain of contemporary times. As such, recognising the importance of material factors has led to an emergence of ways in which our prevailing understandings of material reality can be transformed. These recent accounts of a new materialist philosophy call for a redefinition of matter: not an inert or passive substance as traditionally conceived, but rather that which is in possession of an inherently unpredictable force and vitality.

Investigations into the agency of matter are currently occurring in areas such as material culture, ecocritical discourses, material feminisms, and science studies, where material reality has been given particular emphasis. This is not an abandonment of historical legacies of materialist thought, but an attempt to reconsider the notion of matter in the face of various geopolitical and biotechnological forces acting in the world today. The turn to envisioning new processes of materialisation thus attempts to cultivate a paradigm that rethinks the dualities of nature and culture, language and reality, mind and body, and the human and the inhuman. As an emerging interdisciplinary field, the new materialist studies precipitate a radicalisation of what ‘matter’ truly means.

We are seeking submissions from a range of disciplines relating to the arts, culture or social sciences that consider the topic of THE NEW MATERIALISMS for issue 19 of FORUM. Submissions may relate to, but are not limited to:

- New materialism in literary studies
- Philosophies of new materialism
- New materialism and the creative arts
- Corporeality and discourses of embodiment
- Bioethics and biopolitics
- Posthumanism
- Material feminisms and feminist science studies
- Revivals of materialist traditions
- Virtual 'matter': New materialism and digital culture, cybernetics, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality
- Materialist poetics
- Affect studies
- Postcolonial studies and the politics of location
- Speculative realism and object-oriented ontologies
- Material cultural studies
- Ecocritical discourses and political ecology

Papers must be between 3,000 – 5,000 words in length, formatted according to MLA guidelines. **FORUM is also considering academic book reviews (1000 words), and multi-media and alternative presentations for publication.** Please email your article, a short abstract, and your academic CV in separate, clearly labelled DOC(X). files to **editors@forumjournal.org** by Friday 12th September 2014. All eligible articles will be peer reviewed prior to publication. Only one submission per author per issue is permissible.