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Environmental Education Research

new materialism

13/04/2017 CALL FOR PAPERS LEAVE A COMMENT NEW

MATERIALISM ONTOLOGY PHILOSOPHY POLICY POSTHUMAN PRACTICE RESEARCH THEORY

Environmental Education Research | Call for Proposals for a Special Issue

New Materialisms and Environmental Education

Guest editors: David A.G. Clarke, University of Edinburgh & Jamie Mcphie, University of Cumbria

The purpose of this Special Issue is to:

- acknowledge the emergence of new materialisms in environmental education research and articulate the potential significance of new materialisms for debates in environmental education research, policy, and practice;
- to encourage engagement with debates concerning materiality and ontology occurring in the broader theoretical and research landscape;
- to consider what might arise in the coming together of new materialist theories and the hopes, intentions and purposes of the field of environmental education and environmental education practitioners and scholars.

Key date for CFP, Proposal Guidelines and Submission Timeline – **July 7, 2017**

Overview of the Special Issue

In *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency & Politics*, Coole and Frost (2010) argue that contemporary environmental, economic, geopolitical, and technological developments require novel articulations of nature, agency, and social and political relationships, and that means of inquiry that privilege consciousness and subjectivity are not sufficient for the task.

New materialisms, a term that covers diverse theories, generally posit that the social sciences in the last several decades have paid particular attention to subjectivity at the expense of considering matter due to a perceived inaccessibility of the material world. New materialist theories attempt to take up the ostensibly neglected philosophy of matter by finding new means to express the ways in which the world relates to itself. New materialisms, for example, ask questions about what agency is and where it is located; the relationship between matter and discourse; the axiomatic distinctions between what is 'natural' and what is human or human derived; as well as the possibilities of expanding the concept of 'life' beyond the solely organic, as in Jane Bennett's (2009) vibrant materialism and materially informed contemporary animism (Harvey, 2013).

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The notion of troubling established dualisms, particularly nature/culture, will appear familiar to environmental education theorists. For instance, there may be a general troubling of the concepts that are often taken, ontologically, as relatively stable in developing policy, theory and research approaches. However, new materialisms attempt to move past negative critique of dualisms, essentialism and transcendence to posit new ways of envisioning reality and matter, often as vibrant, animate, creative, immanent and connectable and conceivable in new ways. This move often calls for attention to metaphysics, with theorists articulating forms of protean monism, speculative and agential realisms and ontologies of becoming (e.g. Barad, 2007; Bryant, Srnicek & Harman, 2011; Connolly, 2013).

However, the taking up of new materialisms is not merely a retreat into obscure philosophy. The diverse and divergent theoretical approaches that may be called new materialist often seek to explore the political effects of problematising the matter of fact ways in which we think of the world; troubling our pre-given ontologies. This process of critically considering established assumptions, modes of thought and methods of inquiry against 'new' theory has been characterized as an essential task in the face of driving ethical imperatives related to social and environmental justice and the commodification of research methods (St Pierre, Jackson & Mazzei, 2016).

Subsequently, new materialist theory has been identified as an emerging 'route' for environmental education. In *Environmental Education Research*, for instance Van Poeck and Lysgaard (2016, p.314) articulate how, amongst other approaches, claims of new materialists to operate beyond the strictly discursive may 'offer relevant and inspiring ideas, concepts, frameworks and findings to ESE policy research as well as the broader field of educational research'. Concurrently the new materialisms have been characterised as a new 'movement of thought' for outdoor environmental education research (Gough, 2016) as well as a theoretical area that might hold potential for interrogating various 'absences and silences' within environmental education research (Payne, 2016).

We see an emerging focus on the new materialisms in environmental education scholarship, putting diverse theory to work in consideration of prevailing educational practices and research (e.g.: Adsit-Morris, 2017; Clarke, 2017; Clarke & Mcphie, 2014, 2016; Gannon, 2017; Lynch & Mannion, 2016; Lysgaard & Fjeldsted, 2015; Malone, 2016; Mannion, Fenwick & Lynch, 2013; Mcphie & Clarke, 2015; McKenzie & Bieler, 2016; Rautio, 2014; Ross & Mannion, 2012; Sonu & Snaza, 2015). *This Special Issue will take up some of the themes explored by these authors and encourage new work that focuses on the potential of new materialisms and materially informed research approaches for contributing to discussions of theory and research in environmental education.*

Proposal Guidelines

We are aware of the broad perspectives within the new materialisms and see this Special Issue as appealing to diverse approaches and theory. It provides an opportunity to discuss the relevance of new materialisms to environmental education research and practice and to begin to articulate what environmental education inquiry and theory may in turn contribute to materially concerned thought in broader educational fields and beyond. Thus through this Special Issue, we hope to encourage engagement with these stimulating theories and that the SI acts as a confluence and catalyst for discussion and the further seeking of critical and ethical approaches to research and practice in environmental education.

At this stage we are seeking proposals of up to 1000 words, plus references. We encourage contributions from scholars working within and/or beyond the field of environmental education.

Full manuscripts should *critically engage with new materialist theory as well as literature in the field of environmental education and may be theoretical, methodological and/or practical and, indeed, may seek to transgress/dissolve these distinctions.*

Final manuscripts should be a maximum of 6,000 words, excluding references.

Possible topical areas of focus for this Special Issue include:

- The application of new materialist theories to cases, contexts and policy within environmental education;
- The diversity of new materialist theory, and the implications of different approaches in new materialisms *to* and/or *from* environmental education debates;
- Engagement with debates at the intersection of new materialisms and critical environmental education research. E.g. place-based research, Indigenous methodologies and/or 'post-qualitative research/new empiricisms';
- The commonalities and incommensurabilities of new materialisms with gender, race, Indigenous, post-colonial, and decolonizing perspectives in environmental education practice/research;
- The position of various new materialisms for conceptualising a distinct environment, nature, sustainability, or the subjects/objects (learner/educator/animal/plant/stone) of environmental education given various new materialist theories;
- Critiques of new materialisms and discussions of the nature of critique in environmental education scholarship given new materialist perspectives (e.g. Latour, 2004);
- Historical context and 'newness' of the new materialisms in relation to environmental and sustainability education theory and research;
- The 'environmental' and / or 'educational' ethics of new materialisms, including in relation to the point, purpose and practice of environmental education;
- New materialisms *as* environmental pedagogy.

Again transgression of topic areas are welcome. For more supplementary information on these areas and the Special Issue generally, visit: <http://bit.do/newmaterialismseer> (<http://bit.do/newmaterialismseer>).

Accepted proposals will be those that:

- show potential to make a significant contribution to the literature;
- have appropriate focus and content;
- have coherent research approaches and conclusions or implications; and
- can be understood by an international audience.

Additional factors to be considered in the acceptance of proposals will be geographical, epistemological, and role diversity across the special issue as a whole.

Consult the following for the aims and scope of the journal, and guidelines for manuscript preparation: <http://www.tandfonline.com/eer> (<http://www.tandfonline.com/eer>).

The reference style is Chicago: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/contents.html> (<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/contents.html>).

Submission Timeline

July 7, 2017	1000 word proposals due
August 7, 2017	Invitations for submission of full papers
February 7, 2018	Full manuscripts due
May 7, 2018	Reviews of manuscripts returned
August 1, 2018	Final manuscripts due – notification of final acceptance to issue
October, 2018	Tentative publication date

Submission Details

Send your proposal to David Clarke at david.clarke@ed.ac.uk (<mailto:david.clarke@ed.ac.uk>) and Jamie Mcphie at jamie.mcphie@cumbria.ac.uk (<mailto:jamie.mcphie@cumbria.ac.uk>) by July 7 2017. Please contact us with any questions.

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