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## Editorial

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**Monika Rogowska-Stangret (ORCID: 0000-0002-8317-8562)**

University of Bialystok

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The issue of “Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research” we offer our readers this summer consists of articles, texts, and reviews that undertake and address a variety of research topics, methodologies, and approaches within new materialisms. This issue is about putting theory into practice. Through this very gesture complex and multilayered entanglements and relationalities are revealed and questioned: How do biology, medical conditions, politics, and economy operate in performative conversations? How is an effort to produce knowledge otherwise permeated with bodily-technology and collective becomings beyond binary logics? How can human-non-human encounters challenge the object-subject division? How to look for “queerer forms of intimacy”, to create a “community of oddkin”, and “defamiliarize” the apparently familiar? How is neuroqueerdiversity experienced, felt from within, constructed, and performed? How might it guide us into more just human-more-than-human entangled worlds? The authors contributing to this issue are challenging readers with the above-mentioned questions which introduce a range of topics and approaches. We are invited to think about infertility through Karen Barad’s agential realism; we trace struggles to think the unthought together with Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s notion of rhizome and photography as research practice; we follow the reflection on female sex robots motivated by questions raised by psychoanalysis, phenomenology, and feminist philosophy; we are introduced to a children’s book series to search for the queerer forms of being-with human and more-than-human; and finally we embark on a journey through an autoethnographic account, informed by theories of affect, new materialisms, performativity as well as by the author’s art practice and experiences. All those rich and multifaceted analysis, meditations, and practices (theoretical, artistic, political) touch the heart of what new materialisms is (at least to my understanding): the entanglement of knowledge production and politics. Thus, thinking and practicing otherwise in research,

but also and at the same time, engaged in the practice of community building, being responsible for how knowledge is produced and performed as well as of imagining and bringing forth more just worlds.

Caynnã de Camargo Santos in *Doing Infertility: An Agential Realist Approach to the Experiences of Women with ‘Atypical’ Development of the Reproductive System* zooms into the topic of infertility associated with Mayer-Rokitansky-Küster-Hauser (MRKH) Syndrome. Showing the limits of traditional biomedical and sociological approaches that both – paradoxically – preserve biological determinism, the author puts agential realism to work demonstrating its potential to grasp infertility as performed, rather than a stable, determined, biological condition. Santos diffracts chosen accounts by interviewed women diagnosed with MRKH using notions from Barad’s vocabulary such as indeterminacy, posthuman performativity, material-discursive phenomena, and apparatus of bodily production, to think infertility otherwise – as a doing, not a given. In his analysis, meanings-bodies-politics-economics-medicine are dynamically grasped in the making as (re)producing infertility.

Lorena R. Bañares in her *Weaving Rhizomes in Photography Research* is invested into producing knowledge differently. Taking Deleuze and Guattari as her companions in disrupting dualistic logic to open the new, to encounter the (un)thought of, and to grasp thought-world in motion, Bañares experiments with photography as both artistic and research practice. The author’s practice puts together the dynamic nature of bodies-environments (what she calls “rhizomatic becomings”), human de-centering, inviting chance and contingency into the process, collective work, the apparatus of bodies-technologies (through camera prosthetics, bodies cameras), and the appreciation of the movement that always escapes efforts to stabilize it. Through reflecting on philosophical notions such as rhizome and sensing the becomings of photographic images

of Cambodian Angkor temples, readers are inspired to practice this experimentation themselves! Conscious of the limitations of such prescriptions, the author shares eight clues on how to “take the risk and uncover the sublime” in research-creation.

Gosia Wojas in *The Infallible and The Specter – Manifesting (Artificial) Subjectification in Female Sex Robots* performs an artistic-philosophical meditation on female sex robots. Aware of the rich history of artificial dolls that places readers in a sphere where fiction and reality, desire and fear, freedom and subjugation, utopian dreaming and dystopian nightmares intermingle and aware of the ongoing processes of objectivization of women’s bodies, the author embarks on a philosophical journey into imagining subjectification of female sex robots: objects with “subjectivity” potential. Asking, what would it “mean to embody subjecthood for this object”? Would it be emancipatory (for what/whom)? Who are “humans” face-to-face with an artificial “human”? What might the “self” be in the eyes of artificial “self”? And to paraphrase Jean Luc Nancy’s quote from the beginning of the article, can touching an artificial being be life itself?

Arwen Rosenberg-Meereboer in *Human-Animal Relationships, Silliness, and Queer Homemaking in Sven Nordqvist’s Pettson and Findus*, examines children’s book series that features a human named Pettson and his cat Findus as main characters. Relation between the two is a starting point to search for an insight into queer and more-than-human kinships and practices of home making that are grasped as multispecies and “multibeings” endeavours. This vision does not contribute to a harmonious life, it is marked by tears, lack of attunement, quarrels, and disagreements. But still it is infused with an effort to create a community of oddkin, “non-normative intimacies”, “defamiliarized” home-spaces, and “queerer forms of intimacy”. This is all possible thanks to – in Rosenberg-Meereboer’s words – the “proximity to insanity” of Pettson and his “queer silliness”. This feature allows him to be curious

“of what others assume is unimportant” (or obvious) and in result it enables Pettson “to enter into new and different forms of relation and action”.

Tània Codina in *The Journey of Late Diagnosis of Autism from an Autoethnographic, Neuroqueer, Affective and Performative Perspective* mobilizes autoethnography, critical disability studies (specifically – critical autism studies), affect theory, new materialisms, performative arts and theory to uncover, recover, and discover the “autistic way of being”, of voicing, of relating. She juxtaposes two approaches to autism: the pathology paradigm that contributed to the stigmatization of autistics and the proliferation of stereotypes concerning their condition, and the neurodiversity paradigm that appreciates mind-body differences. Codina brings together neuronormativity and heteronormativity to show how they work to pathologize, exclude, silence, and wipe out diverse communities. Through her own memories, video performance, and the concept of gender performance, the author offers a “neuroqueering” perspective to destabilize the *status quo* that defines what is superior, desirable, and “normal”. The efforts behind those reflections are not purely theoretical, Codina is engaged in thinking “a place of compassion and community” for all and constructing “bridges between all kinds of neurodiversities”.

Contributions in the section *Almanac and Affecting Affirmative Reviews* only strengthen some of the topics mentioned above.

Camilla Bernava in her entry on sympoiesis dives into the genealogy of the notion that stimulates seeing the world not through individual, separated entities, but through relationalities and entanglements to “restore multiplicity” rather than repeat the logic of the same.

Blanca Callén Moreu reviews the edited collection of essays entitled *Visual Participatory Arts Based Research in the City: Ontology, Aesthetics and Ethics* (2022) edited by Laura

Trafi-Prats and Aurelio Castro-Varela and gives the readers a chance to rethink the city by “break[ing] with human exceptionalism, centrality, and privilege”. What is the city? What might it be if we dare to re-imagine it “through the proliferation of encounters with the minor, the everyday, and the historically silenced (under-commons)?” “How can experiences of research based on participatory visual art help to make the city more habitable for everyone, outside of productivism and neoliberal logics?”, “more just for all, human and non-human”?

Sam Le Butt shares with the readers her reflections on *Spectrality and Survivance: Living the Anthropocene* (2022) by Marija Grech. Le Butt – following Grech – directs our attention to imperialist, colonial, and anthropocentric violences embedded in and percolating through the Anthropocene and ways it is narrated. Importantly, Le Butt stresses the author’s struggles to challenge those violences by attending not only to the question of materialism of textuality but also to the textuality of materialism and by not letting the question “who gets to survive in these futures” disappear.

Amanda Boetzkes reads *The Three Sustainabilities: Energy, Economy, Time* (2021) by Allan Stoekl to return to a notion of sustainability – one of “a curious position [...] insofar as it has been demystified as a shallow cultural covering that enables a closed economy rather than resolving global-scale ecological challenges”. Again, we are left with the critical question: “what/ who might it

[sustainability] sustain, and for what/ whom?”. Boetzkes thinks-with Stoekl’s efforts to understand the notion of sustainability otherwise – as a form of resilience: “the effort to embrace what should be resisted for the sustainability of humanity, and to adapt to the unstoppable passage of time and life into total death” and – following Stoekl – poses an important question: “what *collective* disposition will help us carry these thoughts in a lived way?”.

The authors in this volume invite readers to revisit the old paths and to forge new ones, asking us to rethink what and how we see, feel, conceptualize, create. They are trying to grasp the dynamic entanglements of the worlds of which humans and more-than-humans are parts so that “we” could see otherwise and then look again to – as Donna Haraway wrote in *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective* (1988) – “become answerable for what we learn how to see”, feel, research, diagnose, photograph, build communities and bridges, make homes and (odd)kins.

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### Author information

Monika Rogowska-Stangret

ORCID: 0000-0002-8317-8562

m.rogowska-stangret@uwb.edu.pl

Monika Rogowska-Stangret, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Philosophy, University of Białystok, philosopher conducting research at the intersection of feminist philosophy, environmental humanities, and critical posthumanism, translator. She was a member of the Management Committee in the

European project *New Materialism: Networking European Scholarship on "How Matter Comes to Matter"*, European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST), Action IS 1307 (2013-2018). She published in, among others, „Feminist Theory” (2020), „Philosophy Today” (2019), „The Minnesota Review: A Journal of Creative and Critical Writing” (2017). She is the editor-in-chief of “Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research”.