

2021 Virtual NeMLA Panel: Changing Worlds Through Material, Embodied Texts [Deadline Extended]

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Call for Papers

Date:

March 11, 2021 to March 14, 2021

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United States

Subject Fields:

Art, Art History & Visual Studies, Cultural History / Studies, Environmental History / Studies, Film and Film History, Literature

“Much contemporary fiction seems to me barren in part because it draws such tiny, cautious circles, in part because it pretends that nothing lies beyond its timid boundaries...what is missing...I feel, is any sense of nature, any acknowledgement of a nonhuman context.” In his critique of contemporary fiction, Scott Russell Sanders relies on a metaphor of circles to describe the apparent isolation of conventional literary work from the reality of physical ecosystems, an isolation that may lead to an absence of the substantive change of which the humanities boast.

This interdisciplinary panel aims to step outside of the tiny, cautious circles of Sanders’ criticism to examine the animated materiality of contemporary environmental texts and consider their agential potentiality. Though the power of language remains central within the humanities and serves as its principal contribution to social and political movements, we will extend beyond more traditional literary analysis of narratology and genre to an innovative, in-depth study of form and medium: the film of cinema and photography, the visibility of graphic drawings, the textuality of everyday objects, the physical layout of typographic symbols on a page.

As such, we will attempt to answer several key questions: How do authors/artists conceptualize then capture the environment around them? How do these tangible representations change historically, geographically, and culturally? How is the ecological made corporeal through different techniques, modes, textures? How might the materiality of language help to conceive of more ideologically embodied policies? The panel is interested in demonstrating the value of an interdisciplinary examination of the environment—broadly defined—not only by unearthing previously unseen narratives but also by clearly viewing form and medium as organic pieces in the puzzle of politically-embedded action. By thinking through the sensual nature of texts, we can better understand how the humanities may create a tangible, activist product outside of the timid boundaries of its past.

Please submit abstracts of ~300 words directly to <https://www.cfplist.com/nemla/Home/Login> by October 11, 2020. [Deadline Extended]

Contact Info:

2021 NeMLA Virtual Convention (<http://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/convention.html>)

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