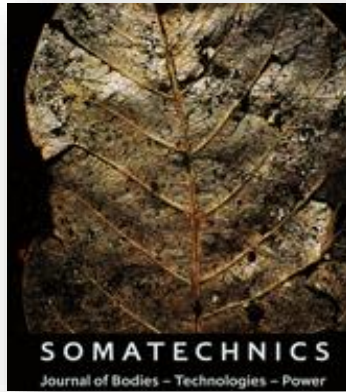


Call for papers:

“The Somatechnics of Violence: Affective, (Im)material and Digital Transformations.” Special issue of [*Somatechnics: Journal of Bodies – Technologies – Power*](#).¹



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Special issue editors: Evelien Geerts (University of Birmingham), Chantelle Gray (North-West University) & Delphi Carstens (University of the Western Cape)

A growing number of philosophical studies are arguing for new frameworks from which to theorise and grapple with contemporary forms of violence that escape the overdetermined representations thereof that ensued in the decade or so following 9/11 – which Jeffrey Di Leo and Uppinder Mehan aptly called critical ‘theory’s “ground zero”’ (2012: 16). While it is true that these attacks transformed current-day perceptions and theorisations of violence, the ensuing so-called Wars on Terror led to reductionist treatments thereof, thereby eliding the incredibly complex, multi-layered and lived phenomenon that violence is and which cannot be captured in universal frameworks but must, instead, be situated in its material, immaterial, affective and now digital contexts.

Such situated philosophical analyses of violence require a different vocabulary and world-reimagining methodologies: it is, we hold, no longer sufficient to merely address the impact that violence currently has through, for example, the Foucauldian (1980) idea of the apparatus – a contextual arrangement of discursive-material phenomena diagramming, and thus maintaining societal power relations, while shaping subjects. Neither does the Harawayan (1988: 591) ‘apparatus of bodily production’, which pays more attention to the intersecting lived categories of gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality and so on, suffice as an analytical

¹ This call for papers is connected to the ERC-sponsored “[Urban Terrorism in Europe \(2004-19\): Remembering, Imagining, and Anticipating Violence](#)” project at the University of Birmingham (ERC-2019-STG 851329) and the November 2021 “[\(Im\)materialities of Violence](#)” conference.

instrument. Although both Foucault and Haraway accurately theorise the differential mattering of embodied subjects and the violence inflicted during processes of (non-)mattering, today's societies, together with the myriad ways in which violence manifests itself, are rapidly changing. Driven by neoliberal governmentality, extractive capitalism and contemporary (counter-) terrorism, present-day societies of hyper-control are plagued by violent threats from multiple, often crisscrossing, directions engendered by interlinked macrostructures and microevents that combine the (im)material, discursive, digital and affective. We may think here, for example, of the violent – yet insufficiently emphasised – damage inflicted by white supremacy, institutionalised racism and racist microaggressions; the mob-inciting divisive rhetoric of neo-fascist populists pushing for alt-facts and alt-realities; the increase in affective disorders, driven by what Mark Fisher (2009) calls capitalist realism; material-immaterial infowars engendering algorithmic violence, fittingly described by Mimi Onuoha as 'violence that an algorithm or automated decision-making system inflicts by preventing people from meeting their basic needs' (2018: n. p.; also see Noble 2018; Bellanova et al. 2021); or the Anthropogenic-Capitalogenic ecocide unfolding itself and impacting transcorporeally entangled human and more-than-human worlds (see Alaimo 2016).

It would seem, then, that novel analytical perspectives are needed and this, as we would like to propose, can be found in what Joseph Pugliese and Susan Stryker (2009: 2-3), inspired by Foucault, have identified as a 'sometechnical assemblage'. Initially intimated by Nikki Sullivan (2005), but further developed by Joseph Pugliese and Susan Stryker, and later on also by Sullivan and Samantha Murray (2011: v) and Line Henriksen and Marietta Radomska (2015), somatechnics stands for 'the materialisation of embodied being[s]' or how they come to matter through processes of material-discursive-affective meaning-making. Bringing together the corporeal and the technological – which, according to a somatechnical perspective, are always already enmeshed – a somatechnics-focused analytical framework zooms in on the (un)making and (de)humanisation of corporeal beings, all while creating space for a much-needed ethico-political critique of the various types of violence these corporeal beings are forced to endure.

While we are open to a variety of frameworks and methodologies from which to theorise violence, we encourage special issue contributors to think beyond so-called shifts and similar epistemological paradigms that follow a logic of tracing – a way of thinking that fixes phenomena by means of neatly organised structures and representations (see Deleuze and Guattari 2005 for this critique). The reason for this is that we, in somatechnical fashion, would like to emphasise the entangled nature of the corporeal, incorporeal and the technological; the micro and the macro; as well as of humans, the more-than-human and the dehumanised – aspects brought into sharp focus by, for example, critical new materialist, posthumanist and Deleuzoguattarian philosophies (see e.g., Chen 2012; Braidotti 2013; Shotwell 2016). Or as Elizabeth Grosz has put it: When analysing violence, 'the incorporeal conditions of corporeality, the excesses beyond and within corporeality that frame, orient and direct material things and processes' need to be examined in relation to corporeality and material (infra)structures (Grosz 2017; Grosz in Grosz and Bell 2017: 5).

Suggested topics:

- the somatechnics of violence (with a focus on the embodied and more-than-bodily lived experience of violence, and that on either a collective or individual level);
- the (im)materiality of violence – political or other (e.g., disposability, dispossession, (neo-) colonialism, extractive capitalism and environmental violence, (bio-/)necropolitics in relation to somatechnics, which bodies come to matter and not matter through violence and its traumas, ...);
- (im)material violence, the affective and the hauntological;
- somatechnics-focused, critical new materialist, posthumanist and/or Deleuzoguattarian perspectives on violence;
- somatechnics-focused, critical cartographical and other related methodological takes on violence;
- the somatechnics of violence related to new digital realities;
- the somatechnics of violence in relation to identity politics; populist and (neo-)fascist politics and political resentment; infowars, alt-facts and alt-realities; algorithmic violence and/or other manifestations of digital violence – and the concrete impact the latter phenomena have on (individual and/or collective) embodied subjects, groups and entities.

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Timeline & submission details:

- **Abstract submission: October 31st, 2022**
- **Abstract acceptance/rejection notification: mid-November 2022**
- **Manuscript submission: March 31st, 2023**
- **Peer reviews received: May 31st, 2023**
- **Revised manuscripts due: August 31st, 2023**
- **Final manuscript due to EUP: November 30th, 2023**

We invite potential contributors to submit an abstract of 500 words by the 31st of October 2022. Please include the contact details and biographies (not included in the word count) of all of the contributors on the abstract document. Abstracts (and manuscripts) must be formatted according to Somatechnics' [author guidelines](#).

Please note that the initial acceptance of an abstract does not guarantee publication and that all manuscripts will undergo a double-blind review process. We strive toward diversity among our contributors in terms of career-stage, disciplines, self-identification and affiliation. We are happy to accommodate different accessibility needs. Please get in touch with (one of) the guest editors for any of these issues.

The author(s) should email their abstract proposal as a Word file to all of the guest editors: geerts.evelien@gmail.com, gray.chantelle@gmail.com, carstensdelphi@gmail.com. For more information, contact the guest editors.

More about the journal:

[*Somatechnics: Journal of Bodies – Technologies – Power*](#) is a journal that provides a forum for research on all things relating to 'the body', critically engaging with the technological, ethical and political implications of a wide range of practices, techniques and academic spaces. Articles present innovative debates in topics such as spatialization, race, reproduction, gender, sexuality, medicine, consumption, gaming, film, globalization, ecology, bioscience, family, education, health, visuality and more.

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Chantelle Gray (Ph.D.) is a contemporary Continental philosopher whose interests span critical algorithm studies, queer theory and gender studies, cognitive studies, anarchism and Continental philosophy, especially the work of Deleuze and Guattari. The interdisciplinary nature of her work allows her to ask critical questions about how to take care of humans, technologies and ecologies in the digital age. She is the co-convener of the biennial South African Deleuze & Guattari Studies Conference (www.deleuzeguattari.co.za) and serves on the editorial boards of *Somatechnics* and *Stilet*. Her books include *Deleuze and Anarchism*, co-edited with Aragorn Eloff (2019, Edinburgh University Press) and *Anarchism after Deleuze and Guattari* (2022, Bloomsbury).

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