

*Towards a 'New Materialism'?*

*Exploring Artifactuality and Material Culture in History of Science, Technology and Medicine*

A monthly Øresund reading symposium arranged by

History of Technology Division, Technical University of Denmark (DTU)/The Danish National Museum of Science and Technology, Medical Museion, University of Copenhagen, & Research Policy Institute, Lund University

The last decade have seen the appearance of a number of books pointing toward a growing interest in the role of material culture, material agency and 'artifactuality' inside as well as outside history of science, technology and medicine. One example is art historian W. J. T. Mitchell, main protagonists of the visual turn that supposedly supplanted the linguistic turn in the 1990s, in describing the anthology *Things That Talk* (2004) as an example of "advanced research in what might be called the 'new materialism.' Unlike the old materialism, which dreamed of a positive science, purified of linguistic accident, ideological prejudice, or fantasy, the new takes aim directly at the figuration and imaging of objects, factoids, and things."

To explore this potential 'artifactual turn' within recent history of science, technology and medicine the History of Technology Division, Technical University of Denmark in partnership with The Danish National Museum of Science and Technology; the Medical Museion, University of Copenhagen; and the Research Policy Institute, Lund University, invites researchers, curators and graduate students in the Øresund region and beyond to participate in a new reading symposium devoted to this 'new materialism'. It will meet once a month from October until June at a museum or research institution alternatively in Copenhagen and Lund/Malmö to discuss a book according to the list below. The symposia will take place 1-3pm for 2 hours of combined discussion and lunch followed by an optional tour of the hosting institution. The discussions will be in English or Scandinavian depending on the participants. We hope to be able to pay for all books and lunches for the participants.

**Schedule**

Thursday October 5, DTU, Lyngby

Lorraine Daston, ed., *Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science* (2004)

Thursday November 6, University of Lund, Lund

Andrew Pickering, *The Mangle of Practice: Time, Agency and Science* (1995)

Thursday December 7, Medical Museion, Copenhagen

Sharon Macdonald, ed., *Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture* (1997)

Thursday January 25, Museum in Copenhagen To Be Decided (TBD)

Bill Brown, ed. *Things* (2004)

Thursday February 22, Museum in Lund/Malmö TBD

Soraya de Chadarevian & Nick Hopwood, ed., *Models: The Third Dimension of Science* (2004)

Thursday March 22, Museum in Copenhagen TBD  
Larsson, ed., *Cultures of Creativity: Birth of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum* (2006)

Thursday April 19, Museum in Lund/Malmö TBD  
Peter Galison, *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics* (1997)

Thursday May 24, Museum in Copenhagen TBD  
Tim Dant, *Materiality and Society* (2005)

Thursday June 21, Museum in Lund/Malmö TBD  
Bruno Latour & Peter Weibel, ed., *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* (2005)

We expect to be able to accommodate all interested but if we will have to limit the number of participants we reserve the right to decide who can participate with priority to graduate students. It is not necessary to attend every meeting to participate but priority will be given to those expressing their intention in following the whole symposium. Those interested in participating should send an email expressing their interest by Thursday September 21 to symposium organizer Mats Fridlund, Associate Professor of History of Technology at DTU at [maf@dtv.dk](mailto:maf@dtv.dk). For the first seminar on October 5 the readings will be sent out electronically and for the following meetings books will be sent out in advance.

It is possible for graduate students to follow the reading group for credit as a 5 credit PhD-course given by teachers from DTU and Lund University. Students taking the course will be required to write comments on the readings, attend four additional seminars, give an introduction to one seminar and write a research paper. The conclusion of the PhD course would be a public symposium after the summer where the students present their final papers.

Welcome!