

SELECTED RESULTS 2023

Criteria	Contribution to knowledge
Output name	Getting angry with endocrine-disrupting chemicals Enfadarse con las sustancias químicas alteradoras endocrinas Enfadar-se amb les substàncies químiques alteradores endocrines
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Description of the output and justification of its significance

The article explores the pervasive presence of endocrine-disrupting chemicals and their potential impact on emotional well-being. Without an experimental model to definitively prove this connection, the article advocates for a speculative approach to address the uncertain yet potentially harmful effects of these chemicals. Published in *Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research*, an open-access, peer-reviewed journal indexed in ERIH PLUS, the article contributes to interdisciplinary dialogue on new materialism — an emerging field of inquiry that emphasizes embodied and materially embedded knowledge. This field bridges the humanities, science and technology studies (STS), and artistic and practice-based approaches to research. The journal, founded by art historian Iris van der Tuin, serves as a platform for such interdisciplinary exchanges. Since its publication on February 28, 2023, the article has gained significant attention, becoming the second most viewed in the journal that year (with 880 views). As of August 28, 2024, it holds the position of the most viewed article in 2024 (with 640 views).

Contribution to research on endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs)

EDCs are pervasive environmental compounds known to interfere with hormonal functions. Prolonged exposure to EDCs has been associated with adverse effects on human sexuality and reproductive health. While the growing awareness of these toxic threats has rightly garnered media attention, there has been an overemphasis on their impact on sex and sexuality, often overshadowing other serious health risks, such as cancer, autoimmune diseases, and metabolic disorders. This article highlights the overlooked impact of EDCs on brain chemistry and, consequently, on emotional well-being. To explore this, I developed the Endocrine Disruption Tracker Tool — a speculative instrument designed for collective investigative practice. This tool enables me, my research participants, and a broader community of concerned individuals to better understand how EDC exposure affects our emotions and to address the challenges posed by involuntary chemical exposure. By fostering responsive care relations, the ideas presented in the article pave the way for new approaches to research, ethics, and politics that are embodied, experientially and materially grounded, in their concerns about EDCs.

Contribution to artistic research

This article emerges from a collaborative effort with researchers across diverse fields, including art, science and technology studies (STS), environmental toxicology, medical and cultural anthropology, gender studies, evolutionary biology, genetics, and bioethics. It offers a comprehensive and multifaceted perspective on EDCs as bio-social agents that influence not only the biology of organisms but also

the social and cultural environments in which they exist. By integrating experimental and innovative methods — such as artistic research, multi-modal ethnography, and STS — the article demonstrates how these approaches can deepen our understanding of complex bio-social phenomena like endocrine disruption.

Key role of authors from BUT

This article is the product of interdisciplinary research led by Lenka Veselá from the Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA) at Brno University of Technology (BUT). The research was first presented publicly under the title “Keeping Track of the Anthropocene: Endocrine Disruption Tracker Tool” during the “Posthumanism/ New Materialism” panel at the 11th European Feminist Research Conference, held at the University of Milano-Bicocca from June 15–18, 2022. The panel was chaired by convenors Silvia Luraschi, Federica Timeto, and Sibel Yardımcı who later invited me to contribute to a special issue “Situating research on art, technological practices, and literature” that they were editing for *Matter*.

→ “Keeping Track of the Anthropocene: Endocrine Disruption Tracker Tool” in panel “Posthumanism/ New Materialism,” 11th European Feminist Research Conference *Social Change in a Feminist Perspective: Situating Gender Research in Times of Political Contention*, University of Milano-Bicocca, 15–18 June 2022, <https://11efrc.unimib.it/>

The ongoing results of research presented in the article have been shared at several prominent conferences and invited lectures, including:

- “Endocrine Disruption Tracker Tool” in the panel “Making and Doing Hormonal Theory,” at *4S EASST 2024: Making and Doing Transformations*, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, July 16–19, 2024. <https://www.easst4s2024.net/>
- “The Sadness of the Anthropocene” in the panel “Metabolic and Endocrine Disruptions,” at *Leakage: Inaugural Conference of STSing 2024*, TU Dresden, Germany, March 19–22, 2024. <https://sts-leakage.org/>
- “Getting Angry with Environmental Chemicals” in the panel “Collaborating with Matter: Explorations of New Feminist Materialism in Multiple Lifeworlds,” at *STS-CH Science, Expertise, and other Modes of Knowledge: Trends, Patterns, and Prospects*, Swiss Association for the Studies of Science, Technology & Society, University of Basel, August 31–September 1, 2023. <https://sts-ch.org/sts-ch-2023/>
- “Getting Angry With Environmental Chemicals,” at *Earth Sensations: Affects, Sensibilities and Attachments in an Era of Climate Change*, Aarhus Institute of Advanced Studies, Aarhus University, Denmark, October 13–14, 2022. <https://aias.au.dk/events/earth-sensations>
- “Getting Sad with Environmental Chemicals,” invited lecture for *Thinking Through Materialities: Insights from and for Gender Studies and Cultural Anthropology*, University of Basel, October 18, 2023. <https://genderstudies.philhist.unibas.ch/de/aktuelles/news/details/ringvorlesung-thinking-through-materialities-insights-from-and-for-gender-studies-and-cultural-anthropology/>
- “Mé chemické já: o životě s toxickými chemickými látkami (a navzdory jim)” [My Chemical Self: On Life With and Despite Toxic Chemicals], at *Antropologie, tělo a biotechnologie* [Anthropology, Body, and Biotechnologies], Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University, Brno, November 29, 2022.
- “Endocrine Disruption Tracker Tool,” at Toxic Futures and the Creative Process, Planet B — Module for Sustainability and Civilizational Issues, UMPRUM, October 27, 2022. <https://www.umprum.cz/en/web/about-umprum/sustainability/planet-b/toxic-futures-and-the-creative-process>

Additionally, the research was further developed during the Vienna Ethnography Lab: Relating Risks, organized by the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Vienna, September 28–30, 2022. <https://ksa.univie.ac.at/en/departament/events/vienna-ethnography-laboratories/>

Journal

Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research is a scientific, open-access, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and reflection on new materialism. The journal is indexed in ERIH PLUS, MIAR, and Latindex. Additionally, it is included in several bibliographical databases and open-access repositories, such as Dialnet, CRUE-REBIUN, CrossRef, BASE (Bielefeld University Library), PKP Index (Public Knowledge Project), ROAD, and RACO (Revistes Catalanes amb Accés Obert).

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Getting angry with endocrine-disrupting chemicals

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1344/jnmr.v7i1.42250>

Abstract

Endocrine-disrupting chemicals are industrially manufactured compounds that have the capacity to mimic or interfere with biosynthesis, metabolism, and the functions of bodily produced hormones. The ubiquity and persistence of endocrine-disrupting chemicals in the environment have raised concerns about their impacts on human as well as nonhuman life. How do these chemicals affect us? How do we interact with them? And how do we respond to the risks that they pose? My inquiry into how chemical endocrine disruptors affect us focuses upon the ways in which they can influence our emotions. I bring attention to how being exposed to them can disrupt our brain chemistry, and therefore our emotions, too. With the help of the Endocrine Disruption Tracker Tool—a speculative instrument for a collective investigative practice that I have created—I look into what we can learn about endocrine disruption if we consider how are emotions are affected. I have developed this tool to help me, my research participants, and a broader community of interested people to address the exigencies of our lives, as affected by involuntary chemical exposure, and to construct responsive care relations—paving the way for new approaches to research, ethics, and politics that are embodied, experientially and materially grounded, in their concerns about endocrine-disrupting chemicals.



<https://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/matter>
SEVENTH ISSUE (February 2023)
ISSN: 2049-7251



[PDF](#)

Published

2023-02-28 — Updated on 2023-03-01

Issue

[Vol. 7 \(2023\): Situating research on art, technological practices and literature](#)

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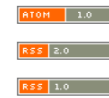


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