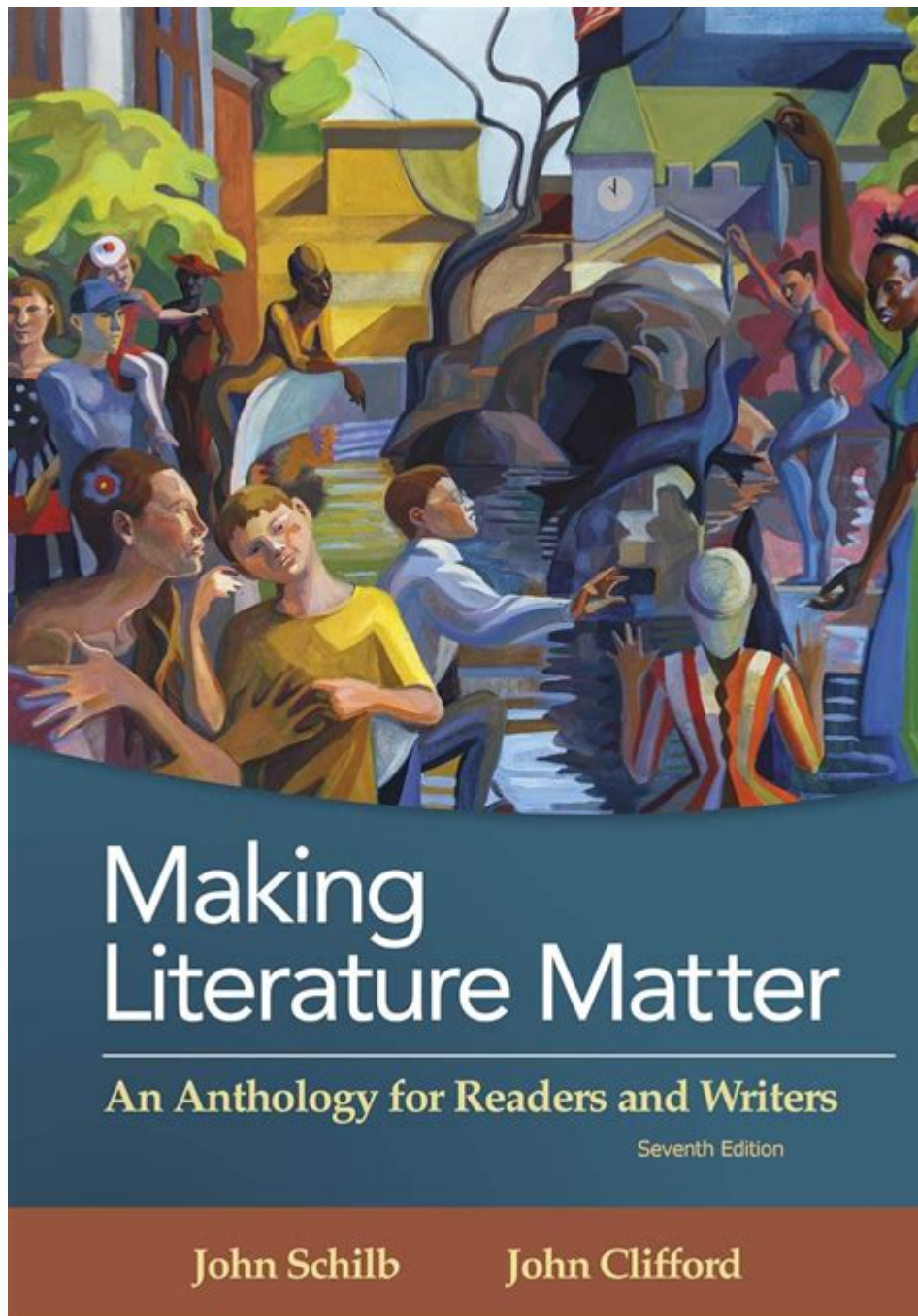


# Making Literature Matter



## **Making Literature Matter: Why Stories Still Shape Our World**

Introduction:

In an increasingly digital and data-driven world, the question often arises: Does literature still matter? In a world of instant gratification and fleeting trends, the seemingly slow and contemplative

act of reading can feel irrelevant. This post argues that not only does literature matter, but it's crucial for individual growth, societal progress, and a deeper understanding of the human condition. We'll explore the multifaceted ways literature impacts our lives, from fostering empathy and critical thinking to inspiring social change and preserving cultural heritage. Get ready to rediscover the enduring power of stories and why "making literature matter" is a mission worth pursuing.

## H2: The Power of Empathy: Stepping into Another's Shoes

Literature's most profound contribution might be its ability to foster empathy. By immersing ourselves in fictional worlds and exploring the lives of diverse characters, we develop a deeper understanding of perspectives different from our own. We experience the world through their eyes, grapple with their dilemmas, and share their triumphs and heartbreaks. This vicarious experience builds empathy, crucial for navigating an increasingly interconnected and complex world. Reading diverse voices, particularly those marginalized or underrepresented, expands our understanding of the human experience and challenges preconceived notions.

### H3: Beyond the Page: Empathy in Action

Empathy cultivated through literature translates into real-world action. By understanding the struggles and perspectives of others, we become more compassionate, tolerant, and engaged citizens. This translates into increased civic participation, a willingness to engage in constructive dialogue, and a greater capacity for understanding different cultures and beliefs. This isn't just about passive consumption; it's about actively using literature to broaden our horizons and build a more just and equitable society.

## H2: Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills: Deconstructing Narratives

Literature isn't just about passive consumption; it's an active engagement with language, ideas, and narratives. Reading complex texts encourages critical thinking. We analyze plot structures, character development, themes, and literary devices, honing our analytical skills in the process. This analytical approach extends beyond the realm of literature, improving our ability to critically evaluate information, identify biases, and form informed opinions in all aspects of life.

### H3: Developing Argumentation and Persuasion:

The study of literature strengthens argumentation and persuasive skills. By examining how authors build their arguments, use rhetoric, and create compelling narratives, we learn to structure our own arguments effectively. We learn to identify logical fallacies, construct persuasive narratives, and articulate our thoughts clearly and concisely – skills invaluable in academic settings, professional environments, and everyday life.

## H2: Literature as a Catalyst for Social Change: Voices of Resistance and Revolution

Throughout history, literature has served as a powerful tool for social change. From abolitionist writings to feminist manifestos, stories have been used to challenge injustice, expose oppression, and inspire movements for social reform. By giving voice to the marginalized and amplifying their experiences, literature can mobilize collective action and drive meaningful change. The power of storytelling to inspire and motivate remains a potent force in shaping societal values and promoting progress.

### H3: Preserving Cultural Heritage and History:

Literature acts as a powerful archive of cultural heritage and history. It preserves languages, traditions, and perspectives that might otherwise be lost. By reading the works of past generations, we gain insights into different cultures, historical events, and the evolution of human thought. This connection to the past enriches our understanding of the present and informs our vision for the future. The study of literature connects us to a broader human narrative, extending beyond our immediate experiences and time.

## H2: Personal Growth and Self-Discovery: Exploring the Human Condition

Literature allows us to explore the complexities of the human condition in a safe and reflective space. By encountering characters grappling with universal themes such as love, loss, betrayal, and redemption, we gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. Literature provides a mirror reflecting our own experiences and offering insights into the human psyche. It prompts self-reflection and encourages personal growth.

## Conclusion:

Making literature matter is not a matter of nostalgia or elitism; it's about recognizing its vital role in shaping individuals and societies. From fostering empathy and critical thinking to driving social change and preserving cultural heritage, literature remains a powerful force for good. By actively engaging with literature, we enrich our lives, enhance our understanding of the world, and contribute to a more just and compassionate society. Let's continue to champion the power of stories and make literature a cornerstone of a richer, more meaningful existence.

## FAQs:

1. How can I encourage my children to appreciate literature? Start young with engaging stories and diverse characters, make reading a fun family activity, and visit libraries and bookstores regularly. Let them choose books that interest them, and don't pressure them to read "classic" literature before they're ready.
2. Is it only "classic" literature that matters? No, contemporary literature, diverse voices, and genres like graphic novels and poetry all offer valuable contributions and perspectives.
3. How can literature help in professional development? Improved communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills honed through literature translate directly to the workplace.
4. What if I struggle with reading? Start with shorter works, audiobooks, or graphic novels. Find formats and genres that engage you, and don't be afraid to ask for help.
5. How can I contribute to making literature matter in my community? Support local libraries and bookstores, participate in book clubs, volunteer at literacy programs, and advocate for literature education in schools.

**making literature matter:** *Making Literature Matter* John Schilb, John Clifford, 2014-09-26  
Students have always responded powerfully to the memorable stories, poems, plays, and essays gathered in distinctive clusters in *Making Literature Matter's* thematic anthology. At the same time, the book's chapters on reading, writing and research help students harness those responses into

persuasive, well-supported arguments about the issues raised by the literature. As ever, the new edition of *Making Literature Matter* reflects John Schilb and John Clifford's careful attention to emerging pedagogical needs and trends. In response to instructor requests, they have expanded their treatment of argumentation and research, and refined their approach to literary genres. Further, they read widely to identify some of the most engaging fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction published recently, and based their new choices for the sixth edition on how well that literature raises and explores issues that matter to students right now.

**making literature matter: Making Literature Matter** John Schilb, 2012

**making literature matter:** *Making Literature Matter* John Schilb, John Clifford, 2017-12-28  
Become a better writer by writing about what interests you as *Making Literature Matter* clusters recent fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction around issues relevant to you today.

**making literature matter: Resources for Teaching Making Literature Matter**, 2012

**making literature matter: Making Literature Matter** John Schilb, John Clifford, 2005  
*Making Literature Matter* combines an innovative writing text with a uniquely organized anthology for introductory literature courses that emphasize critical thinking and writing. The third edition addresses new trends in literature and composition, with more instruction on writing arguments and unique clusters that pair literary and visual texts for analysis.

**making literature matter: Why Does Literature Matter?** Frank B. Farrell, 2018-07-05

Literature matters because... it allows for experiences important to the living out of a sophisticated and satisfying human life; because other arenas of culture cannot provide them to the same degree; and because a relatively small number of texts carry out these functions in so exceptional a manner that we owe it to past and future members of the species to keep such texts alive in our cultural traditions.—from Chapter One  
Frank B. Farrell defends a rich conception of the space of literature that retains its links to issues of self-formation and metaphysics and does not let that space collapse into just another reflection of social space. He maintains that recent literary theory has badly misread findings in the philosophy of language and the theory of subjectivity. That misreading, Farrell says, has tended to endorse ways of understanding literature that make one question why it matters at all. Farrell here opposes some recent theoretical trends and, through a mix of philosophical and literary studies, tells us why in his view literature does truly matter. Among the writers Farrell discusses are John Ashbery, Samuel Beckett, Amit Chaudhuri, Cormac McCarthy, James Merrill, Marcel Proust, Thomas Pynchon, Salman Rushdie, W. G. Sebald, and John Updike. The philosophers important to his arguments include Donald Davidson, Daniel Dennett, and Bernard Williams; G. W. F. Hegel, Martin Heidegger, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Ludwig Wittgenstein play roles as well. Among the literary theorists addressed are Stephen Greenblatt, Paul de Man, and Marjorie Perloff. In addition to his close readings of literary, philosophical, and critical texts, Farrell considers cultural studies and postcolonial studies more generally and speculates on the possible contributions of object-relations theory in psychology to the study of literature.

**making literature matter: Making Writing Matter** Ann M. Feldman, 2009-01-01  
Challenging more limited approaches to service learning, this book examines writing instruction in the context of universities fully engaged in community partnerships.

**making literature matter: Making Words Matter** Ambreen Hai, 2009-06-15  
Why should Salman Rushdie describe his truth telling as an act of swallowing impure "haram" flesh from which the blood has not been drained? Why should Rudyard Kipling cast Kim, the imperial child-agent, as a body/text written upon and damaged by empire? Why should E. M. Forster evoke through the Indian landscape the otherwise unspeakable racial or homosexual body in his writing? In *Making Words Matter: The Agency of Colonial and Postcolonial Literature*, Ambreen Hai argues that these writers focus self-reflectively on the unstable capacity of words to have material effects and to be censored, and that this central concern with literary agency is embedded in, indeed definitive of, colonial and postcolonial literature. *Making Words Matter* contends that the figure of the human body is central to the self-imagining of the text in the world because the body uniquely concretizes three dimensions of agency: it is at once the site of autonomy, instrumentality, and subjection. Hai's work

exemplifies a new trend in postcolonial studies: to combine aesthetics and politics and to offer a historically and theoretically informed mode of interpretation that is sophisticated, lucid, and accessible. This is the first study to identify and examine the rich convergence of issues and to chart their dynamic. Hai opens up the field of postcolonial literary studies to fresh questions, engaging knowledgeably with earlier scholarship and drawing on interdisciplinary theory to read both well known and lesser-known texts in a new light. It should be of interest internationally to students and scholars in a variety of fields including British, Victorian, modernist, colonial, or postcolonial literary studies, queer or cultural studies, South Asian studies, history, and anthropology.

**making literature matter: Loose-Leaf Version for Arguing about Literature: a Guide and Reader** John Schilb, John Clifford, 2020-12-14

**making literature matter: Why Race Still Matters** Alana Lentin, 2020-04-22 'Why are you making this about race?' This question is repeated daily in public and in the media. Calling someone racist in these times of mounting white supremacy seems to be a worse insult than racism itself. In our supposedly post-racial society, surely it's time to stop talking about race? This powerful refutation is a call to notice not just when and how race still matters but when, how and why it is said not to matter. Race critical scholar Alana Lentin argues that society is in urgent need of developing the skills of racial literacy, by jettisoning the idea that race is something and unveiling what race does as a key technology of modern rule, hidden in plain sight. Weaving together international examples, she eviscerates misconceptions such as reverse racism and the newfound acceptability of 'race realism', bursts the 'I'm not racist, but' justification, complicates the common criticisms of identity politics and warns against using concerns about antisemitism as a proxy for antiracism. Dominant voices in society suggest we are talking too much about race. Lentin shows why we actually need to talk about it more and how in doing so we can act to make it matter less.

**making literature matter: Stories Matter** Dana L. Fox, Kathy Gnagey Short, 2003 The controversial issue of cultural authenticity in children's literature resurfaces continually, always eliciting strong emotions and a wide range of perspectives. This collection explores the complexity of this issue by highlighting important historical events, current debates, and new questions and critiques. Articles in the collection are grouped under five different parts. Under Part I, The Sociopolitical Contexts of Cultural Authenticity, are the following articles: (1) The Complexity of Cultural Authenticity in Children's Literature: Why the Debates Really Matter (Kathy G. Short and Dana L. Fox); and (2) Reframing the Debate about Cultural Authenticity (Rudine Sims Bishop). Under Part II, The Perspectives of Authors, Illustrators, and Editors on Cultural Authenticity, are these articles: (3) Who Can Tell My Story? (Jacqueline Woodson); (4) 'Around My Table' Is Not Always Enough (W. Nikola-Lisa); (5) Authentic Enough: Am I? Are You? Interpreting Culture for Children's Literature (Susan Guevara); (6) The Candle and the Mirror: One Author's Journey as an Outsider (Judi Moreillon); (7) A Mess of Stories (Marc Aronson); (8) To Stingo with Love: An Author's Perspective on Writing Outside One's Culture (Kathryn Lasky); and (9) Multiculturalism Is Not Halloween (Thelma Seto). Under Part III, Political Correctness and Cultural Authenticity, are these articles: (10) Beyond Political Correctness (Hazel Rochman); (11) The Complexity of Debates about Multicultural Literature and Cultural Authenticity (Violet J. Harris); (12) 'Authenticity, ' or the Lesson of Little Tree (Henry Louis Gates, Jr.); and (13) Multicultural Literature and the Politics of Reaction (Joel Taxel). Under Part IV, The Perspectives of Educators on Cultural Authenticity, are these articles: (14) Can We Fly across Cultural Gaps on the Wings of Imagination? Ethnicity, Experience, and Cultural Authenticity (Mingshui Cai); (15) Accuracy and Authenticity in American Indian Children's Literature: The Social Responsibility of Authors and Illustrators (Elizabeth Noll); (16) Accuracy Is Not Enough: The Role of Cultural Values in the Authenticity of Picture Books (Weimin Mo and Wenju Shen); (17) Artistic Triumph or Multicultural Failure? Multiple Perspectives on a 'Multicultural' Award-Winning Book (Laura B. Smolkin and Joseph H. Suina); (18) Images of West Africa in Children's Books: Replacing Old Stereotypes with New Ones? (Vivian Yenika-Agbaw); and (19) Use of Spanish in Latino Children's Literature in English: What Makes for Cultural Authenticity? (Rosalinda B. Barrera and Ruth E. Quiroa). Under Part V, Connecting Cultural

Authenticity to the Classroom, are these articles: (20) Multiple Definitions of Multicultural Literature: Is the Debate Really Just 'Ivory Tower' Bickering? (Mingshui Cai); (21) The Trivialization and Misuse of Multicultural Literature: Issues of Representation and Communication (Zhihui Fang; Danling Fu; Linda Leonard Lamme); and (22) 'I'm Not from Pakistan': Multicultural Literature and the Problem of Representation (Curt Dudley-Marling). (NKA).

**making literature matter:** *Minders of Make-believe* Leonard S. Marcus, 2008 Marcus offers this animated history of the visionaries--editors, illustrators, and others--whose books have transformed American childhood and American culture.

**making literature matter: Matters of Care** María Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017-03-21 To care can feel good, or it can feel bad. It can do good, it can oppress. But what is care? A moral obligation? A burden? A joy? Is it only human? In *Matters of Care*, María Puig de la Bellacasa presents a powerful challenge to conventional notions of care, exploring its significance as an ethical and political obligation for thinking in the more than human worlds of technoscience and naturecultures. *Matters of Care* contests the view that care is something only humans do, and argues for extending to non-humans the consideration of agencies and communities that make the living web of care by considering how care circulates in the natural world. The first of the book's two parts, "Knowledge Politics," defines the motivations for expanding the ethico-political meanings of care, focusing on discussions in science and technology that engage with sociotechnical assemblages and objects as lively, politically charged "things." The second part, "Speculative Ethics in Antiecolological Times," considers everyday ecologies of sustaining and perpetuating life for their potential to transform our entrenched relations to natural worlds as "resources." From the ethics and politics of care to experiential research on care to feminist science and technology studies, *Matters of Care* is a singular contribution to an emerging interdisciplinary debate that expands agency beyond the human to ask how our understandings of care must shift if we broaden the world.

**making literature matter: The Politics Book** DK, 2015-03-02 Learn about how the world of government and power works in *The Politics Book*. Part of the fascinating Big Ideas series, this book tackles tricky topics and themes in a simple and easy to follow format. Learn about Politics in this overview guide to the subject, great for novices looking to find out more and experts wishing to refresh their knowledge alike! *The Politics Book* brings a fresh and vibrant take on the topic through eye-catching graphics and diagrams to immerse yourself in. This captivating book will broaden your understanding of Politics, with: - More than 100 groundbreaking ideas in the history of political thought - Packed with facts, charts, timelines and graphs to help explain core concepts - A visual approach to big subjects with striking illustrations and graphics throughout - Easy to follow text makes topics accessible for people at any level of understanding *The Politics Book* is a captivating introduction to the world's greatest thinkers and their political big ideas that continue to shape our lives today, aimed at adults with an interest in the subject and students wanting to gain more of an overview. Delve into the development of long-running themes, like attitudes to democracy and violence, developed by thinkers from Confucius in ancient China to Mahatma Gandhi in 20th-century India, all through exciting text and bold graphics. Your Politics Questions, Simply Explained This engaging overview explores the big political ideas such as capitalism, communism, and fascism, exploring their beginnings and social contexts - and the political thinkers who have made significant contributions. If you thought it was difficult to learn about governing bodies and affairs, *The Politics Book* presents key information in a clear layout. Learn about the ideas of ancient and medieval philosophers and statesmen, as well as the key personalities of the 16th to the 21st centuries that have shaped political thinking, policy, and statecraft. The Big Ideas Series With millions of copies sold worldwide, *The Politics Book* is part of the award-winning Big Ideas series from DK. The series uses striking graphics along with engaging writing, making big topics easy to understand.

**making literature matter:** *How Literature Changes the Way We Think* Michael Mack, 2011-12-01 >

**making literature matter:** *Stay Woke* Tehama Lopez Bunyasi, Candis Watts Smith, 2019-09-24 The essential guide to understanding how racism works and how racial inequality shapes black lives,

ultimately offering a road-map for resistance for racial justice advocates and antiracists When #BlackLivesMatter went viral in 2013, it shed a light on the urgent, daily struggles of black Americans to combat racial injustice. The message resonated with millions across the country. Yet many of our political, social, and economic institutions are still embedded with racist policies and practices that devalue black lives. Stay Woke directly addresses these stark injustices and builds on the lessons of racial inequality and intersectionality the Black Lives Matter movement has challenged its fellow citizens to learn. In this essential primer, Tehama Lopez Bunyasi and Candis Watts Smith inspire readers to address the pressing issues of racial inequality, and provide a basic toolkit that will equip readers to become knowledgeable participants in public debate, activism, and politics. This book offers a clear vision of a racially just society, and shows just how far we still need to go to achieve this reality. From activists to students to the average citizen, Stay Woke empowers all readers to work toward a better future for black Americans.

**making literature matter: Bring on the Books for Everybody** Jim Collins, 2010-06-30 Bring on the Books for Everybody is an engaging assessment of the robust popular literary culture that has developed in the United States during the past two decades. Jim Collins describes how a once solitary and print-based experience has become an exuberantly social activity, enjoyed as much on the screen as on the page. Fueled by Oprah's Book Club, Miramax film adaptations, superstore bookshops, and new technologies such as the Kindle digital reader, literary fiction has been transformed into best-selling, high-concept entertainment. Collins highlights the infrastructural and cultural changes that have given rise to a flourishing reading public at a time when the future of the book has been called into question. Book reading, he claims, has not become obsolete; it has become integrated into popular visual media. Collins explores how digital technologies and the convergence of literary, visual, and consumer cultures have changed what counts as a "literary experience" in phenomena ranging from lush film adaptations such as *The English Patient* and *Shakespeare in Love* to the customer communities at Amazon. Central to Collins's analysis and, he argues, to contemporary literary culture, is the notion that refined taste is now easily acquired; it is just a matter of knowing where to access it and whose advice to trust. Using recent novels, he shows that the redefined literary landscape has affected not just how books are being read, but also what sort of novels are being written for these passionate readers. Collins connects literary bestsellers from *The Jane Austen Book Club* and *Literacy and Longing in L.A.* to *Saturday* and *The Line of Beauty*, highlighting their depictions of fictional worlds filled with avid readers and their equations of reading with cultivated consumer taste.

**making literature matter: Why I Write** George Orwell, 2021-01-01 George Orwell set out 'to make political writing into an art', and to a wide extent this aim shaped the future of English literature - his descriptions of authoritarian regimes helped to form a new vocabulary that is fundamental to understanding totalitarianism. While *1984* and *Animal Farm* are amongst the most popular classic novels in the English language, this new series of Orwell's essays seeks to bring a wider selection of his writing on politics and literature to a new readership. In *Why I Write*, the first in the *Orwell's Essays* series, Orwell describes his journey to becoming a writer, and his movement from writing poems to short stories to the essays, fiction and non-fiction we remember him for. He also discusses what he sees as the 'four great motives for writing' - 'sheer egoism', 'aesthetic enthusiasm', 'historical impulse' and 'political purpose' - and considers the importance of keeping these in balance. *Why I Write* is a unique opportunity to look into Orwell's mind, and it grants the reader an entirely different vantage point from which to consider the rest of the great writer's oeuvre. 'A writer who can - and must - be rediscovered with every age.' — *Irish Times*

**making literature matter: Equipment for Living** Kenneth Burke, 2010-03-10 *Equipment for Living: The Literary Reviews of Kenneth Burke* is the largest collection of Burke's book reviews, most of them reprinted here for the first time. In these reviews, as he engages famous works of poetry, fiction, criticism, and social science from the early 20th century, Burke demonstrates the prominent methods and interests of his influential career.

**making literature matter: *Becoming Human*** Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, 2020-05-19 Winner, 2021

Gloria E. Anzaldúa Book Prize, given by the National Women's Studies Association Winner, 2021 Harry Levin Prize, given by the American Comparative Literature Association Winner, 2021 Lambda Literary Award in LGBTQ Studies Argues that Blackness disrupts our essential ideas of race, gender, and, ultimately, the human Rewriting the pernicious, enduring relationship between Blackness and animality in the history of Western science and philosophy, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiblack World* breaks open the rancorous debate between Black critical theory and posthumanism. Through the cultural terrain of literature by Toni Morrison, Nalo Hopkinson, Audre Lorde, and Octavia Butler, the art of Wangechi Mutu and Ezrom Legae, and the oratory of Frederick Douglass, Zakiyyah Iman Jackson both critiques and displaces the racial logic that has dominated scientific thought since the Enlightenment. In so doing, *Becoming Human* demonstrates that the history of racialized gender and maternity, specifically anti-Blackness, is indispensable to future thought on matter, materiality, animality, and posthumanism. Jackson argues that African diasporic cultural production alters the meaning of being human and engages in imaginative practices of world-building against a history of the bestialization and thingification of Blackness—the process of imagining the Black person as an empty vessel, a non-being, an ontological zero—and the violent imposition of colonial myths of racial hierarchy. She creatively responds to the animalization of Blackness by generating alternative frameworks of thought and relationality that not only disrupt the racialization of the human/animal distinction found in Western science and philosophy but also challenge the epistemic and material terms under which the specter of animal life acquires its authority. What emerges is a radically unruly sense of a being, knowing, feeling existence: one that necessarily ruptures the foundations of the human.

**making literature matter:** *Joe-Joe the Wizard Brews Up Solids, Liquids, and Gases* Eric Braun, 2012 A young wizard learns the differences between solids, liquids, and gases.

**making literature matter: The Renaissance** Walter Pater, 1910

**making literature matter:** *Farsighted* Steven Johnson, 2018-09-06 Plenty of books offer useful advice on how to get better at making quick-thinking, intuitive choices. But what about more consequential decisions, the ones that affect our lives for years, or centuries, to come? Our most powerful stories revolve around these kinds of decisions: where to live, whom to marry, what to believe, whether to start a company, how to end a war. Full of the beautifully crafted storytelling and novel insights that Steven Johnson's fans know to expect, *Farsighted* draws lessons from cognitive science, social psychology, military strategy, environmental planning, and great works of literature. Everyone thinks we are living in an age of short attention spans, but we've actually learned a lot about making long-term decisions over the past few decades. Johnson makes a compelling case for a smarter and more deliberative decision-making approach. He argues that we choose better when we break out of the myopia of single-scale thinking and develop methods for considering all the factors involved. There's no one-size-fits-all model for the important decisions that can alter the course of a life, an organization, or a civilization. But *Farsighted* explains how we can approach these choices more effectively, and how we can appreciate the subtle intelligence of choices that shaped our broader social history.

**making literature matter: Be Kind** Pat Zietlow Miller, 2018-02-06 A thoughtful picture book illustrating the power of small acts of kindness, from the award-winning author of *Sophie's Squash*.

**making literature matter: How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read** Pierre Bayard, 2010-08-10 In this delightfully witty, provocative book, literature professor and psychoanalyst Pierre Bayard argues that not having read a book need not be an impediment to having an interesting conversation about it. (In fact, he says, in certain situations reading the book is the worst thing you could do.) Using examples from such writers as Graham Greene, Oscar Wilde, Montaigne, and Umberto Eco, he describes the varieties of non-reading-from books that you've never heard of to books that you've read and forgotten-and offers advice on how to turn a sticky social situation into an occasion for creative brilliance. Practical, funny, and thought-provoking, *How to Talk About Books You Haven't Read*-which became a favorite of readers everywhere in the hardcover edition-is in the end a love letter to books, offering a whole new perspective on how we read and absorb them.



**making literature matter: American Literature and the Long Downturn** Dan Sinykin, 2020-02-20 Apocalypse shapes the experience of millions of Americans. Not because they face imminent cataclysm, however true this is, but because apocalypse is a story they tell themselves. It offers a way out of an otherwise irredeemably unjust world. Adherence to it obscures that it is a story, rather than a description of reality. And it is old. Since its origins among Jewish writers in the first centuries BCE, apocalypse has recurred as a tempting and available form through which to express a sense of hopelessness. Why has it appeared with such force in the US now? What does it mean? This book argues that to find the meaning of our apocalyptic times we need to look at the economics of the last five decades, from the end of the postwar boom. After historian Robert Brenner, this volume calls this period the long downturn. Though it might seem abstract, the economics of the long downturn worked its way into the most intimate experiences of everyday life, including the fear that there would be no tomorrow, and this fear takes the form of 'neoliberal apocalypse'. The varieties of neoliberal apocalypse--horror at the nation's commitment to a racist, exclusionary economic system; resentment about threats to white supremacy; apprehension that the nation has unleashed a violence that will consume it; claustrophobia within the limited scripts of neoliberalism; suffocation under the weight of debt--together form the discordant chord that hums under American life in the twenty-first century. For many of us, for different reasons, it feels like the end is coming soon and this book explores how we came to this, and what it has meant for literature.

**making literature matter: Arguing About Literature: A Guide and Reader** John Schilb, John Clifford, 2016-12-09 More and more, first- year writing courses foreground skills of critical analysis and argumentation. In response, *Arguing about Literature* first hones students' analytical skills through instruction in close critical reading of texts; then, it shows them how to turn their reading into well-supported and rhetorically effective argumentative writing. From the authors of the groundbreaking and widely adopted *Making Literature Matter*, *Arguing about Literature* economically combines two books in one: a concise guide to reading literature and writing arguments, and a compact thematic anthology of stories, poems, plays, arguments, and other kinds of texts for inquiry, analysis and research. The second edition includes even more instruction in the key skills of argumentation, critical reading, and research, while linking literature more directly to the newsworthy current issues of today.

**making literature matter: *Reckoning with Matter*** Matthew L. Jones, 2016-11-29 From Blaise Pascal in the 1600s to Charles Babbage in the first half of the nineteenth century, inventors struggled to create the first calculating machines. All failed—but that does not mean we cannot learn from the trail of ideas, correspondence, machines, and arguments they left behind. In *Reckoning with Matter*, Matthew L. Jones draws on the remarkably extensive and well-preserved records of the quest to explore the concrete processes involved in imagining, elaborating, testing, and building calculating machines. He explores the writings of philosophers, engineers, and craftspeople, showing how they thought about technical novelty, their distinctive areas of expertise, and ways they could coordinate their efforts. In doing so, Jones argues that the conceptions of creativity and making they exhibited are often more incisive—and more honest—than those that dominate our current legal, political, and aesthetic culture.

**making literature matter: *News That Matters*** Shanto Iyengar, Donald R. Kinder, 2010-10-15 Almost twenty-five years ago, Shanto Iyengar and Donald R. Kinder first documented a series of sophisticated and innovative experiments that unobtrusively altered the order and emphasis of news stories in selected television broadcasts. Their resulting book *News That Matters*, now hailed as a classic by scholars of political science and public opinion alike, is here updated for the twenty-first century, with a new preface and epilogue by the authors. Backed by careful analysis of public opinion surveys, the authors show how, despite changing American politics, those issues that receive extended coverage in the national news become more important to viewers, while those that are ignored lose credibility. Moreover, those issues that are prominent in the news stream continue to loom more heavily as criteria for evaluating the president and for choosing between political candidates. "*News That Matters* does matter, because it demonstrates conclusively that television

newscasts powerfully affect opinion. . . . All that follows, whether it supports, modifies, or challenges their conclusions, will have to begin here.”—The Public Interest

**making literature matter:** *Rescuing Socrates* Roosevelt Montas, 2023-03-21 A Dominican-born academic tells the story of how the Great Books transformed his life—and why they have the power to speak to people of all backgrounds What is the value of a liberal education? Traditionally characterized by a rigorous engagement with the classics of Western thought and literature, this approach to education is all but extinct in American universities, replaced by flexible distribution requirements and ever-narrower academic specialization. Many academics attack the very idea of a Western canon as chauvinistic, while the general public increasingly doubts the value of the humanities. In *Rescuing Socrates*, Dominican-born American academic Roosevelt Montás tells the story of how a liberal education transformed his life, and offers an intimate account of the relevance of the Great Books today, especially to members of historically marginalized communities. Montás emigrated from the Dominican Republic to Queens, New York, when he was twelve and encountered the Western classics as an undergraduate in Columbia University’s renowned Core Curriculum, one of America’s last remaining Great Books programs. The experience changed his life and determined his career—he went on to earn a PhD in English and comparative literature, serve as director of Columbia’s Center for the Core Curriculum, and start a Great Books program for low-income high school students who aspire to be the first in their families to attend college. Weaving together memoir and literary reflection, *Rescuing Socrates* describes how four authors—Plato, Augustine, Freud, and Gandhi—had a profound impact on Montás’s life. In doing so, the book drives home what it’s like to experience a liberal education—and why it can still remake lives.

**making literature matter: A Reader's Manifesto** B. R. Myers, 2002 Including: A response to critics, and: Ten rules for serious writers, the author continues his fight on behalf of the American reader, arguing against pretension in so-called literary fiction, naming names and exposing the literary status quo.

**making literature matter:** *Making Literature Matter with 2009 MLA Update* John Schilb, John Clifford, 2010-07-12 Prepared by editors whose scholarship fuses literary and composition studies, *Making Literature Matter* combines a comprehensive writing text with a uniquely organized anthology for introductory literature courses that emphasize critical and academic writing. What makes literature matter? Writing about it — argumentatively. The writing text helps students learn to analyze literature and develop responsible and persuasive claims about it — making it matter to them as it hasn’t before. Reading it — when it explores issues that matter. The stories, poems, plays and essays in the anthology are uniquely organized into thematic clusters focusing on life issues that speak to students and evoke their engaged response.

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relationship between the subject and object, the human and the nonhuman, this volume shows how literature and post-anthropocentric theory can illuminate each other in mutually productive ways. Focusing on how the study of literature is an underdeveloped field within 'the material turn', the introduction and each of the eleven chapters examine ways in which new materialist and object-oriented theory opens the study of literature in new ways just as they demonstrate the deep entanglements in literature of human and nonhuman realities. The collection includes an Afterword by Timothy Morton and hands-on analyses and close readings of individual works by such diverse writers as Hans Christian Andersen, Djuna Barnes, Sylvia Plath, Georges Perec, Ayi Kwei Armah, Jeanette Winterson and Paolo Bacigalupi. Sten Pultz Moslund is Associate Professor in Comparative Literature at the University of Southern Denmark Marlene Karlsson Marcussen holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from the University of Southern Denmark where she is currently affiliated as an external lecturer. Martin Karlsson Pedersen holds a Master of Arts in Comparative Literature from the University of Southern Denmark where he is currently affiliated as an external lecturer.

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