

PHILOSOPHY

E-Co-Affectivity is a philosophical investigation of affectivity in various forms of life: photosynthesis and growth in plants, touch and trauma in bird feathers, the ontogenesis of human life through the placenta, the bare interface of human skin, and the porous materiality of soil. Combining biology, phenomenology, Ancient Greek thought, new materialisms, environmental philosophy, and affect studies, Marjolein Oele thinks through the concrete, living places that show the receptive, responsive power of living beings to be affected and to affect. She focuses on these localized interfaces to explain how affectivity emerges in places that are always evolving, creative, porous, and fluid. Every interface is material, but is also “more” than its current materiality in cocreating place, time, and being. After extensively describing the effects of the milieu and community within which each example of affectivity takes place, in the final chapter Oele adds a prescriptive, ethical lens that formulates a new epoch beyond the Anthropocene, one that is sensitive to the larger ecological, communal concerns at stake.

“This is a very welcome contribution to environmental philosophy. The strikingly original thesis is evident in the book’s title: what we call ‘ecology’ is a co-affectivity—the mutuality of affecting and being affected on the part of species, biological kingdoms, ecosystems, etc. Here, Marjolein Oele melds biology and ontology in new and creative ways, enriching both fields. Her book performs the very theme it explores: it stages a co-affective relation between philosophy and the life sciences.”

— Michael Marder, author of *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*

Marjolein Oele is Professor of Philosophy at the University of San Francisco. She is the coeditor (with Gerard Kuperus) of *Ontologies of Nature: Continental Perspectives and Environmental Reorientations*.

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Exploring *Pathos*
at Life’s Material Interfaces

Marjolein Oele

