

# **LITERATURE**

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## **SPECIAL ISSUE**

# What is the Role of Literature Now?

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Guest Editor:

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Questions for the Special Issue,  
but not limited to these:

Must “literature” be redefined? With people now reading on average less than twenty minutes per day, If “literature” is to remain relevant must its definition expand to include multimedia, social media, video games, etc.? Should it include all forms of “story”? If so, how can quality standards be maintained?

What is the practical value or function of literature in contemporary society?

Why should literature remain/become a required subject in schools today?

Can literature help us solve pressing inter-species problems such as climate change and pandemics? What genres of literature are best for these purposes? Apocalyptic or Post-Apocalyptic Fiction such as McCarthy’s *The Road*? Realist fiction such as Kingsolver’s *Flight Behavior*? Prophetic poetry like Yeats’s “Second Coming”? Sacred poetry such as Hopkins’s “God’s Grandeur”?

Can the evocation of emotion in literature generate energy to deal with climate change and pandemics as well as it does with racism, sexism, classism?

Can literature teach us how to convey positive emotions in social media stories to attract more readers than the anger, hatred, and fear generated by conspiracy stories?

Can literature still critique contemporary society, making the invisible visible? Can it reveal the plots and values and offer alternatives not just to conspiracy stories but also to the current master and family narratives, as well as the disciplinary paradigms of the sciences?

Can literature continue to make the reader a better person: more ethical, more compassionate, more whole?

What role does literature play in contemporary interdisciplinary research projects on emotion and neurobiology?

How could the new rationality of context dependency in the biological sciences benefit from the thousands of years of literary and linguistic explorations of the meanings of words dependent on context?

How could explanation and promulgation of the new biomedical logic, epitomized in [OneHealth](#), be improved by drawing on the use of paradox and other holistic traditions and techniques in literature? (One "brief" example, Hopkins's "Pied Beauty")

For the new logic of biology see Robert M. Sapolsky, *Behave: The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst*. 2018. Kindle Edition, pp.265, 386.

How does the use of literature in bibliotherapy relate to research on emotional intelligence in ethics and mental health?

How can literature improve emotional literacy?

How can literature show us the relationships between feelings and how to manage them?

*Submit by November 30,2021*