A New Materialisms Poetics of Touch: David Eastham’s *Understand: 50 Memowriter Poems*

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In 1985, the Ottawa-based poet David Eastham published *Understand: 50 Memowriter Poems*, a book that is widely considered to be the first published autobiography by an autistic person. Despite being mentioned in various academic texts as a "first," his work has received no sustained analysis in the field of Canadian literature to date. This paper considers the strategic incompatibilities inherent to the epistemologies of biomedicine and disability studies using Eastham's work as literal and metaphorical contact point, problematizing and reconciling the epistemologies using a dialectical method in the hopes of encouraging future collaborations that might benefit both knowledge traditions.

**Learning objective:** Understand what "new materialisms" are and how they can inform disability consciousness so as to usefully counteract the biomedical episteme.

**References:**


