



# Press Release

## Unsel'd Lecture on the relationship between mankind and nature

### Sociologist and philosopher Bruno Latour at the University of Tübingen

Dr. Karl Guido Rijkhoek  
Director

Antje Karbe  
Press Officer

Phone +49 7071 29-76788  
+49 7071 29-76789

Fax +49 7071 29-5566  
karl.rijkhoek[at]uni-tuebingen.de  
antje.karbe[at]uni-tuebingen.de

[www.uni-tuebingen.de/aktuell](http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/aktuell)

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Human beings are not superior rulers over nature, but are closely intertwined with it; we are symbiotic creatures of Gaia. That is the theory of French sociologist and philosopher and Bruno Latour, whose Gaia theory argues that global progress is an undesirable utopia. The topic of the 2017 Unsel'd Lecture is Political Ecology; Latour will outline and discuss his theory. Latour is known for his work in the area of investigation into the impact of science and technology, which has received the critical attention of researchers across the disciplines, particularly in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

### Unsel'd Lecture events

The 2017 Unsel'd Lecture includes the following events:

- **Public lecture: Tuesday, 30 May, 8:15 pm**, Audimax, Geschwister Scholl Platz - Professor Latour speaks on "Facing Gaia: An European View."
- **Public discussion:** The podium discussion "Political Ecology and the Meander of Modernity" takes place between Bruno Latour and Professor Dorothee Kimmich (Neuere deutsche Literatur, University of Tübingen) on **Wednesday, 31 May at 8:15 pm** in the Audimax (Neue Aula, Geschwister Scholl-Platz, 72074 Tübingen).

These events are in English. All welcome; admission is free. Bruno Latour will also participate in the annual **International Master Class**, discussing his work with 20 junior researchers.

### Guest speaker Bruno Latour

Latour was director of the MediaLab at Sciences Po Paris (2006-2017) and a guest professor at Cornell University in Ithaca, USA. He was a

Professor of Sociology at Sciences Po between 2006 and 2015. From 1982 to 2006 he taught at the École des Mines de Paris. Latour has been a visiting professor at the University of California San Diego, the London School of Economics, and at Harvard University.

Since the 1980s, Latour and his colleagues have been developing the actor-network theory, which says that science is influenced by a network consisting of ideas and people as well as technical and social factors. He criticises the modern world's perception of itself and the belief that nature and human culture can be kept separate. In recent years, Latour has been active in political ecology and has further developed his Gaia theory.

He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holder of several honorary doctorates.

Key publications: *We have never been modern*. (1993); *Pandora's hope: essays on the reality of science studies*. (1999); *Reassembling the social: an introduction to actor-network-theory*. (2005); *Facing Gaia. Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime* (2017).

The Unselde Lectures are sponsored by the Udo Keller Foundation Forum Humanum and Suhrkamp Verlag publishers.

Further information: <http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/en/facilities/zentrale-einrichtungen/forum-scientiarum/events/unseld-lectures.html>

**Contact:**

Dr. Niels Weidtmann  
University of Tübingen  
Forum Scientiarum  
Phone: +49 7071 40716-12  
[niels.weidtmann@fsci.uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:niels.weidtmann@fsci.uni-tuebingen.de)

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**Suhrkamp Verlag**

The Suhrkamp publishing house was founded in 1950 by Peter Suhrkamp. It incorporates Insel Verlag, the Deutsche Klassiker Verlag, the Jüdischer Verlag and the Verlag der Weltreligionen, with Edition Unselde launched in 2008.