

Walking with theory: feminist materialist/ posthumanist encounters with objects, bodies and spaces

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Feminist materialist and posthumanist thinking presumes that matter and discourse are entangled and co-constitutive and that neither is foundational. Instead, matter is conceptualised as agentic and all sorts of bodies, not just human bodies, are recognised as having agency. This radical move has profound ontological, epistemological and ethical consequences; it raises serious methodological questions about how we do qualitative research, and how knowledge in posthuman times can come to matter differently. Drawing on the work of Karen Barad (2007), Jane Bennett (2010), Rosi Braidotti (2013) and Donna Haraway (2015) the workshop is a feminist materialist/ posthumanist theory-praxis engagement with a *dérive* – that is, a playful, political walk or stroll – which activates walking with theory as a means to unsettle anthropocentrism. The workshop invites participants to co-compose a research space for experimental encounters. It puts to work a practice of walking with theory to attend to everyday things that we don't normally notice or accord value to, and to bring to the fore the value of affective, sensory, embodied and relational research practices. Drawing throughout on aspects of Carol's experimental research practice-ings and theoretical thinking, this workshop is structured as a three-part research-creation process: an initial theoretical orientation; a participatory, experimental feminist materialist/ posthumanist *dérive* where participants will get away from their computer and go for a short walk; and a critical, collaborative speculative wondering regarding the matter and meaning which emerges.

Carol Taylor is a Professor of Higher Education and Gender in the Department of Education at the University of Bath where she is Director of Research and leads the Learning, Pedagogy and Diversity Research cluster. Carol's research focuses on the entangled relations of knowledge, power, gender, space and ethics in higher education and utilizes trans- and interdisciplinary feminist, new materialist and posthumanist theories and methodologies. Carol has written a number of books. Her latest book is Knowledge in Material Spaces (2021) (with Fairchild et al.) London: Routledge. Previous books include Taylor, C. A., Ulmer, J., and Hughes, C. (Eds.) (2020) Transdisciplinary Feminist Research: Innovations in Theory, Method and Practice. London: Routledge; Taylor, C. A. and Bayley, A. (Eds.) (2019) Posthumanism and Higher Education: Reimagining Pedagogy, Practice and Research. London: Palgrave Macmillan, and Taylor, C. A., Abbas, A. and Amade-Escot, C. (Eds.) (2019) Gender in Learning and Teaching: Feminist Dialogues across International Boundaries. London: Routledge. Carols work is widely published in international journals Carol is co-editor of the journal Gender and Education, and serves on the Editorial Boards of Teaching in Higher Education, Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning and Journal of Posthumanism.

