



Intimate Entanglements

A two-day Workshop brought to you by The Sociological Review Foundation and
The University of York's Sociology Department/Science & Technology Studies Unit (SATSU)

Date: Monday 19th to Tuesday 20th February 2018, 09.30-16.30 both days

Venue: York Medical Society (<http://yorkmedsoc.org/index.html>)

Monday 19th February 2018, 09.30-17.00

09.30-10.00	Registration and refreshments
10.00-10.15	Welcome and Introduction: Joanna Latimer (University of York) & Daniel López Gómez (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)
10.15-11.30	<p>Dangerous liaisons: intimacy, technology and experiments in resistance Joanna Latimer (SATSU, University of York)</p> <p>Visualising antibiotics in antibiotic resistance Catherine Will (University of Sussex)</p> <p>Provocateur: Harriet Smith (Goldsmiths College, University of London)</p> <p>2 papers (20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions</p>
11.30-11.45	Refreshments
11.45-13.00	<p>Metagenome, contagion and the figure of the twins Florence Chiew (Macquarie University) Ashley Barnwell (University of Melbourne)</p>

	<p>Care and intimacy in patient accounts of genomic profiling in early stage breast cancer Emily Ross (University of Edinburgh)</p> <p>Provocateur: Nik Brown (SATSU, University of York)</p> <p>2 papers (20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions</p>
13.00-14.00	Lunch
14.00-15.15	<p>Dog Words; or, how to think without language. Mariam Motamedi-Fraser (Goldsmiths College, University of London)</p> <p>Openness and the politics of animal experimentation: Intimacy and engagement through dancing across discursive divides Carrie Friese, London School of Economics and Political Science (Skype).</p> <p>Provocateur: Greg Hollin (University of Leeds)</p> <p>2 papers (20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions</p>
15.15-15.30	Refreshments
15.30-16.45	<p>Don't touch/push me! From alienation to intimacy in wheelchairs users. Myriam Winance (CR INSERM, CERMES3, Villejuif, Paris)</p> <p>Technologies of friendship: In search for a diverse common world. Tomás Sánchez Criado, (MCTS, TU Munich)</p> <p>Provocateur: Wendy Martin (Brunel University)</p> <p>(20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions</p>
16.45-17.00	Closing remarks day 1

Tuesday 20th February 2018, 09.00-16.30

09.30-10.00	Refreshments
10.00-11.15	<p>"Living in the Parts of Others" in Conversation with Marilyn Strathern. Joanna Latimer (York)</p> <p>The Uses of Intimacy. Rachel O'Neill (York)</p> <p>Provocateur: Mark Carrigan (TSR)</p> <p>2 papers (20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions</p>
11.15-11.30	Refreshments
11.30-12.45	<p>Objectual companionship: Intimating with objects at the end of their lives Blanca Callen (BAU Design College, Barcelona) Daniel López (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona)</p> <p>Speculative Knowing: The Lure of Intimate Entanglements in Excavations</p>

	Kevin Pijpers (University of Leicester). Provocateur: Dr Emilie Whitaker (University of Salford) 2 papers (20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions
12.45-13.45	Lunch
13.45-15.00	Data intimacies: building infrastructures for intensified embodied encounters with air pollution Nerea Calvillo (University of Warwick) & Emma Garnett (King's College, London) Aesthetics and Affect: Engaging Energy Communities Mike Michael (University of Exeter) Alex Wilkie (Goldsmiths, University of London) Liliana Ovalle (Goldsmiths, University of London) Provocateur: Rachel O'Neil (University of York) 2 papers (20 minutes each) and 30 minutes for questions
15.00-15.15	Refreshments
15.15-15.55	The climate of the ward: Affective atmosphere in secure forensic psychiatric care Paula Reavey (London South Bank University), Ava Kanyeredzi (University of East London), Laura McGrath (University of East London), Ian Tucker (University of East London), Steven D. Brown (University of Leicester) Provocateur: Anne Kerr (University of Leeds) 1 paper (20 minutes) and 15 minutes for questions
15.55-16.25	Closing discussion and goodbye

ABSTRACTS (in order)

Joanna Latimer, "Dangerous liaisons: intimacy, technology and experiments in resistance and transformation"

'Intimacy' has been seen as a quality of relations that is not just counter to professionalism, objectivity and scientific methodologies, but even as dangerous to their modes of ordering. Within this perspective intimacy as a quality of relations has traditionally been relegated to the sexual, the domestic, the personal and the family. Intimacy has had no place as a quality of scientific knowledge-making or other kinds of professional work. Indeed, knowledge produced as an effect of intimate relations can be disruptive of the mainstream because it can assert an alternative imaginary to those versions of reality which dominate. Because of this intimacy and affect as critical to the making of professional and scientific worlds, leads to struggles in mundane communities of practice (see for example Kroell 2011), and to their absence from dominant versions of knowledge-making and science (e.g. Latimer & Miele 2013). Drawing on Strathern's (1991) notion that humans do not so much as have relations directly with one another, but rather that relations are created through the materials of extension to which they attach and detach, I explore how moments of intimacy in the novel "The Cellist of Sarajevo" by Steven

Galloway are created outside the *durée* of oppressive and violent regimes of power through attachment and detachment to and from various kinds of technology (such as smoking a cigarette, and playing and listening to music), processes that are deeply characterized by affective intra-action. I explore how intimacy as a quality of these relations helps create collective and intermittent sites of alterity and resistance through reasserting a sense of belonging, solidarity and humanity. I end by reflecting upon my current research that experiments with possibilities for creating biosocial understandings of ageing with life scientists. This research depends upon (some, at the very least) life scientists and I being taken inside, and affected by, each other's world-making. Here I explore the possibilities for a methodology that deliberately promotes 'being alongside' (Latimer 2013), and a quality of intimacy, with the subjects and objects of research. I examine how such relations of intimacy are emergent, on for example our attaching and detaching to and from specific kinds of materials, and speculate on whether these processes of attachment and detachment facilitate experiments in collectivity, alterity and even resistance to our respective entanglements in relations of power.

Catherine Will, "Visualising antibiotics in antibiotic resistance"

Since the 1960s antibiotics have become embedded in modern medical practice, and thus in our lives, as treatments for bacterial infections of different kinds. This explains current fear about the social consequences of growing resistance to existing classes of the drugs among policy makers and health professionals. In this brief presentation I introduce representations from campaigns by the European Centre of Disease Control on this issue over the last decade. Antibiotic resistance understood as a property of bacteria is difficult to show visually - though some mobilisation has been attempted around the idea of dangerous bacteria or 'superbugs'. However, the ECDC campaigns have largely framed more mundane messages. These ask people across the Union to reduce 'unnecessary use' of antibiotics for common infections, which they argue are often viruses making antibiotic use ineffective as well as wasteful. Starting from the depictions of antibiotics themselves, both direct and those generated through analogies, I explore the versions of antibiotics made in these campaigns through representations of drugs as both familiar and risky, weak and powerful, and the relationship between the messages aimed at the general public and scientific efforts to understand resistance as a constantly changing property of bacteria made through and with bodies.

Florence Chiew & Ashley Barnwell, "Metagenome, contagion and the figure of the twins"

In mythology twins represent both dualism and entanglement. Saturated with archetypal meaning, the twin unsettles divisions between nature and culture and – in its various incarnations as the double, doppelganger, shadow, or fetch – it troubles the notion of a unique, bounded self. Interestingly, new research in the field of human social genomics suggests that the figure of the twins may be a fertile site to unpack what is at once a novel scientific question and an age-old riddle about self and other, identity and difference. This paper draws on the concept of a 'metagenomic system', as championed by social genomics researchers, to explore the precarious intimacy of twins. At the heart of the metagenome is the profound empirical finding that the environments we inhabit, and even more

significantly our perceptions of those environments, including the presence of other people's emotions and perceptions, have a palpable effect at the level of gene expression. In exploring the tension between hardwired dis/similarity and social contagion through the figure of the twins, we consider novel ways to address identity and intimacy within the ontological turn, drawing on insights from sociological theory, new materialisms, affect theory and feminist science studies.

Emily Ross, "Care and intimacy in patient accounts of genomic profiling in early stage breast cancer"

In her book 'The Logic of Care', Mol invites us to reflect on the meaning of care in the context of an emphasis on 'choice' in contemporary medicine. In this presentation, I draw on Mol's work to make sense of women's accounts of a gene expression profiling test (Oncotype DX), mobilised to aid treatment choices in early stage breast cancer. I show how and where women sited 'good care', which entailed, among other activities, intimate and subtle forms of work to 'wheedle out' clinician recommendations and advice. I discuss how, in decision making surrounding chemotherapy, the results of gene expression profiling became entangled with cultural representations of chemotherapy, embodied experience, tumour characteristics and patients' 'inklings', to come together as a specific choice which is necessarily one-dimensional whilst being experienced as dispersed and precarious. In a context of fear surrounding cancer recurrence, and tensions surrounding attempts to predict the future which remains uncertain and unknowable, the test is ascribed with a particular power. The meanings women give to the test have implications for sociologists and clinicians, as genomic techniques become ever more visible within clinical practice.

Mariam Motamedi-Fraser, "Dog Words; or, how to think without language"

In her moving account of love, death, and dogs, Laurie Anderson (Heart of a Dog, 2015) describes a short trip she took with her rat terrier, with the intention of establishing how many words Lolabelle knew. Anderson soon abandoned that project in favour of a far richer experience of their relationship, one that was shaped by their shared cliff-top environment. Vicki Hearne would surely have approved. For it is not words themselves that serve as a measure of intimacy but rather, she argues, the contract that 'the command of language' instils in a dog. If a dog and a handler have learned to talk, she writes, then the dog, '[a] trained dog, a dog with a vocabulary,' can be considered to be 'sane and trustworthy' (Hearne, Adam's Task, 2007, 24). This is where the vocabularised dog differs from the signing primate: the signing primate may well use words and speak in 'language' but, unlike the dog, this does not mean that she or he assents to the terms of the discussion (Hearne, 2007, 40). Intimacy follows from assent to the command of language.

This paper begins from the premise, shared with Cary Wolfe, that 'your theory of language matters, and it matters not just epistemologically ... or methodologically ... [but] because all sorts of consequences, both ontological and ethical, follow in its wake' (Wolfe, What is Posthumanism?, 2010, 47). Cartesian theories of language, in which language is a short-cut to interiority, thinking and reason, have historically defined and delimited the assumption of human exceptionalism. Today however, two forces, often in tension with each other, are reshaping this assumption. On the one (experimental, and often extensionalist) hand, the 'cognitive revolution' in animal sciences suggests that many

nonhuman animals are 'capable of interacting with us in rich and even recursive linguistic domains' (Maturana and Varela in Wolfe, 2010, 37). On the other (philosophical) hand, numerous theorists protest that human cognition does not necessarily involve language at all. For Derrida, for example, [i]t would not be a matter of "giving speech back" to animals, but perhaps of acceding to a thinking, however fabulous and chimerical it might be, that thinks the absence of the name and of the word otherwise, as something other than a privation' (Derrida in Wolfe, 2013, 47).

In this paper I seek to contribute to these debates by asking whether the posthumanist evisceration of language necessarily also requires the evisceration of words ('the absence of ... the word'). Building on previous work, in which I have explored what is done and undone when words are released from word-word associations and enter into multi-dimensional collaborations with other sorts of creatures (Motamedi Fraser, Word, 2015), I suggest that the anchoring of words in language not only betrays a latent anthropocentrism but also, more importantly, stands in the way of more nuanced understandings of how words 'work' in human-animal relations. By attending to the specifics of handler-dog word work in particular, I argue that a focus on non-linguistic word-relations – on the sound, feel, touch, taste, place, position, speed, and direction of words – potentially illuminates both human-animal intimacies, as described by Hearne, as well as human-word intimacies that could be described as animal.

Carrie Friese, "Openness and the politics of animal experimentation: Intimacy and engagement through dancing across discursive divides"

This paper explores the use of dance as a technology of intimate communication. It describes a project that uses dance to bring various human animals together, people who generally avoid engaging with one another as a matter of ideology and even personal safety: scientists and animal technicians with animal right activists and vegans with members of the ambivalent public. Different and always already political ways of being engaged and entangled with nonhuman animals has divided these different groups of people. Language and discourse tends to reify this divide; we already know what scientists, vegans and the ambivalent public are likely to say about the use of laboratory animals in the life science research. No one is likely to change their mind as a result of discursive contact, including both their opinions about the topic of laboratory animal research and the character of those who seek to promote their way of being entangled with nonhuman animals. In this context, the author is working with an artist and a choreographer in order to bring these different people together, and to explore the trope of 'openness' in laboratory animal research through dance. The goal of the project is not for scientists and animal technicians, animal rights activists and vegans or members of the ambivalent public to change their mind regarding the ethics of laboratory animal research. The goal is instead to be more open to the perspectives and experiences of others who are entangled with nonhuman animals in different kinds of ways. Rather than emphasize speech or text in expressing these perspectives and experiences, the workshops and ultimate performance art piece emphasize dance as a means to express one's perspectives and experiences and to hear the perspectives and experiences of others in a bodily manner. The unease that comes when dancing with someone else as an amateur dancer is here scaled up to address the unease that comes with expressing one's position to another with whom one disagrees. The different affective registers experienced in the process will be the focus of much of the papers. But through these intimate entanglements between those who disagree on the

ethics of laboratory animal research we seek the potential to find better ways of engaging with not only one another as human animals, but also nonhuman animal species.

Myriam Winance, “Don’t touch/push me! From alienation to intimacy in wheelchairs ‘uses”

At the beginning of the 2000 years, authors (Law, 1999; Moser, 1999; Moser & Law, 1998) have taken the case of disability to analyze how relations to technology could take part in the emergence of subjectivities and identities, of able or disabled bodies. They endeavor to describe empirically and in detail how peoples’ abilities and inabilities are defined through heterogeneous networks made of human and non-humans, and how different forms of subjects can emerge from these configurations. They suspend the idea that an autonomous individual subject exists and ask themselves how this type of subject is formed: through what discourses, which practices, what objects or techniques, etc. In this frame, abilities and disabilities are understood as emergent qualities of those heterogeneous networks. More precisely, those authors have shown that the qualities of our Western subjectivity—autonomous, centered, articulated, rational—were performed through relationships, in an empirical and local manner. They have also shown that other forms of subjectivities: passive, decentred, silent, etc., could emerge from those relationships. In my paper, I will question this approach and prolong it with an analysis of the nature of the relationships that disabled people might have with the technology they use to compensate for their disabilities. I will analyze the different modalities of this relationship exploring its affective dimensions (Despret, 1999, 2004; Gomart & Hennion, 1999), that is the feelings people have for their technology, the way they take care of it or not, the intimacy or distance that exists and that is shaped between them. I will identify five modalities of relating between the user and her/his technical aid: dehumanizing, instrumenting, functioning, appropriating, attaching. I will show that each modality results in a different “person”, a different body (having dis/abilities, having different contours or frontiers) and a different subjectivity. My analysis will be based on interviews (around 60) conducted with wheelchairs users between 2007 and 2009.

Tomás Sánchez Criado, “Technologies of friendship: In search of a diverse common world”

The intense co-existence afforded in Spanish *indignados* protests by public space occupations had the unexpected effect of forging unprecedented relations and forms of affective politicisation. This had a huge impact in the activism around 'functional diversity:' transforming a self-representational fight by independent-living activists to substitute 'dis/ability' and 'residential care' framings into a wider exploration on how to enjoy and do things together with previously strange others. Drawing on my ethnographic engagement in the activist design collective *En torno a la silla* (ETS) emerging in that context, I will explore the register of friendship to narrate the intimate entanglements developed thereon: reclaiming the means to increase the conditions of access between bodily diverse people they delved into processes of collaborative prototyping and spatial intervention to remediate disabling body-environment nexuses impeding them to develop stronger bonds; and crafted meetings and documentation interfaces to articulate or share the experiences there made available, making newer alliances possible. From the very beginning their aim was not just the 'inclusion' of 'disabled people' through newer 'technical aids', but the sheer experimentation with spaces of encounter, bringing to the fore what ETS referred to as

‘technologies of friendship.’ Far from referring to ready-made commodities enabling a distinctive and static ontology of relations, this term designates frail and careful cosmopolitical explorations of the appropriate forms of relatedness, a recursive material opening up of friendship between bodily diverse strangers who might otherwise never meet were it not for their troublesome search for inhabiting and forging a diverse common world.

In Conversation with Marilyn Strathern: “Living in the Parts of Others”.

This piece will be based upon an interview with Marilyn Strathern to explore her ideas about attachment and detachment, partial connection and how persons are the effects of the different relations they are entangled in.

Rachel O’Neill, “The Uses of Intimacy”

In this talk I discuss my experiences researching the ‘seduction community’, a cultural formation that promises heterosexual men greater control in their intimate lives through a compendium of practical training and personal development programmes. While making use of research and theory from fields such as business management and evolutionary psychology, the seduction community elaborates its own distinctive system of expertise organised around the premise that the affective and embodied dynamics of attraction and desire can be deliberately staged. Particular emphasis is placed on emotional orchestration, with choreographed displays of spontaneity and cultivated performances of authenticity deployed to exploit the unwritten feeling rules of heterosexuality. Researching this community-industry – a project that involved a combination of media analysis, participant observation and interviews – has involved considerable ambiguities and ambivalences. In reflecting on these, I address long-standing concerns regarding intimacy and relationality in feminist fieldwork. I focus in particular on arguments made by Judith Stacey in her provocative 1988 essay: ‘Can there be a feminist ethnography?’ Stacey’s critique – which calls on researchers to acknowledge the strategic nature of our relationships with research participants, whatever else we may intend for them – takes on particular significance in the context of this project. After all, what distinguishes the researcher who seeks to establish rapport for the purposes of research from the seducer who attempts to conjure affinity as a means to procure sex?

Blanca Callen & Daniel López, “Objectual companionship: Intimating with objects at the end of their lives”

The material turn in social theory has put the study of objects in the centre of any attempt to understand the production of social order, but only recently their affectivity has become an important issue. Even in STS where objects have been approached as “actants” that actively participate in the material composition and decomposition of various socio-natural orderings, their affectivity has rarely been explored. Scholars such as Stengers (2010), Haraway (2008), Latimer (2013), Despret (2004; 2013) and Hennion (2004; 2007) have made important contributions in this regard. They have brought to the forefront the affective entanglements between humans and non-humans as constitutive of various ecologies of knowledge production. Our contribution aims to further pursue this in relation

to practices of maintenance, repairing, mending and conservation of everyday objects. These practices reveal the fragility of the ecologies we inhabit and their study entails recounting the never-ending production of imperfect adjustments to sustain fragile objects, infrastructures and bodies (Denis & Pointille 2015; Jackson 2013; Henke 1998; Ureta 2014; Graham & Thrift 2007). However, in most of these stories the affective attachments that bond us with these objects are usually taken for granted.

We propose the notion of intimate entanglements to explore, in the context of consumption economies and quick disposal practices connected to planned obsolescence, how objects come to matter to us, what makes us care for them (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011), and how they might become companions. To do so, we have interrogated people from different ages and rural and urban contexts about the reasons and conditions that move them to keep and maintain certain objects while discarding some others. These latter objects were donated to the project "Objection" (<http://www.fundaciotapies.org/objections/en>) and analysed in detail from a sensorial and material perspective, trying to balance the pre-eminence of human discourses in social sciences. The notion of intimate entanglements will enable us to approach various objectual biographies as stories of companionship and becoming with these objects (Haraway 2008), where the self is accounted as a figure that holds and is affected by the encounter with the multiple. By doing this we will be able to explore objectual affectivity while questioning anthropocentric approaches to objects' sociality in social theory. The consequences this shift may have for the political ecology of discard and maintenance studies will be explored as it promises to shed some light on the critical moments when keep, care or maintenance are definitely activated (or not).

Kevin Pijpers, "Speculative Knowing: The Lure of Intimate Entanglements in Excavations"

This presentation comes at archaeological knowing from a speculative side. It wonders about 'the knowing done by archaeologists' when epistemological questions themselves have been abandoned (James and Kuklick, 1987, p. 979; Stengers, 2008). Emphasising instead, with Isabelle Stengers (2000), the archaeological excavation as an adventure, knowing then becomes a matter of nurturing what 'gathers us together' at a field site. How is knowing fabricated in these experiential situations, populated by an intimate multiplicity of objects, tools, plants, animals, recording sheets, photographs, soil, and others? How does the researcher's bodily ability to relate play into the crafting of new archaeological knowledge?

Following encounters between archaeologists and some of these others in the form of photographs taken by the presenter, these questions address the contingency of intimate entanglements, as well as the methodological dedication to such contingency. Archaeological artefacts, made by a multiplicity of historical bodies, and transformative chemical processes over the course of at least centuries, highlight the importance of traces left by intimate encounters between multiple actors.

It is suggested that speculative knowing can partially follow these traces and residues of past encounters in crafting a history of events. This actively embeds the archaeologists themselves into an intimate assembly of an entangled past. As medium of experience, and memory of the past, the archaeologist's excavation labour therefore seems particularly interesting for a politics of relations in present times (see Benjamin, 1999). Can the labour invited by these intimate entanglements contribute to the conception of a different politics of relations?

Nerea Calvillo and Emma Garnett, “Data intimacies: building infrastructures for intensified embodied encounters with air pollution”

The air is, in many urban contexts, polluted. Governments and institutions monitor particles and gases’ concentrations to better understand how they perform and to make predictions. The visibility of this data is considered crucial for citizens to manage their own health, for which all sorts of apps are have been created. And yet, beyond everyday decisions (when to use a mask or when to do sports outdoors), it is not clear whether these apps produce behavioural change or other modes of stronger citizen engagement with air pollution. Drawing on the design, construction and ethnography of an urban infrastructure to measure, make visible and remediate particulate matter (PM2.5) through a water vapour cloud that we installed at the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism 2017, we will inquire the effects and affects created by this physical interaction with the data, to explore if more intimate encounters with air particles’ data create different forms of engagement with air pollution.

Mike Michael, Alex Wilkie, Liliana Ovalle, “Aesthetics and Affect: Engaging Energy Communities”

This exploratory paper discusses a particular role for ‘aesthetics’ in empirically enacting and practically analysing Public Engagement with Science and Technology (PEST). We draw specifically on a particular research project with members of energy communities (communities directly involved in the processes of energy demand reduction). In particular, we designed and implemented an ‘engagement’ event to enable (energy) publics’ potential apprehensions of particular issues, or ‘matters of concern’. To this end, the paper reports on a ‘probe workshop’ in which participants were asked to complete three ‘probe exercises’. These exercises were designed as tasks that were in some respects unusual, that is, tangential to the usual ways of thinking about energy demand reduction. The aim was to facilitate a more ‘aesthetic’ reading of such standard elements of energy demand reduction as ‘energy’, ‘community’ and the ‘future’. Part of the point of the workshop was to see whether such probes prompted more critical and creative engagement with the potentiality entailed in energy demand reduction. While there was some evidence of this speculative – what we call ‘semblomatic’ – engagement, it was also clear that the participants had recourse to more traditional – that is, ‘anaesthetic’ - ways of thinking about ‘energy’, ‘community’ and the ‘future’. However, we also subjected the completed probes to own aesthetic reading. Accordingly, we strove to derive ‘matters of potentiality’ through which to ‘energy demand reduction’ could be rethought as holding out a range of engagement possibilities.

Paula Reavey, Ava Kanyeredzi, Laura McGrath, Ian Tucker & Steven D. Brown, “The climate of the ward: Affective atmosphere in secure forensic psychiatric care”

The idea that a ward environment can be evaluated in terms of a specific 'climate', defined in terms of social relationships, experiences of safety, therapeutic environment etc.,

is well embedded in secure psychiatric care. However, the conception of psychological space as something that is 'measurable' that can be extracted from relationships is highly problematic, not least in its lack of concern for the qualitative aspects of the interpersonal and sociomaterial relationships. Drawing on the work of Kathleen Stewart (2011), we propose a concept of 'affective atmospheres' that are constituted by 'feelings of affordance' (see Brown & Reavey, 2015). In this chapter, we present material from a study of a large medium-secure forensic psychiatric unit in the UK to demonstrate that attunement to the affective atmospheric conditions of life on the ward is a key capacity for both staff and patients. We also describe how the unanticipated consequences of design decisions around the built environment can have significant consequences for the atmosphere and, consequently, for what care and recovery means in these spaces.

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS NOT BEING PRESENTED

Maria Puig de la Bellacasa, "Nitrogen fixations: stories of destruction and healing in a time of deranged biochemical cycles"

Bodies are nitrogen passers. Nitrogen makes blood red, and leafy plants green. It is needed to build up protein, and DNA. To make the stuff of life. We say we breath oxygen, but nitrogen constitutes 78% of the atmosphere. And yet in this gaseous atmospheric form, nitrogen does not affect hardly anything, it is indifferent to living encounters with plants and animals. To be "used", scientist tell us, it needs to be "fixed" in its "reactive" form (Nr). Until the early 20th century, nitrogen fixation could only be accomplished by bacteria, in a symbiotic mutualistic relation with specific plants, the invisible intimacy of a root nodule. As human needs for nitrogen grew, this rare slow process couldn't keep up. But once science and industry, fuelled by nationalism, managed to force indifferent N to react in industrial proportions it opened a new era, first for war and then for agricultural production, changing the face of the planet in less than 50 years. Today nitrogen is in excess in most industrialised environments. Yet, as an anthropocenic scene, this excess humanness manifests in its more than human effects for instance the quasi-hallucinatory beauty of blue-green algal blooms. An essential nutrient for life as we know it, in excess it is seen as deadly, nurturer of wondrous growths and alarming lifeforms that imbalance ecosystems and choke environments. The priced Nr has become today a culprit of nutrient pollution, the initiator of a cascade of environmental destruction. "Too much of a good thing" is a motto in contemporary nitrogen policy. And so, reactive nitrogen is not just a chemical compound, it is an industrialised political economy that traverses bodies and reconfigures affective ecologies. Engaging with the imaginaries of nitrogen excess this paper looks at more than human disconcerted intimacies with Nr and the lifeforms it nurtures, as well as at the confusing affective relations with science, both blamed for, and expected to enlighten the ways to heal, deranged biochemical cycles. I approach these troubles by weaving scientific accounts, policy discourses as well as science fictions around Nitrogen such as Hal Clement's SF Novel "The Nitrogen Fix" that portrays an Earth in which the atmosphere has turned irrespirable by an excess of nitrogen fixation, and science and alien species are blamed by surviving humans for the damaging change. Looking for alternative visions of eco-systemic healing, I look at the more than human entanglements in Hayao Miyazaki's science fiction manga, Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind, where humanity is threatened by a spreading toxic sea of corruption, provoked by human destructive wars and where princess-warrior

Nausicaä's experimentally based knowledge and caring understanding of the toxic forest, fuelled for love of all creatures and defying tribalisms and speciesisms, becomes the only hope.

Stefana Broadbent, "Intimacy & the internet"

Digital communication technologies have been redefining some of the characteristics of intimacy both in the relational sphere and in the performance of identity. The loci of intimate exchanges have been extended into spaces from which they had been long banned, e.g. the workplace and public areas intended both as physical and virtual spaces. Private intimate conversations are carried out surreptitiously on personal devices in places designed for public and not private presence. Digital devices are allowing for relational work to happen outside the gaze and control of the people in physical proximity. At the same time, every exchange is being captured, stored and potentially analysed. A new tension arises between the potential for secrecy from a proximal social world and a total disclosure to a less known institutional sphere of data collecting organisations.

Conversely intimate states are also being made public intentionally via channels of social distribution. Social media offer a medium but more importantly formats, languages and genres of expression for representing the intimate. Boredom and anxiety for instance can be publicly performed in widely shared and understandable formats of self-representation. The expectation of gifting others with revelations of intimate states and relations (as manifested in Facebook memorial pages for the recently deceased) is crafted in newly ritualised formats that allow subjectivities to be performed in highly stereotypical formats.

The standardisation of the modalities of the affective work carried out on digital media is manifest in phenomena such as digital parenting of migrant parents, teenager construction of public selves, sexting, online dating and hooking up. All the above have rapidly found formats to perform intimacy. Intimacy is not only the mode and content but the currency of the medium.

Finally, the legal, philosophical debates about internet and data privacy are providing the fundamental arguments supporting the valuing of intimacy as the main currency of online relations. The tightly fought battles around the legal boundaries of the private sphere provide the ultimate justification for the monetization of digital intimacy.

Meritxell Ramírez-i-Ollé, "Pedagogy as Technologies of Intimacy and Objectivity"

This article will broadly consider pedagogy and the methods and practices of teaching as technologies for developing intimacy and objectivity in one scientific domain, dendrochronology (the science of atmosphere analysis over time using tree rings as representations of changes in patterns of growth). Instructions between teachers and students are arguably one of the most intimate and affective forms of interaction. Such intimacy takes form in the development of long-lasting relationships of trust; the student accepts the authority of the teacher, and in so doing, becomes trusted as a competent member by the teacher and by the community of experts that recognise the teacher as such. I will draw upon sociological literature on education and science to analyse the nature and roles of one institutionalised training technique in the field of dendrochronology, the so-called "fieldweek". I will show the processes by which the development of sensory

intimacy with trees and networks of trust between participants in fieldweeks become a criterion for successful socialisation in dendrochronology. By analysing the routinized bodies, gestures, gazes, frustrations, punishments and rewards involved in fieldweek instructions, I will show the entanglement between the affective and the intellectual aspects of knowledge-making in dendrochronology. Fieldweeks create the necessary face-to-face interactions by which trust develops and professional norms can be shared and transmitted between expert and neophyte dendrochronologists. Whilst dendrochronologists' research practices are pedagogically conditioned by fieldweeks, they are not determined. Competent dendrochronologists are expected to apply creatively the resources previously learnt and practiced during fieldweeks to new problems, and so fieldweeks are just one type of technologies of intimacy and objectivity in science.

Participant List

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