

## **Doctoral workshop: We are compost, not posthuman! Queer feminist composting of the Anthropocene**

**Friday, 13 and Saturday, 14 April 2018**

Organisation: Department of Educational and Social Sciences and Institute for Media Culture and Theatre, University of Cologne; Institute for Media and Cultural Studies, Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf in collaboration with the Graduate School of the Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Cologne

### **Description:**

The Anthropocene describes the current geological epoch in which the human species has had a massive impact on the environment. This includes the enormous consumption of resources, the rising number of natural disasters, the extinction of many animal and plant species through pollution and climate change. According to Dipesh Chakravarty, if nothing is going to be done about this, we will have to start thinking about a future without humans for the first time in the history of mankind. This leads to the question as to who or what needs to take responsibility in the wake of this “Horror of the Anthropocene” (Donna Haraway 2015). The governments or “guardians” (Isabelle Stengers 2015) of the Global North pretend to be able to avert the catastrophe by deploying those measures that have caused it in the first place: the epistemologies of objectivity and progress, of modernisation and growth. The transition from the Anthropocene to the “Chthulucene”, a term coined by Donna Haraway, which describes the age of the “earthly critters”, marks a shift away from this type of knowledge towards a different, relational ontology – the queer feminist composting of the Anthropocene. In this new ontology there is no human subject as opposed to a world full of objects upon which it acts or for which it is responsible. This new ontology is more about the fundamental relationality of the world itself, of which we all are a part in our own very particular way. For this ontology we need a thinking of a different kind: One that diffractively interlaces every individual with the uncircumventable alterity of the world. Haraway calls this tentacular, non-individual, collective, partial thinking (Haraway 2016).

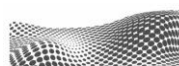
The workshop focuses on gestures of the diffraction of natural, social and cultural knowledge beyond human exceptionalism and the duality of the individual and the environment. In the context of such a queer feminist opening up of disciplinary knowledge, we would like to discuss the concepts of Astrid Schrader, Martha Kenney and Henriette Gunkel in order to substantiate manners of intra-action (Karen Barad) between (non-)/human players, common becomings or worlding and to multiply opportunities for action.

### **Location:**

University of Cologne  
Faculty of Human Sciences  
Lecture theatre H 112, IBW-Building, Herbert-Lewin-Str. 2, 50931 Cologne and  
Room 0.105, main building of the Faculty of Human Sciences (HF-Hauptgebäude), ground floor, Gronewaldstraße 2, 50931 Cologne

### **Registration:**

Registration for participation is open until 29 March 2018. If you wish to register for the workshop, please send us an e-mail at [graduierenschule-hf@uni-koeln.de](mailto:graduierenschule-hf@uni-koeln.de). Upon confirmation of your registration, you will receive text material that you will need to read in preparation for the workshop.



## Programme:

### Friday, 13 April 2018

- 2:00 - 2:30pm Welcoming/Introduction (Lecture theatre H 112, IBW building)
- 2:30 - 3:30pm Lecture Astrid Schrader:  
"Caring with Microbes: Bio-hauntings and Abyssal Relations" (Lecture theatre H 112)
- 3:30 - 4:00pm Short break
- 4:00 - 7:00pm Workshop Part 1 with Astrid Schrader (Room 0.105, main building Faculty of Human Sciences, ground floor)
- from 8:00pm Dinner at one's own expense

### Saturday, 14 April 2018 (Room 0.105, main building, ground floor)

- 09:30-10:15am Lecture Henriette Gunkel:  
"The Sea is History, and the Future too: The Capitalocene in the context of the Black Atlantic"
- 10:15-10:30am Short break
- 10:30- 1:30pm Workshop Part 2 with Henriette Gunkel
- 1:30 - 2:30pm Lunch break
- 2:30 - 3:15pm Lecture Martha Kenney:  
"Daphnia and Apollo: An Epigenetic Fable"
- 3:15 - 3:30pm Short break
- 3:30 - 6:30pm Workshop Part 3 with Martha Kenney
- from 7:00pm Dinner at one's own expense

### About the Lecturers:

**Astrid Schrader, PhD.** is a lecturer at the Department of Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology at the University of Exeter (UK) and has previously spent time at the Institute for History of Consciousness, University of California, Santa Cruz. She works at the interface between Science and Technology Studies, Human-Animal Studies and Feminist as well as Post-structuralist theory. <http://socialsciences.exeter.ac.uk/sociology/staff/schrader/>

**Henriette Gunkel, PhD.** is a lecturer at the Department of Visual Culture at Goldsmiths College London (UK) and has previously spent time in Germany, the US, South Africa and the United Kingdom. She currently works on a monograph called "Africanist Science Fictional interventions" and different spacetimes from an Afrofuturism perspective. <http://www.gold.ac.uk/visual-cultures/staff/gunkel-henriette/>

**Martha Kenney, PhD.** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Women and Gender Studies at San Francisco State University and has previously spent time at the Institute for History of Consciousness, University of California, Santa Cruz. She works at the interface between knowledge policies, technology, medicine and environment and has recently focused on environmental epigenetics. <http://wgsdept.sfsu.edu/people/martha-kenney>