

S10

BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

Vivienne Bozalek
vbozalek@gmail.com

Nike Romano
niker@icon.co.za

Jayne Osgood
J.Osgood@mdx.ac.uk

This panel thinks through the Promises, Impasses, Threats and Settlements (PITS) themes from a hydrofeminist praxis. *Bodies of water* (Neimanis, 2012) is a figuration that encourages generative ways of thinking about how conference participants may respond to (the) PITS. In this stream we invite proposals that swim-think-read-write-make with the praxis of hydrofeminism conveying the fluidity of watery bodies, which challenge Cartesian notions of discrete, atomised, self-sufficient landlocked human and more-than-human individuals, aligned with affect theory.

Promises

Oceans, ponds, rivers, dams and lakes cannot be used as human dumping grounds or mined for further human greed and consumption, without serious consequences for the dying planet. Rather than be seen as bottomless pits, we invite responses that explore how slow upwelling flows from the pits in bodies of water—octopus and shark dens, feeding pits, blue holes, pockmarks from methane gas—might give rise to capacious nutrient-rich potentialities for un/settling impasses and threats. Some questions that panelists may wish to pursue include:

- How might slow methodologies performed in bodies of water provide alternative moistenings for scholarly practices and doing academia differently?
- What might we learn from water and the creatures living in water?

- How might affect studies flow—with processes of swimming—thinking—reading—writing?
- How might we think differently about human and more-than human care-carriage practices that are fluid rather than contained?

Impasses

Watery bodies, in their vibrant buoyancy, support and carry a potential for uncanny sensibilities that lure towards new speculative imaginaries. Panelists may wish to pursue the following:

- How might we take advantage of the impasses of Berlant’s “dog paddling in the meanwhile”?
- How do watery attunements and encounters with sea creatures that sense the not-yet help develop multisensorial response-abilities for a changing world?

Threats

Human violences to other humans, animals, plants, and land pose threats to all life on the blue planet. With increasing pollution (chemical, sewage, plastic), oceanic acidification, rising sea temperatures, mining and seismic surveys, overfishing by big corporations, we wit(h)ness a reduction of algae and watery species. Not only are marine algae the main producers of oxygen, they are also nurturant habitats of diverse species.

Some questions that panelists may wish to pursue:

- How might we think with algae as nurturing spaces that encourage diversity and flourishing in the midst of the threat of their demise?
- What role might affect play in making such threats visible?
- What implications do these threats have for how we do higher education pedagogy and scholarship?

Un/Settlings

The hydrocommons is not a conducive space for feeling settled and yet the ocean has been the conduit for haunting hydro-settler-colonialism—the movement from north to south and the appropriation of land and resources including slave trade.

Panelists may wish to ponder:

- How do watery bodies sediment histories settling/settler colonial encounters?
- How might exploring the aphotic zone—the dark region of the ocean and inland water bodies lying beneath the surface sunlit waters—un/do and un/settle taken for granted notions of that which is un/knowable?