

Walking the now to reimagine the future: ‘Arts of noticing’, the somatechnics of bodily engagement and trans(disciplinary)mattering,

We take up Tsing’s (2015) call to develop ‘arts of noticing’ to explore how walking in the now can bring back curiosity in research and open up opportunities to reimagine more capacious futures. Theoretically, we explore walking as a somatechnics of bodily mattering. Methodologically, we develop a relational-materialist sociological approach. Navigating a theory-practice line the paper speaks to modes of feminist indiscipline as ongoing praxis to un-discipline normative qualitative research practices. Our context is the Anthropocene’s destruction of the natural world and precarity of ecosystems arising from capitalism and White, Western colonialist ‘progress’ imperatives. We contest these orientations and ask: How can walking in the now help reimagine better futures? Drawing on a number of walking experiments, including walking in the post-industrial city, walking with whiteness, walking with wild spaces, and walking with teachers we pose walking as a transdisciplinary means to attend to relational human-nonhuman connections and ‘unheard’ voices. Envisaging walking as a somatechnic methodology of slow relationality – of micro-moments of noticing – encourages us to ‘stay with the trouble’ (Haraway, 2016). Walking somatechnics choreograph bodily engagements anew with landscapes, environments, natures, cities; they ‘stretch our imagination to grasp its contours’ (Tsing, 2015: 3). Walking the now reimagine futures through the embodied doing of research as sensory, affective, relational, political practice. It is an affirmative critical response to Barad’s (2007: 49) statement that ‘knowing does not come from standing at a distance and representing but rather from a direct material engagement with the world’.