

Ecology of Encounters: Re-imagining (Compost) Relationality for Education in Times of Environmental Breakdown

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Abstract

“we are all compost, not posthuman” (Donna Haraway 2016, 101).

This presentation examines the interconnectedness of human, non-human, and environmental relations and draws out their meaning for education. In particular, it explores how current education can respond to ecological, environmental, and climate challenges through a re-imagining of educational relations. Drawing on Donna Haraway's notion of "compostist" versus "posthumanist," I argue for an embodied, entangled relationality responsive to living in a damaged world, and offer a critique of humanist traditions for the way they contribute to ecological crises through prioritizing humans over other life forms. In conclusion, I propose an "ecology of encounters" as an educational framework that emphasises the generative potential of encounters extending beyond human interactions to include the more-than-human. The presentation suggests that education can cultivate interconnectedness and mutual transformation through concrete practices that challenge assumptions of human separateness and superiority.