



International Conference

## ***Queer Ecology and the Temporal Imagination***

**26 – 27 February 2026**  
**University of Tübingen**  
**Center for Gender and Diversity Research (ZGD)**

Organised by Gero Bauer and Davina Höll

***Confirmed Keynote Speaker: Prof. Sylvan Goldberg (Colorado College)***

### **Call for Abstracts**

In recent political discourse, there has been a striking correlation between questions relating to the environment, the climate crisis, and environmental justice on the one hand and gender and sexuality on the other. At the same time, the climate crisis (and its denial) has been increasingly framed in terms of a new sense of temporal urgency: it is ‘high time’ that we reduce carbon emissions; it is already ‘too late’ to keep the rise in global temperatures within the boundaries of the Paris Agreement; and while some cling nostalgically to a past of carbon prosperity, some fight over how to best project, prepare for, or imagine a (better) future, while others turn away from future horizons to attend to the urgencies of the present.

*This conference asks how insights from the field of ‘queer ecologies’ can be made productive for an analysis of social, cultural, and scientific conceptualisations of pasts, presents, and futures, and how ‘queer temporality’ can inspire ecological debates.*

Since the 1970s, ecofeminist thinking and theory have foregrounded and conceptually complicated the relationship between environmental politics and gender equality and social justice. More recently, ‘queer ecology’ has consolidated as an interdisciplinary research field that “probe[s] the intersections of sex and nature with an eye to developing a sexual politics that more clearly includes considerations of the natural world and its biosocial constitution, and an environmental politics that demonstrates an understanding of the ways in which sexual relations organize and influence both the material world of nature and our perceptions, experiences, and constitutions of that world” (Mortimer-Sandilands/Ericksen 2010: 5). Interrogating the relationship between gender, sexuality, and the environment has gained new urgency in the context of the current worldwide dominance of a political and social rhetoric that actively entangles anti-feminist, anti-queer, patriarchal, and misogynistic narratives with an opposition to environmental and climate research and concerns. However, scholarship in the context of ‘queer ecology’ has not yet systematically attended to the dimension of temporality.

For over two decades, queer theory has productively theorised the implications of queer identities, historically situated queer suffering, and queer notions of kinship for a sense of time and temporality. 'Queer temporality' designates the many ways in which the experience of time can deviate from the heteronormative, teleologically narrow, and ideologically charged scripts of reproduction and futurity. Lee Edelman (2004), for example, polemicalises against 'reproductive futurism', and Heather Love (2007) calls for a new sense of 'feeling backward' to the queer losses of the past in order to enable liveable presents, while Elizabeth Freeman (2010) evokes queer challenges to what she calls 'chrononormativity'. We believe that these productive discussions within queer theory of the relationship between queerness, the material world, and temporality have much to contribute to the broader field of 'queer ecologies'.

In this conference, along the lines of Donna Haraway's (2016) call to "make kin in lines of inventive connection" (1) in times of trouble and existential threat, we want to explicate and further explore *the convergences between 'queer ecologies' and 'queer temporalities'*. At the same time, we also hope to inquire into the 'queerness' of conceptualisations of time within the natural and life science themselves: what can we learn from the reproductive temporality of microbes? What can researchers working on disappearing glaciers tell us about grief and mourning? But also: how can queer theorisations of trauma and negativity help us cope with feelings of loss and anxiety in the face of ecological devastation so that we can "learn[] to live and die well together in a thick present" (Haraway 2016: 1)? Overall, we hope to contribute to conversations about time and temporality in queer ecology as an interdisciplinary field which offers opportunities for conceptual work across the disciplines.

In this spirit, we want to bring together scholars from the humanities and social sciences, the natural and life sciences, and those working at the intersection of these disciplines, but also activists and artists, to discuss, among others, the following set of questions:

- What positive and negative (utopian/dystopian) narratives emerge at the intersection of gender/sexuality and ecology?
- What specific pasts, presents, and futures does the political, social, cultural, or scientific imagination invoke to what ends and what effects?
- How do human and non-human time(s) relate ('deep time' as 'queer time')?
- What role does temporality play in historical and contemporary narratives of 'nature' and climate change?
- How do ecofiction, nature writing, and climate fiction contribute to the eco-temporal and queer imagination?
- How do historical and contemporary discourses 'naturalize' specific notions of gender and sexuality, and how do these naturalised notions relate to conceptualisations of 'nature' and 'the environment' in general?
- What crucial contributions do non-western and indigenous perspectives make to these debates and questions?

Please send your abstracts (not exceeding 300 words) along with a short bio to:

gero.bauer@uni-tuebingen.de  
davina.hoell@uni-tuebingen.de

**Deadline for Abstracts: 30 April 2025**

There will be no registration fee for the conference.