

The Kitchen STS discussion group kindly invites to a talk and discussion with
Dr. Tara Mehrabi (Karlstad University, Sweden) on

Queer Ecologies of Death in the Lab: Rethinking Waste, Decomposition and Death Through a Queerfeminist Lens

Drawing on ethnographic material collected from a one-year participatory observation in an Alzheimer's laboratory in Sweden, in which scientists work with *Drosophila Melanogaster*, commonly known as fruit flies, I explore the entanglement of human and transgenic fruit fly relations with everyday practices of waste management. In doing so, I discuss how heteronormative and humanistic ideologies about 'purity' and 'pure Nature' shape the space of the laboratory and regulate waste management practices. I will argue that the fruit flies' bodies, both in their living and non-living state, cross the boundaries between inside and outside, natural and unnatural/artificial, safe and hazardous waste, and life and death, creating queer ecologies of death. Queer ecologies of death suggest new modes of thinking about agency as well as the (non)human and (non)living within the context of laboratory waste management. Resonating with the critique of rationality and the dominance of nature as it has been outlined by the Frankfurt School already in the mid of the twentieth century, such a take promises to go beyond the limits of human exceptionalism and modernist hierarchical binary logics that are essential to and constitutive of the notion of purity and the imaginary of a Nature 'out there'.

Wednesday, February 12 | 6 pm
Room PEG 3G 202

More information on the Kitchen STS discussion group can be found here:
<https://blog.studiumdigitale.uni-frankfurt.de/kitchensts/about-us/>



Dr. Tara Mehrabi is a senior lecturer at the Centre for Gender Studies at Karlstad University, Sweden. She is a founding member of the Queer Death Studies Network and a member of The Posthumanities Hub based at Linköping University. She is the author of the monograph *Making Death Matter: A Feminist Technoscience Study of Alzheimer's Sciences in the Laboratory* (2016). Together with Marietta Radomska and Nina Lykke, she co-edited the special issue of the journal *Women, Gender & Research* "Queer Death Studies: Coming to Terms with Death with Death, Dying and Mourning Differently" (2019).