

A Rhizomatic Mapping of TCR Spaces and Action Sites

Track Chairs: Martina Hutton and Joel Hietanan

Statement of TCR Issue:

As the TCR movement grows, the problems and solutions of well-being we engage with, become more complex, whilst the consumers we work with become increasingly varied. As researchers embrace the relational engagement approach to help maximise the societal impact of their studies through collaboration with an array of participants, communities and stakeholders (Davis and Ozanne 2018; Ozanne et al, 2017), they must remain adaptable, working across disciplinary boundaries on projects within and outside of the TCR community. Therefore, the link between the form and content of knowledge and relationships that form around that knowledge, demand a flexibility and fluidity to appreciate the “intertwined and not-so-visible rhizomes, linkages, influences, and flows” (Dholakia, 2012; 221) representative of social issues.

Track Goal:

The aim of this track is to apply rhizomatic thinking derived from the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), to create new possibilities for knowing and action across TCR projects. Rather than focusing on one specific TCR issue, alternatively this track adopts a “How it Works” approach, providing scholars with the opportunity to experiment with and apply rhizomatic analysis to identify spaces and sites of action within their own work and the work of other track participants. We hope to bring together a range of researchers and data from different areas to find connections between writing, artworks, video, interview transcripts, photographs, textual artefacts and other data forms to acknowledge and celebrate the complexities of sites of action.

By encouraging a rhizomatic view of transformative consumer research we hope to develop useful conceptual language that characterises its treatment of consumer well-being issues as problem-centred and network-embedded. As rhizomatic thinking is built on several principles, we will apply these in our pre-conference preparations and during our time together at the conference. These are i) connection and heterogeneity (connecting the idea, tools and skills of all participants involved – stakeholders, researchers, etc) ii) multiplicity (moments of interaction between stakeholders, participants) iii) assigning rupture (in constant movement or transformation) and iv) cartography (new knowledge that creates or maps new possibilities for transformation).

Pre-Conference Activities will consist of:

- Call for participation of 4-6 academic researchers and/or stakeholders with demonstrated interest and/or data related to this theme will be selected to participate.
- Knowledge building – rhizomatic principles and literature shared with track participants for review and discussion.
- Participants will identify possible sites of action/learning spaces from their work as a basis for mapping/analysis.

Post-Conference:

- We are interested in the application of rhizomatic thought to TCR and as such plan to co-author a conceptual paper outlining the specific contribution that Deleuzian and Guattarian theories can make to the epistemology and design of transformative consumer research.
- There is also potential to co-author an empirical paper utilizing the outcomes of our collective mapping activities to identify new insights and connections from the data that were previously less visible to evidence the contribution of rhizomatic thinking to TCR, and to contribute new ways of conceptualizing social relationships, thus building on the relational engagement approach.

References:

Davis, B. and Ozanne, J.L. (2018). Risky Research? How Relational Engagement in Research Can Mitigate Harm and Enhance Benefits, *Journal of the Association of Consumer Research*, 3, 7-15.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (B. Massumi, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dholakia, Nikhilesh (2012), Being Critical in Marketing Studies: The Imperative of Macro Perspectives, *Journal of Macromarketing*, 32 (2), 220 - 225

Ozanne, J.L., Brennan Davis, Jeff B. Murray, Sonya Grier, Ahmed Benmecheddal, Hilary Downey, Akon E. Ekpo, Marion Garnier, Joel Hietanen, Marine Le Gall-Ely, Anastasia Seregina, Kevin D. Thomas, and Ekant Veer (2017). Assessing the Societal Impact of Research: The Relational Engagement Approach. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 36, (1), 1-14.