

Two Time Travellers and the Hope they Wear: Transmitting Research Methods across the Centuries

a joint keynote by
Kat Jungnickel & Laura Watts

We live in hope. We work in hope. We make the world in hope through our research practice, as two feminist STS scholars. Our hope is not vanity but hard scholarly work and a commitment to the possibility that, through our research practice being otherwise, we can make worlds that are otherwise. This joint keynote is an exploration of our STS methods for world-weaving hope in the midst of anthropogenic climate change and academic institutional transformation. We will sew together our research across the centuries: from the eighteenth century, through the present, into the twenty-second century.

Our journey through time begins in the early 1800s, in the patent archives. Here, Kat Jungnickel studies the attempts by clothing inventors to change the world, stitch by stitch. We then move through the present moment and its crises, to the early 2100s, where Laura Watts collaborates with energy and tech organisations to change the world through speculative fabulation ('SF') created through her ethnographic archive. Both patents and SF are instruments of power and erasure, but it is in their gaps and silences, in what is not quite written, that we find hope and possibility: the organisations and individuals we work with reframe, negotiate, and sometimes even remake their socio-political worlds in acts of quiet resistance. They pressed against binaries and conventional boundaries. We can do no less.

Inspired by our collaborators' persistent acts of hope across the centuries, we two time travelling scholars will weave together alternative research methods to show how we transmit research inside and outside the academy—and how we can wear hope on our scholarly sleeve.