

# **PDC 2018: Avoiding Ecocidal Smart Cities: Participatory Design for More-than-Human Futures**

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**Title: More-Than-Human Design for the More-Than-Human City**

## **Abstract**

Drawing on a previous article 'The More-Than-Human City, published in *Sociological Review* (Franklin 2016), this paper will consider its very significant implications for design in cities. I shall argue that these implications take the field of design way beyond the language and concepts of sustainability, the anthropocene, environmental ethics, environmentalism, ecology and ecosystem as they are typically understood (see also Franklin 2012; 2015 on ecology and ecosystem) because it no longer means that a separable field of human design/intervention/'responsibility' is feasible or desirable. Architecture, engineering, planning and industrial design were fields central to a new class of experts emerging from the late eighteenth century that Zygmunt Bauman (1992) described as 'Legislators', an historically new class with unprecedented powers and audacious plans to blueprint and drive modernisation this way or that, with the non-human deemed to be merely neutral substrate. 'With both society and its members found wanting (i.e. shapeable yet heretofore shaped in the wrong way), the new legislative authority of men of knowledge established its own necessity and entitlements' (p.11). And with it came a heightened humanist ontology 'a dualism of the human and the non-human, a detachment from and domination of the latter by the former, and an erasure of time' (Pickering 2008: 3). In the more-than-human city the arrogance of the legislators and the folly of humanist ontologies are both recognised, alongside a more distributed posthumanist sense of agency: 'an intermediate symmetrical engagement between the human and the non-human and an intrinsically temporal becoming in that engagement (Pickering 2008: 3). The paper develops a sense of what this means for design alongside some examples of its practice.

## **References**

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