

KayaB

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SPEAKERS

Kaya Barry, Cassie Phoenix

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- C** Cassie Phoenix 00:03
Okay, so it's really lovely to welcome Dr. Kaya Barry to Weather Talk. Kaya is a postdoctoral research fellow at Griffith Centre for Social cultural research. Thanks for joining us, Kaya.
- K** Kaya Barry 00:18
Thank you for having me.
- C** Cassie Phoenix 00:21
Could you just start off by, like all the other speakers on where the talks telling me just a little bit about your research, and how the weather fits into it?
- K** Kaya Barry 00:33
Sure. Um, so I'm a artist and cultural geographer, I came into this sort of hybrid form of research a lot through creative, creative research, the creative arts practice. And the weather has always been present in my life and my research, I grew up around the country doing reflecting fires and things. So it's always kind of been to the strong imaginary of how we think about and live in places. And up until writing a recent book on whether it's always sort of been lingering in the background. So I've done a lot of work on environment, and

sort of, you know, not eco tourism, the tourism that is to specific places with very astounding environmental experiences. And I guess looking back on it, whether it was always right there up front, and how weather oriented with these places, and the kinds of sensations you might pick up on in more creative tones. So yeah, it's always been there. But up until the last couple of years, I hadn't sort of uncovered that. Actually, it was the weather that was speaking to me... (Referring to book - Weather: Spaces, Mobilities and Affects) ...Tim and Maria and I, a few years ago, dreamed up a conference session about the mobility of weather. We're very interested in mobilities research and as well as geography and play. And we pulled together I think, around a dozen people at a conference in Auckland, New Zealand a few years back. And we just had a really cracking discussion around weather and mobility and everyday life. And then we decided the logical step would be to collect some more current research around around the sort of social and cultural aspects of weather in our lives. So the book brings together 22 authors from around the world. Most of them, geographers, but I mean, broadly, it's arts and humanities. And it's a really nice collection looking at each chapter is automatically around different kinds of weather. So we have fire, smoke, snow, sunshine, wind, I have a chapter interviews in fog, says, Oh, come on. So we try to go for the themed based on individual weather phenomenon, and then bring them all together in this collection to sort of look at different kinds of weather and how it impacts on different kinds of movements and patterns in our daily lives.

C

Cassie Phoenix 04:01

Well, it's a, it's a really good collection, anyone interested in this topic would definitely recommend it. Obviously, in your chapter in that book, you do talk a little bit about the creative methods that you've used. Could you just say a little bit more about that I thought was so interesting.

K

Kaya Barry 04:17

Yeah, so the chapter that I've written is around turbulence. So when you travel in an aeroplane, and you experience being turbulence of the aircraft in pockets of different pressure to air, which is a really strange, quite horrible phenomenon for anyone who's experienced severe air turbulence when they fly, and it's something that over, you know, my time as a player, as a passenger, I guess, had experience and you're really fascinated by these kinds of jobs and bumps and downs that happen. And so as the More sort of side project, I started trying to record it when I was on board. So at the time, I was doing a lot of travel for field work on planes. And every time I'd get on a plane, I'd use an audio recorder and a special device like apple, my phone, that could measure the different movements and vibrations that were going on. Because, you know, creative artists that

kind of download all the data, and then I did a little bit of visualising of what these movements might look like when you map them out. But actually, as I was doing that, you know, I kind of realised you can't really visualise these really embodied very collective kinds of experiences, that it's not just you, it's all the passengers on the fly, the aircraft itself is the weather interacting with the aircraft flying through. So I started thinking around it in this very kind of collective, almost more of engineering terms. And then I went out to the airport, the local airport where I am, and I do some recordings on the ground, as close as I could get to the airport perimeter off of the ground. So when you can see aircraft taking off and landing, you know, the vibrations that you might not feel standing there on the ground for your feet, but putting a device that used to like an engineering to record the vibrations of equipment, it's picking it up, so and then I kind of had this environment thinking where you know, this sort of performance going on, it's not just me, but the whole environment that you're in is being affected by the way change and the rumble the way that the earth reacts. And so yeah, so that was quite a long winded explanation. But trying to draw these things together in a creative way to think about things that can't be easily described in text or in words, was something that I tried to pursue in that chapter.



Cassie Phoenix 07:05

Mm hmm. And I suppose leads me on to my next question, which is around the challenges of doing research on whether there are any particular challenges you've experienced?



Kaya Barry 07:21

Yeah, I mean, it might seem a little trivial, but actually getting people to talk about whether beyond the the immediate, descriptive view, and probably a lot of listeners will know, it's quite, quite difficult, you know, because these are really the the, the the felt things, you know, it gets under your skin, it's on your skin, you're breathing, you're leaving it. And then sort of different kinds of scales of attention that, that people obviously have. You know, when I've done interviews with people, and I've tried to discuss the weather, they get stuck on the clouds of the sky, and it doesn't sort of come back to their bodies, which is the part that I'm really interested in, like how we feel and sensory things. And I know speaking with some of the other authors who've done some really amazing work, like Suzanne, and Clement has a chapter about walking in the rain with children, and just trying to they're on top and other kinds of attentions that we have. And I think it comes across in many of the chapters of how difficult it is to articulate these these moments. So that would be one. I mean, the other the other hurdle that myself in some of the other authors I spoke with, was around you guys not really being too confident in the science behind what we're studying. Not wanting to kind of over report, you know, statistics and

facts on a weather phenomenon that we're not entirely sure that cultural.

C Cassie Phoenix 08:58

Yeah, yeah, that's pretty complex, that whole side. Yeah, but I think is also a reason why, you know, it lends itself well to interdisciplinary projects. But yeah, not that every project needs to be interdisciplinary. But there's so many different levels of expertise, I suppose a knowledge that can be brought to the table isn't there? On this particular subject? What surprised you the most in the work that you've been doing? What kind of caught you off guard that you weren't anticipating?

K Kaya Barry 09:33

Oh, that's a tricky question. In terms of bringing together the collection from the book, but it's also continued since then, in my other research, the very kind of Eurocentric framing of weather. I mean, it's something that we all know you're in Australia where you know, very very guilty of that, too. It's something we all know, and quite quickly acknowledged, but just how pervasive that is in our understanding of place, and how weather interacts with that, and the language we use. So for me realising that, you know, the places that I was doing my own work and creative practising, you know, I had no idea what the local indigenous names were, where they were, and, and things like that, that there was just a really big disconnect with the very British framing of whether in our conversations and our culture, yeah, when, even right now, like a British weather doesn't translate very well to an experience, weather, and very particular kinds of descriptors, I thought would be more varied. So that was a really interesting, I guess, realisation for myself when it might seem obvious, but it's something that presents an opportunity for us to really do a lot more with the research we do, and not just who we talked to, or recite, or they were reading, but really thinking about whether in more sort of entangled in an international frame, you know, because what I experienced here is very different from what we experienced there. And, you know, so that was one of the real, the real challenges that we had as evidence, but it really changed my thinking around weather and place and link statements in other projects.

C Cassie Phoenix 11:45

What do you think that living well with the weather involves then?

K Kaya Barry 11:51

They think Well, I think my first reaction, is that a very utopian ideal.

C Cassie Phoenix 12:02
Yeah, well, that's fine as well.

K Kaya Barry 12:08
Yeah, I guess the context of weather in Australia has had kind of, you know, being tipped on its head since the bushfires in 2019, to 20, summer fire season. And we're going through another fire season now, which is not nearly as bad, but it really kind of brought home the prominence of how important weather is, and that we take it serious as a symptom of climate change, but also as a really distinguishing point in our lives. So you know, the the extremes that we're experiencing now, and you're gonna get more extreme than it really opens. It alters our routines and how we work and how we live and what we can kind of hope for. So I think living well with whether it's a really wide or question for what lies ahead. But these are questions that we have to have. And I think there needs to be quite difficult, rather than an easy solution.

C Cassie Phoenix 13:14
Right. Thank you so much for for that conversation. It's been really good to hear your thoughts on those few questions and learn more about the book. So yeah, thank you for joining the weather talk podcast.

K Kaya Barry 13:27
Yeah, thanks for having me.