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TITLE: A Posthumanist Ethics in Inter-Disciplinary Education about Science

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This paper presents a case for how the framework relational sociomaterialism (elsewhere 'new materialism'), inspires an alternative and inter-disciplinary approach to education about science in Australian teacher/secondary domains. Russell Tytler, a leading academic voice in Australian science education, has argued that there is disengagement between education, society and the practice of science. It has also been noted that only 25% of Australian year eight students report liking science (Freeman 2013, p.20). While there is wide concern about this in terms of economic development, my focus is the 'ethicopolitical' imperatives, which is about facilitating a public that can contend with advances in science/technology in ethical ways, within a rapidly changing and inter-connected world. My research examines ways of knowing that constitute ethics in education about science, including the implications of 'gender-sex'. This project also involves analysis of the Australian secondary curriculum, secondary textbooks, as well as interviews with pre-service teachers, from the humanities and science disciplines. I demonstrate evidence of traditional-masculinist approaches that limit engagement with ethics, while also highlighting favourable aspects towards a creative, relational mode that, in the posthumanist sense, decentres the human.

Freeman, B. (2013). Consultant Report Securing Australia's Future STEM: Country Comparisons, Australian Council of Learned Academies.