Walnut pedagogy

By Charlotte Grum, 2026.

At semester start, meeting a new crowd of master students of Social Psychology and Learning at Roskilde University in Denmark, I bring another crowd to the table. Walnuts from my own garden. I give each student a walnutty more-than-human being. Not as a gift og a symbol. But as a reminder of all the vital vibrant matter (Bennett, 2010) we are already and always a part of. Walnuts thus become co-teachers, insisting on germination power and life force (Lapina and Grum, 2025).

The walnut tree in my garden is one of many walnut trees planted in the neighborhood in order to feed the inhabitants of both garden and house. I share the harvest with squirrels, crows, ravens, mice and rats and others. Some walnuts are eaten right away, others are hidden and perhaps forgotten as small walnut trees pop up everywhere.

By bringing this unruly and very lively process into semester start at university, I hope to nourish more-than-human life forces and grow a learning atmosphere of embedded and embodied practices, situating us in the midst of the mess, while worlding with walnuts.

Bennett, J. (2010). Vibrant matter: a political ecology of things. Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822391623

Lapiņa, L., & Grum, C. (2025). Walking with sheep, dancing with dragonflies: moving-with multispecies ecologies. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 22(1), 314–333. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2024.2341410