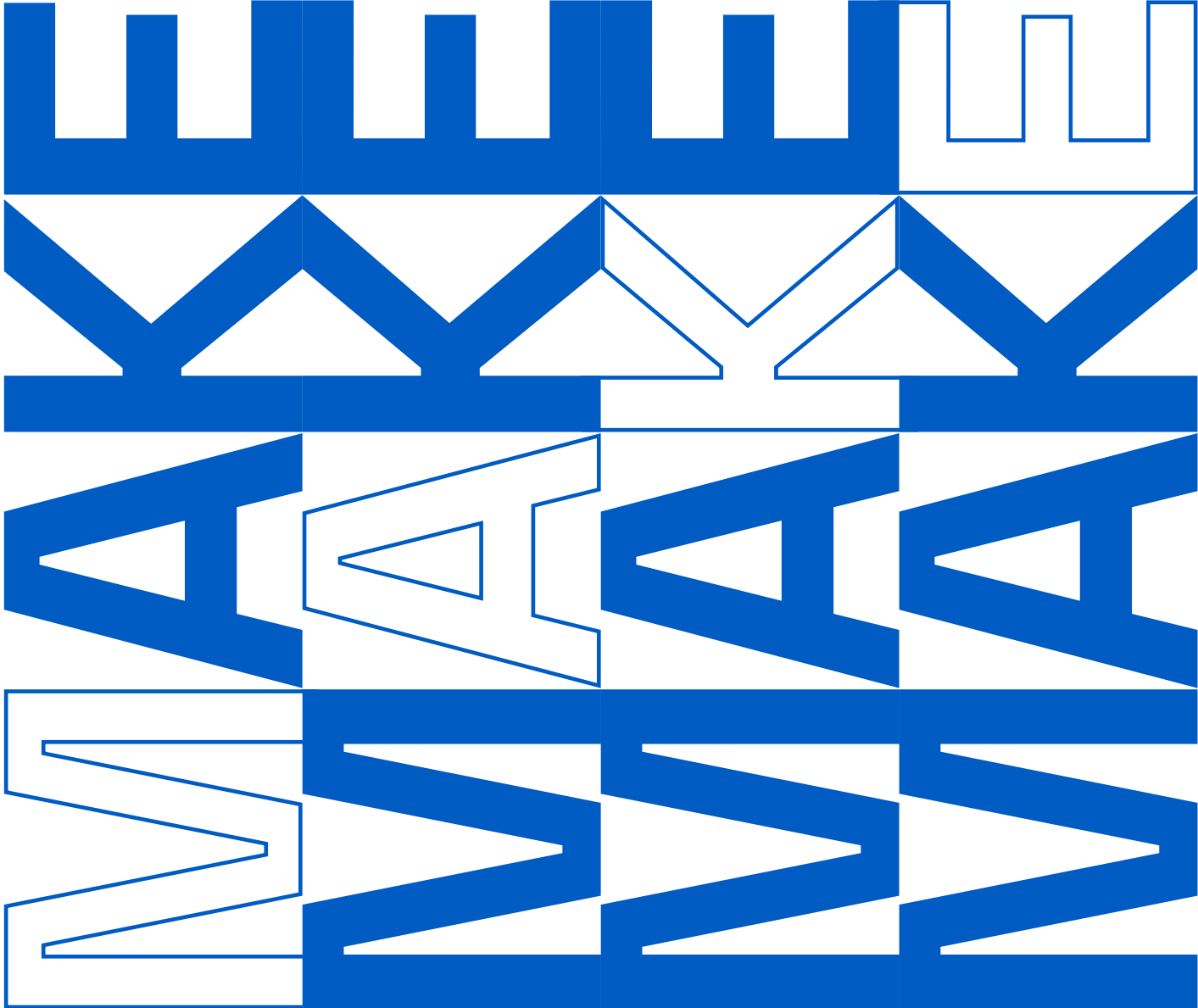


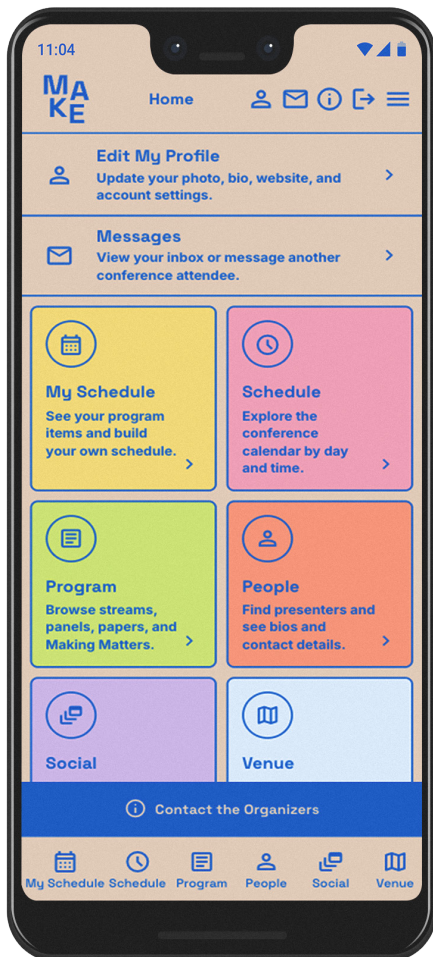
# 2026 Affect Studies Conference



Draft  
Program

ENERGIES × METHODS × ATMOSPHERES × KNOWLEDGES

OCT 23-25, 2026  
VANCOUVER



## Get the App

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Friday, October 23

9:15 AM–8:50 PM

Saturday, October 24

8:15 AM–7:20 PM

Sunday, October 25

8:15 AM–10:00 PM

9 AM

10 AM

11 AM

12 PM

1 PM

2 PM

3 PM

4 PM

5 PM

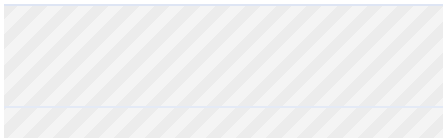
6 PM

7 PM

8 PM

9 PM

10 PM



Registration, Coffee, and Snacks  
Conference Welcome

10:15–11:45 AM  
Spotlight Panel

Conference Lunch

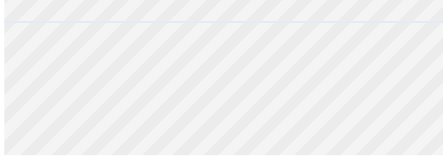
1:30–3:00 PM  
Panels

3:10–4:40 PM  
Panels

4:50–6:20 PM  
Panels

Dinner on Your Own

7:20–8:50 PM  
Panels



8:15–9:45 AM  
Panels

10:00 AM–11:30 AM  
Making Matters Musical Performance and Film

11:45 AM–1:15 PM  
Making Matters Workshops (Signup Required)

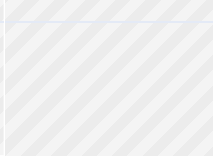
Lunch on Your Own

2:30–4:00 PM  
Making Matters Workshops (Signup Required)

4:10–5:40 PM  
Panels

5:50–7:20 PM  
Panels

Dinner on Your Own



Registration, Coffee, and Snacks

10:00 AM–11:30 AM  
Panels

11:45 AM–1:15 PM  
Visit Making Matters Kiosks

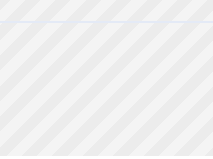
Lunch on Your Own

2:30–4:00 PM  
Visit Making Matters Kiosks

4:10–5:40 PM  
Panels

5:50–7:20 PM  
Panels

Dinner on Your Own



8:15–9:45 AM  
Panels

10:00–11:30 AM  
Panels

11:45 AM–1:15 PM  
Panels

Lunch on Your Own

2:30–4:00 PM  
Panels

4:10–5:40 PM  
Panels

5:50–7:20 PM  
Panels

6:20–7:50 PM  
Spotlight Panel

Conference Dinner at Pizza Coming Soon

Registration, Coffee, and Snacks

10:00–11:30 AM  
Visit Making Matters Kiosks

11:45 AM–1:15 PM  
Panels

Lunch on Your Own

2:30–4:00 PM  
Making Matters Short Films Screening

Julietta Singh's "The Nest"

Post-film Q&A with Julietta Singh

6:20–7:50 PM  
Spotlight Panel

Conference Dinner at Pizza Coming Soon

## Spotlight Panels

● <b>1-1</b> Friday, October 23 10:15–11:45 AM	S16. INSURGENT RESIDUES OF EXTRACTION ● <b>Rust and Dust, Grieving and Gasping</b> Chair: Mathew Arthur	<b>SCA: 3200</b>
● <b>3-26</b> Sunday, October 25 6:20–7:50 PM	S12. FEELING SICK AND SICKLY FEELINGS ● <b>Disability Visibility, Obscurity, and IL/Legibility: At the Limits of Crip Identification</b> Chair: Zoë Fuad	<b>SCA: 3200</b>

## Stream Panels

### S1. Absence and Its Afterparties

● <b>1-2</b> Friday, October 23 1:30–3:00 PM	Post-Settler Attachments in Minor Key Chair: Michael Lechuga	<b>WOSK: 0020</b>
● <b>1-14</b> Friday, October 23 4:50–6:20 PM	Sublimation as Invitation: Accounting for Absence Chair: Carrie Rentschler	<b>WOSK: 0010</b>
● <b>2-1</b> Saturday, October 24 8:15–9:45 AM	Ruins and Residues of the Not-Quite and Might Never-Be Chair: Lisa Mazzei	<b>HARBOUR: 1600</b>
● <b>2-7</b> Saturday, October 24 10:00 AM–11:30 AM	Restoring Decolonial Traces Through Ecological Affectivity Chair: Alana Brekelmans	<b>HARBOUR: 1520</b>
● <b>3-1</b> Sunday, October 25 8:15–9:45 AM	Absence and Educational Affects Chair: Erica Colmenares	<b>HARBOUR: 2245</b>
● <b>3-7</b> Sunday, October 25 10:00–11:30 AM	Pedagogies of Absence Chair: Kim Edmondson	<b>HARBOUR: 2245</b>
● <b>3-14</b> Sunday, October 25 11:45 AM–1:15 PM	The Afterparty of Loss Chair: Asilia Franklin-Phipps	<b>HARBOUR: 1600</b>

### S2. Affect-ionate Appetites: Desire, Disgust, and All the Feelings in Between

● <b>1-8</b> Friday, October 23 3:10–4:40 PM	Consuming Objects Chair: Jennifer LeMesurier	<b>WOSK: 0020</b>
● <b>2-20</b> Saturday, October 24 5:50–7:20 PM	Consuming Beyond Chair: Jennifer LeMesurier	<b>HARBOUR: 1520</b>

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### S3. Affective Built World: Body-Space Politics Beyond Utility

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|--|--|----------------------|
| ● <b>1-9</b> Friday, October 23<br>3:10–4:40 PM    | Space and Abstract Affect Writing<br>Chair: Allyson Compton              | <b>WOSK: 0010</b>    |
| ● <b>2-21</b> Saturday, October 24<br>5:50–7:20 PM | Bodily Affect in Architectural Settings<br>Chair: Katarina Bogosavljević | <b>HARBOUR: 1600</b> |
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### S4. Affective Oceanic Encounters in the MAKEing

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| ● <b>1-3</b> Friday, October 23<br>1:30–3:00 PM    | Haunted Waters and Atmospheres of Displacement<br>Chair: Delphi Carstens                                   | <b>WOSK: 0010</b>    |
| ● <b>2-22</b> Saturday, October 24<br>5:50–7:20 PM | Embodied Methodologies and Sensory Attunements<br>Chair: Nike Romano                                       | <b>HARBOUR: 2270</b> |
| ● <b>3-8</b> Sunday, October 25<br>10:00–11:30 AM  | Ecological Disruption, Creaturely Atmospheres and Transdisciplinary Imaginaries<br>Chair: Vivienne Bozalek | <b>HARBOUR: 2270</b> |
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### S5. Affective Politics and Energetic Transductions Across Art and Design

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|--|---|------------------|
| ● <b>1-4</b> Friday, October 23<br>1:30–3:00 PM    | Energetic Worldings through Affective Design<br>Chair: Jonas Fritsch    | <b>SCA: 4955</b> |
| ● <b>2-23</b> Saturday, October 24<br>5:50–7:20 PM | Affective Energetics in Theory and Practice<br>Chair: Christoph Brunner | <b>SCA: 4955</b> |
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### S6. Affective Traces Across Generations

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|--|---|----------------------|
| ● <b>1-5</b> Friday, October 23<br>1:30–3:00 PM    | Affective Traces Across Generations/Art<br>Chair: Tiina Lempinen & Helena Ristaniemi        | <b>WOSK: 0470</b>    |
| ● <b>2-24</b> Saturday, October 24<br>5:50–7:20 PM | Affective Traces Across Generations/Engagement<br>Chair: Tiina Lempinen & Helena Ristaniemi | <b>HARBOUR: 2245</b> |
| ● <b>3-2</b> Sunday, October 25<br>8:15–9:45 AM    | Affective Traces Across Generations/Memories<br>Chair: Helena Ristaniemi & Tiina Lempinen   | <b>HARBOUR: 1600</b> |
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### S7. Curatorial Affects

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|--|---|----------------------|
| ● <b>1-10</b> Friday, October 23<br>3:10–4:40 PM   | Curatorial Affects II<br>Chair: Jennifer Fisher | <b>WOSK: 0030</b>    |
| ● <b>2-25</b> Saturday, October 24<br>5:50–7:20 PM | Curatorial Affects I<br>Chair: Jennifer Fisher  | <b>HARBOUR: 2945</b> |
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## S8. Dirt/Y Affects: Against Clean Living

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|--|--|----------------------|
| ● <b>1-20</b> Friday, October 23<br>7:20–8:50 PM     | Dontello (the Ninja Turtle) once said, “I just thought there would be more to it; to the ooze, to you know, us!”: Atmospheres of Relational Ooze<br>Chair: Michaela Frischherz | <b>WOSK: 0020</b>    |
| ● <b>2-13</b> Saturday, October 24<br>4:10–5:40 PM   | Divine once said, “I have gone to parties where people just sit around and talk about dog shit”: Shitty Pedagogies<br>Chair: Michaela Frischherz & Desirée Rowe                | <b>HARBOUR: 1600</b> |
| ● <b>3-15</b> Sunday, October 25<br>11:45 AM–1:15 PM | Chamillionaire once said, “Catch me Ridin’ Dirty”: Engagements with Dirt & Dust:<br>Chair: Desirée Rowe  | <b>HARBOUR: 1520</b> |

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## S9. Elemental Affects and Atmospheric Wellbeing

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| ● <b>1-15</b> Friday, October 23<br>4:50–6:20 PM       | Atmospheric Resonances<br>Chair: David Rousell               | <b>WOSK: 0020</b>    |
| ● <b>2-8</b> Saturday, October 24<br>10:00 AM–11:30 AM | Temporal Ecologies and Elemental Milieus<br>Chair: Cher Hill | <b>HARBOUR: 2245</b> |
| ● <b>3-3</b> Sunday, October 25<br>8:15–9:45 AM        | Climate Affects and Atmospheres<br>Chair: Deborah Lupton     | <b>HARBOUR: 7000</b> |

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## S10. Exercising Corpo-Realities

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| ● <b>1-16</b> Friday, October 23<br>4:50–6:20 PM   | Exercise and Affective World-Making<br>Chair: Toni Ingram                          | <b>WOSK: 0030</b>    |
| ● <b>2-14</b> Saturday, October 24<br>4:10–5:40 PM | Exercise Performance and the Making of Affective Atmospheres<br>Chair: Paul Bowman | <b>HARBOUR: 2270</b> |

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## S11. Feeling Beside Affect: (Un)Translatable & Ineffable

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|--|--|----------------------|
| ● <b>1-17</b> Friday, October 23<br>4:50–6:20 PM   | Affective Vocabularies in the Chinese Condition<br>Chair: Jiayi Wang | <b>SCA: 4955</b>     |
| ● <b>1-21</b> Friday, October 23<br>7:20–8:50 PM   | Postcolonial Translations and Methods<br>Chair: Alexis Lai           | <b>WOSK: 0030</b>    |
| ● <b>2-2</b> Saturday, October 24<br>8:15–9:45 AM  | Untranslatable Affect and Femininity<br>Chair: Weifan Mo             | <b>HARBOUR: 1520</b> |
| ● <b>2-15</b> Saturday, October 24<br>4:10–5:40 PM | Corporeal Narratives and Materiality<br>Chair: Chufeng Meng          | <b>HARBOUR: 1520</b> |
| ● <b>3-9</b> Sunday, October 25<br>10:00–11:30 AM  | The Geography of Affect<br>Chair: Manuela Rosso-Brugnach             | <b>HARBOUR: 1520</b> |

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## S12. Feeling Sick and Sickly Feelings

● <b>1-6</b> Friday, October 23 1:30–3:00 PM	Crippling the Classroom Chair: Zoë Fuad	<b>WOSK: 0030</b>
● <b>2-3</b> Saturday, October 24 8:15–9:45 AM	Disability Intimacy, Friction, and Rupture: on Disability's (Anti?) Social Affects Chair: Zoë Fuad	<b>HARBOUR: 7000</b>
● <b>3-26</b> Sunday, October 25 6:20–7:50 PM	Disability Visibility, Obscurity, and IL/Legibility: At the Limits of Crip Identification Chair: Zoë Fuad	<b>SCA: 3200</b>

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## S13. Finding Form/Less/None

● <b>1-22</b> Friday, October 23 7:20–8:50 PM	Forms in Interference: Montage, Blur, Motion Chair: Lindsey Freeman	<b>WOSK: 0010</b>
● <b>2-4</b> Saturday, October 24 8:15–9:45 AM	Forms of Attachment: Intimacy, Coherence, and Collective Life Chair: Steve Liu	<b>HARBOUR: 2945</b>
● <b>2-16</b> Saturday, October 24 4:10–5:40 PM	Affective Formations: Density, Adaptation, and Atmosphere Chair: Casey Boyle	<b>HARBOUR: 7000</b>

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## S14. Futures/Critical/Sense-Making

● <b>3-10</b> Sunday, October 25 10:00–11:30 AM	Futures/Critical/Sense-Making: Ecologies of Possibility Chair: Gillian Russell	<b>HARBOUR: 7000</b>
● <b>3-16</b> Sunday, October 25 11:45 AM–1:15 PM	Futures/Critical/Sense-Making: Affecting Method Chair: Frederik Lesage	<b>HARBOUR: 2245</b>

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## S15. Hexegesis, Of and On

● <b>2-17</b> Saturday, October 24 4:10–5:40 PM	Oneiric Moods Chair: David Cecchetto	<b>SCA: 4955</b>
● <b>3-20</b> Sunday, October 25 2:30–4:00 PM	Structural Incantations Chair: Ted Hiebert	<b>HARBOUR: 7000</b>

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## S16. Insurgent Residues of Extraction

● <b>1-1</b> Friday, October 23 10:15–11:45 AM	Rust and Dust, Grieving and Gasping Chair: Mathew Arthur	<b>SCA: 3200</b>
● <b>1-23</b> Friday, October 23 7:20–8:50 PM	Super Residues, Residual Materialisms Chair: Claire Fitch	<b>WOSK: 0420</b>
● <b>3-17</b> Sunday, October 25 11:45 AM–1:15 PM	Imperial Matters, Insurgent Petromolecules Chair: Sophia Jaworski	<b>HARBOUR: 2270</b>

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## S17. Made in/Visible: Threading Technologies and Affective Meaning MAKEing

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| ● <b>2-9</b> Saturday, October 24<br>10:00 AM–11:30 AM | Wavering Epistemologies of Technological Events or How Did We Get Here?<br>Chair: Soham Sen         | <b>HARBOUR: 1600</b> |
| ● <b>3-18</b> Sunday, October 25<br>11:45 AM–1:15 PM   | Perpetuating Atmospheres of Technological Infrastructures or What We Live With<br>Chair: Meha Gupta | <b>HARBOUR: 2945</b> |
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## S18. Minor Theory Amid Transactional Forms (Other People Have Become Incoherent to Me)

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|---|--|----------------------|
| ● <b>2-5</b> Saturday, October 24<br>8:15–9:45 AM       | Pulling Things Apart in the Gravitational Field of Logistics<br>Chair: Robyn Taylor-Neu              | <b>HARBOUR: 2270</b> |
| ● <b>2-10</b> Saturday, October 24<br>10:00 AM–11:30 AM | Because the Weather Misunderstands Us<br>Chair: Harshavardhan Bhat                                   | <b>HARBOUR: 2270</b> |
| ● <b>2-26</b> Saturday, October 24<br>5:50–7:20 PM      | When the Why Disappears but the Wind Does Not Ask the Question<br>Chair: Alecia Beymer & Megan Gette | <b>HARBOUR: 7000</b> |
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## S19. Multispecies Affects: MAKEing Worlds in Precarious Times

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|--|--|----------------------|
| ● <b>1-11</b> Friday, October 23<br>3:10–4:40 PM   | Multispecies Aesthetics and Making Practices<br>Chair: Ceall Quinn | <b>WOSK: 0420</b>    |
| ● <b>2-18</b> Saturday, October 24<br>4:10–5:40 PM | Encountering Affective Ecologies<br>Chair: Ceall Quinn             | <b>HARBOUR: 2945</b> |
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## S20. Occluded Atmospheres: Esoteric Aesthetics, Night Knowledges, and Sensory Shifts

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|---|--|----------------------|
| ● <b>2-11</b> Saturday, October 24<br>10:00 AM–11:30 AM | Night Sweats—Bodies, Moods, Fluids, Desires<br>Chair: jessie beier                 | <b>HARBOUR: 7000</b> |
| ● <b>3-4</b> Sunday, October 25<br>8:15–9:45 AM         | Atmospheric Media—Occult, Pneumatic, and Queer Abstractions<br>Chair: Sandra Huber | <b>HARBOUR: 2270</b> |
| ● <b>3-11</b> Sunday, October 25<br>10:00–11:30 AM      | Ritual Attunements of Body, Form, and Field<br>Chair: Yani Kong                    | <b>SCA: 4955</b>     |
| ● <b>3-21</b> Sunday, October 25<br>2:30–4:00 PM        | Portal Pedagogies & Threshold Ruptures<br>Chair: Victoria Papa                     | <b>HARBOUR: 1600</b> |
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## S21. Sensational Affects, Strange Aesthetics, and (Counter)Pedagogies

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|--|---|-------------------|
| ● <b>1-7</b> Friday, October 23<br>1:30–3:00 PM  | Sensational Affects II: Of Sonics and Listening<br>Chair: Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth | <b>WOSK: 0420</b> |
| ● <b>1-18</b> Friday, October 23<br>4:50–6:20 PM | (Counter)Pedagogies I: Affective Methods<br>Chair: Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth        | <b>WOSK: 0420</b> |
| ● <b>1-24</b> Friday, October 23<br>7:20–8:50 PM | Strange Aesthetics III: Of Art Practices<br>Chair: Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland        | <b>WOSK: 0470</b> |
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● <b>2-6</b> Saturday, October 24 8:15–9:45 AM	Strange Aesthetics I: Engaging Bodies in Spaces Chair: Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland	<b>HARBOUR: 2245</b>
● <b>2-12</b> Saturday, October 24 10:00 AM–11:30 AM	Sensational Affects III: Negotiating Community Chair: Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth	<b>HARBOUR: 2945</b>
● <b>3-5</b> Sunday, October 25 8:15–9:45 AM	(Counter)Pedagogies II: Affective Methods Chair: Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland	<b>HARBOUR: 2945</b>
● <b>3-12</b> Sunday, October 25 10:00–11:30 AM	Sensational Affects I: In Film and Photo Chair: Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth	<b>HARBOUR: 1600</b>
● <b>3-22</b> Sunday, October 25 2:30–4:00 PM	Strange Aesthetics II: Bodies in Motion Chair: Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland	<b>HARBOUR: 2245</b>

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## S22. Storing Wisely: Speculative Fictionings, Affect, and the Politics of the 'What If?'

● <b>1-25</b> Friday, October 23 7:20–8:50 PM	Speculative Inquiry and Methods Chair: Ken Morimoto	<b>SCA: 4955</b>
● <b>3-6</b> Sunday, October 25 8:15–9:45 AM	Speculative Media and Affective Time Chair: Michael Goddard	<b>HARBOUR: 1520</b>
● <b>3-23</b> Sunday, October 25 2:30–4:00 PM	Speculative Care, Embodiment, and Futurity Chair: James Estrada	<b>HARBOUR: 2270</b>

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## S23. Taxonomy, Psychology, and Beyond: Affect in the History of the Sciences

● <b>3-13</b> Sunday, October 25 10:00–11:30 AM	Taxonomy, Psychology, and Beyond: Affect in the History of the Sciences Chair: Jason Emmett Collins	<b>HARBOUR: 2945</b>
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## S24. The Making of an Affective Cosmos: Between Art, Science, and Philosophy

● <b>1-12</b> Friday, October 23 3:10–4:40 PM	Machinic, Molecular and Cosmic Patterns Chair: Janae Sholtz	<b>WOSK: 0470</b>
● <b>2-19</b> Saturday, October 24 4:10–5:40 PM	Cosmological Sensibilities and Affective Entanglements Chair: Ewa Szumilewicz	<b>HARBOUR: 2245</b>
● <b>3-19</b> Sunday, October 25 11:45 AM–1:15 PM	Cosmic Creativity - Building Affective Worlds Chair: Alain Beaulieu	<b>HARBOUR: 7000</b>



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## S25. Theory (for Now)

● <b>1-19</b> Friday, October 23 4:50–6:20 PM	On the Angles of Theory: Diffraction, Being Affect, Atmospherics, Negativity & Hope Chair: Walter Lucken IV	<b>WOSK: 0470</b>
● <b>3-24</b> Sunday, October 25 2:30–4:00 PM	Theorizing Political Collectivity: Desire, Pride, Anti-populism, Shame Chair: Chad Shomura	<b>HARBOUR: 2945</b>

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## S26. Make-Break-Flows

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|--|--|----------------------|
|  <b>1-13</b> Friday, October 23<br>3:10–4:40 PM | <b>Fragile, Falling, Dying, and Healing</b><br>Chair: Gregory J. Seigworth | <b>SCA: 4955</b>     |
|  <b>3-25</b> Sunday, October 25<br>2:30–4:00 PM | <b>The Breaks</b><br>Chair: M. Gail Hamner                                 | <b>HARBOUR: 1520</b> |

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## Making Matters

### **#haircutsforplanetarysurvival (a Queer Feminist Infrastructure for Climate Change)**

Astrida Neimanis

#### **Kiosk Open**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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### **Altar-Ing How We Gather: a Workshop for Wor(I)ding and Remembering Otherwise**

Bretton Varga

#### **Kiosk Open**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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### **An Arch for Trump: a Mail-Art Installation + Workshop**

Florian Grundmüller

#### **Installation**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM

#### **Workshop**

**SCA: 3750** Saturday, October 24: 2:30–4:00 PM

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### **Arcana of Affect**

Andie Shabbar

#### **Kiosk Open**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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### **Econut: The Harvest Counter**

Shihan Zhang

#### **Kiosk Open**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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### **Exploring Embodiment Through T'ai Chi**

Paul Bowman

#### **Workshop**

**SCA: 4650** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–12:45 PM

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### **How to Make Banana Pot Roast**

Rainn Forrest Jackson; Bea Hurd

**SCA: 4955** Sunday, October 25: 2:30–4:00 PM

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**Hydrofeminist Action Generator (H.A.G) | Mark(ed) Water Time**

Dawn Roe

**Installation**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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**I Won't Bite**

Bianca McDonald

**Installation**

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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**Learning from the High Priestess: A Book Release/A Workshop**

Ann Cvetkovich

**Workshop**

**HARBOUR: 1520** Saturday, October 24: 2:30–4:00 PM

**Kiosk Open**

**SCA: 2555** Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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**Little Trees**

Sophia Jaworski

**Short Film**

**SCA: 4955** Sunday, October 25: 2:30–4:00 PM

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**Making Sanctuary for a Vanishing Sound: Choor Khuur, Resonance, and Modular Synthesis**

Xiaoyue Zhang; Anqi Liu

**SCA: 3200** Saturday, October 24: 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

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**Meaningful Encounters Matter: Polyamorous Methods for Transdisciplinary Collaborations**

Julia Jung

**Kiosk Open**

**SCA: 3205** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM

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**Moist**

Jennifer Lin LeMesurier

**SCA: 3200** Saturday, October 24: 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

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**Oneiric Mutirão: Moving with the Field of Dreaming**

Bianca Scliar Cabral Mancini; Giovanna Soares Malpighi

**Workshop (No Signup Required)**

**SCA: 3205** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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**Putting the Heart Back in Academia: An RTD Club Gathering**

Magali Forte; Jacky Barreiro; Tanya Behrisch

**Workshop**

**SCA: 3750** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM

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## ● Recipes for a Spectacle: CAKE

Kyra Philbert

### Performance

**SCA: 3200** Saturday, October 24: 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

### Installation

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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## ● Respiratory Justice: Elemental Techniques for Sensing Atmospheric Wellbeing

Deborah Lupton; David Rousell; Chloe Wattfern

### Workshop

**HARBOUR: 2270** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM

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## ● Scrappy, Beautiful, Emergent: Stitching Together a Narrative of the #MAKE Conference

Wendy J. Truran; Catherine E. Paul

### Workshop

**SCA: 4390** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM

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## ● Similar Rubble

Robyn Taylor-Neu

### Short Film

**SCA: 3200** Saturday, October 24: 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

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## ● Slow Formations

Ileanna Sophia Cheladyn

### Workshop

**SCA: 4650** Saturday, October 24: 2:30–4:00 PM

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## ● Textile Thoughts, Patchworking Inquiries

Anastasia Y. Goodwin

### Installation

**SCA: 3205** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

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## ● The Courage to Be

Katalin Halász

**SCA: 3200** Saturday, October 24: 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

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## ● The Forms of Landscape

Michal Krawczyk

### Short Film

**SCA: 4955** Sunday, October 25: 2:30–4:00 PM

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## ● The Outlines of Loss

Asilia Franklin-Phipps; Kay Gordon

### Kiosk Open

**SCA: 2555** Saturday, October 24: 11:45 AM–1:15 PM; 2:30–4:00 PM  
Sunday, October 25: 10:00–11:30 AM

### Workshop

**SCA: 4390** Saturday, October 24: 2:30–4:00 PM

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● **Welcome to the Drum Circle: Inviting Resonance and Creating Movement for Ceremony, Community, and Self**

Carman McKay

**Workshop**

**SCA: 4955**

Saturday, October 24: 2:30–4:00 PM

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● **Women Cannibals and the Visceral Chamber.**

Julie Le Hegarat

**SCA: 3200**

Saturday, October 24: 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

# Schedule



- Conference Check-In, Events, and Meals
- Spotlight Panel
- Concurrent Panels
- Making Matters

## Friday, October 23

9:15–9:45 AM

● **Registration, Coffee, and Snacks**

**SCA: 2200**

Registration with coffee, muffins, scones, and banana bread. Registration tables can be found in the 2nd floor lobby and coffee and snacks are in the World Art Centre down the hall.

9:45–10:15 AM

● **Conference Welcome**

**SCA: 3200**

Conference welcome with Mathew, Greg, Wendy, and Eldritch.

10:15–11:45 AM

● **Spotlight**

**SCA: 3200**

1-1 ● S16. INSURGENT RESIDUES OF EXTRACTION  
**Rust and Dust, Grieving and Gasping**

Chaired by Mathew Arthur

Bretton Varga

Andrea Vela-Alarcón

María Fernandez Pello

Anna Hickey-Moody

The Holes We (Must) Fill

Unforgetting the Rubber Genocide: Re-Storying Absence in the Peruvian Amazon

Dust Doesn't Think of Us—A Moving Essay

Gasping: the Intersectionality of Air Pollution

11:45 AM–1:15 PM

● **Conference Lunch**

**SCA: 2555**

Conference bagged lunch served at the World Art Centre. Feel free to explore the SCA roof deck, courtyard, or nearby parks.

1:30–3:00 PM

● **Concurrent Panels**

**WOSK: 0020**

1-2 ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES  
**Post-Settler Attachments in Minor Key**

Chaired by Michael Lechuga

Megan Poole

Michael Lechuga

Donnie Johnson Sackey

Settler Feelings and Environment

Settler Feelings and Time

Settler Feelings and Energy

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**1-3** ● S4. AFFECTIVE OCEANIC ENCOUNTERS IN THE MAKEING **WOSK: 0010**  
**Haunted Waters and Atmospheres of Displacement**  
Chaired by Delphi Carstens

Christopher Pham	Abyssal Atmospheres of Remaindered Intimacy
Emile Fromet de Rosnay	Littoral Ontogenesis: Anecdote, Exile, Language
Margaret Rowley	Written by the Divine: on Senegal's Edge, Making Thick Community with the Ocean
Pamila Gupta	"Joburg's Swimming Pools: Watery Contemplations, Atmospheric Imaginings"

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**1-4** ● S5. AFFECTIVE POLITICS AND ENERGETIC TRANSDUCTIONS ACROSS **SCA: 4955**  
ART AND DESIGN  
**Energetic Worldings through Affective Design**

Chaired by Jonas Fritsch

Kristina Mah; Jonas Fritsch	Designing for Energetic Differentials: Affective Field Modulations in Interactive Environments
Chenxi Cui	Cosmotechnical Energetics: Affective Matter, Qi, and the Transduction of Design Ethics
Matthew-Robin Nye	Sailing: Force-to-Form
Anastasia Y. Goodwin	The Energies of Clothed Bodies: a Vital Materialist Proposition for Transforming "Sustainable Fashion"

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**1-5** ● S6. AFFECTIVE TRACES ACROSS GENERATIONS **WOSK: 0470**  
**Affective Traces Across Generations/Art**

Chaired by Tiina Lempinen & Helena Ristaniemi

Tang Zixin	Homeless Home: Intimacy, Queer Subjectivity, and Anticolonial Temporality in How Much of These Hills Is Gold
Camille Brijer	Blood, Camera, Action: the Viennese Actionists and Post-Fascist Affective Inheritance
Angel Maria Varghese	"It Was What He Had Refused to Name, and It Was Now with Me": Intergenerational Traces of Illness, Trauma, Shame, and Care in Indian Life Writing
Masayuki Iwase	Untimely "Shock to Thought": Affective Encounters with Temporal Entanglements and Frictions through a Deformed Vision and Rhythmic Sensations

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**1-6** ● S12. FEELING SICK AND SICKLY FEELINGS **WOSK: 0030**  
**Crippling the Classroom**

Chaired by Zoë Fuad

Maddie Neufeld	Haunting Ableism and Whiteness: Windowless Classrooms and the Slow Death of Teaching
Marcelina Obarska	Towards Emo Scholarship. Who Cares?
Mindy Ptolomey; Lisa Bradley; Anna Bochorishvili	Crafting Visible Mending with Neurodivergent Girls and Young Women: Making the Present Moment of the Research-Creation Encounter a Fractal to the Future
Adrienne Pinsoneault	Young, Healthy, and Malignant: an Ont(c)ology of Affective (Un)intelligibility in University Accommodations Processes

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**1-7** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND **WOSK: 0420**  
(COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES  
**Sensational Affects II: Of Sonics and Listening**

Chaired by Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth

Natalie LeBlanc; Natasha S. Reid	Sensing Strange Intimacies in (Anti-)racist and (Anti-)oppressive Artistic Approaches in a University Art Gallery
Maude B. Lafrance	Listening Back to Affect: the Audio Essay as Research-Creation in a Feminist Oral History of Theatre
Kaitlyn Patia	A Genealogy of Screams
Matthew Bejtlich	Sounding Reciprocity: Listening Practices for Multispecies Organizations

3:10–4:40 PM

● **Concurrent Panels**

**1-8** ● S2. AFFECT-IONATE APPETITES: DESIRE, DISGUST, AND ALL THE FEELINGS IN BETWEEN

**WOSK: 0020**

**Consuming Objects**

Chaired by Jennifer LeMesurier

Ran Xiang	Learning with and Through the Swirl of Affects: the Pedagogical Agency of Non-Human Entities in Tea
Nadia Di Martino	The Affective Life of a Spoon
Liyufan	What Food Becomes: Affective Mutations of Eating in the Self-Writing of Chinese Women with Eating Disorders
Alexis McGee	Black Women's Bodily Texts: a Method for Future Makings of Civility

**1-9** ● S3. AFFECTIVE BUILT WORLD: BODY-SPACE POLITICS BEYOND UTILITY

**WOSK: 0010**

**Space and Abstract Affect Writing**

Chaired by Allyson Compton

Allyson Compton	Making Kin with Space
Gordon Titchener	We're All in This Together – Countermobility and the Collective Renegotiation of the Railway Journey
Qin Junjie	Refugee Narratives and Affective Spatiality in Hong Kong Literature: Centered on XI XI's Tigerland
Emma Gibb	A Home with Infinite Rooms: Temporal Loitering in Colossal Youth (2006)

**1-10** ● S7. CURATORIAL AFFECTS

**WOSK: 0030**

**Curatorial Affects II**

Chaired by Jennifer Fisher

Bilge Ece Çizmeci	Vegan Imaginaries: Rehearsing Freedom and Redistributing the Sensible Through (An)archival Bloom Spaces
Maya Rodrigo-Abdi	The Daddy Dérive: a Case Study in Psychogeographical Curatorial Process
Drew White	In the Werk Room: the Curatorial Affects of Drag Storytime
Nilou Yekta	You Can Comprehend My Pain, but You Can't Feel It: Curatorial Affect and the Afterlife of Witnessing

**1-11** ● S19. MULTISPECIES AFFECTS: MAKEING WORLDS IN PRECARIOUS TIMES

**WOSK: 0420**

**Multispecies Aesthetics and Making Practices**

Chaired by Ceall Quinn

Elise Kristin Sæhle	Eco Violence: the Toxic Sublime and Contemporary Art Amongst Polluted Water Bodies
Dale MacDonald	Funerals at the End of the World: Dirt, Decomposition, and Dy(e)ing in the Anthropocene
Sabrina Meherally; Safeera Jaffer	How Do I Love an Invasive Species? a Sensorial Exploration of Political Affective Ecologies, Deviance, and Portals of Possibility
Luke Iandoli	Kelp Erotics; Speculative Aesthetics in Multispecies Worlds

**1-12** ● S24. THE MAKING OF AN AFFECTIVE COSMOS: BETWEEN ART, SCIENCE, AND PHILOSOPHY

**WOSK: 0470**

**Machinic, Molecular and Cosmic Patterns**

Chaired by Janae Sholtz

Delphi Carstens	Ecosophy, Deep-Time & Machine-Vision: Mapping an Affective Cosmos
Andrew Culp; A Thousand Plateaus Reading Group	The Nomadology Visualizer: Four Nomadic Models of Capture and Flight
Alain Beaulieu	Fractal Cosmology, Chaomological Thinking and Affect Theory
Ewa Szumilewicz	Toward a Cosmic Aesthetics: String Theory and the Affective Limits of Thought

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**1-13** ● S26. MAKE-BREAK-FLOWS  
**Fragile, Falling, Dying, and Healing**

**SCA: 4955**

Chaired by Gregory J. Seigworth

Sreelakshmy M	Contesting Fragility and Freedom in More-than-Human Worlds
Farah Siddiqui	Affective Stylistics and Method in Don DeLillo's <i>Falling Man</i> in Framing the Identity of "Others"
Alan DeClerck	"As if Each Silent Grief Were (In)communicable": Reading the Narratorial Voices of the Dead in <i>Moby-Dick</i>
Mia Livingston	Night Knowing: Somatic Psychotherapy, Buddhist Practice, and the Occluded Atmospheres of Healing

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**4:50–6:20 PM** ● **Concurrent Panels**

**1-14** ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES  
**Sublimation as Invitation: Accounting for Absence**

**WOSK: 0010**

Chaired by Carrie Rentschler

Carrie Rentschler	Handling Precious Materials: Post-Mortem Writing and Co-Existence
Valentina Proust	Sensing Absence: Feminist Protest Practices and the Making-Present of Absent Lives
Sydney Sheedy	Staying Present with Absence: Somatic Experiencing and the 'Void' of Whiteness
Vanessa Mabonso Nzolo	The Man-Not on My Screen: Following the Affective Traces of Black Death

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**1-15** ● S9. ELEMENTAL AFFECTS AND ATMOSPHERIC WELLBEING  
**Atmospheric Resonances**

**WOSK: 0020**

Chaired by David Rousell

Max Gibson	Affective Resonances of Care: Field Recording Without Use
Vandhana Ravi	Campus Climates and the Coloniality of Affect
Sarah Sharp	"What a Difference a Wing Makes": How Anne Carson Lets Us See Ourselves as 'Sky-Subjects'
Ridita Mizan	Temporal Multiplicities: A Transnational Academic Inquiry into Time

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**1-16** ● S10. EXERCISING CORPO-REALITIES  
**Exercise and Affective World-Making**

**WOSK: 0030**

Chaired by Toni Ingram

Lauren Miller-Crawford	Affective Habitus in Capoeira & Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu
Paul Bowman	Feel the Burn: Bodybuilding as Method in Affect Studies
Gabriela Mendez Cota	Will the Orchids Rise? on the Bodybuilder as a Deconstructive Ecofeminist Figure
Jocelyn Holmes	A Feminist Posthuman View of Artistic Gestures: Affect, Embodiment, and Ethical Implications

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**1-17** ● S11. FEELING BESIDE AFFECT: (UN)TRANSLATABLE & INEFFABLE  
**Affective Vocabularies in the Chinese Condition**

**SCA: 4955**

Chaired by Jiayi Wang

Qianwen Zhou	From Sympathy to Yifen: Abyssinia and the Untranslatable Politics of Feeling in Republican China
Jiayi Wang; Jing Lu	Feeling Shuang 爽: Neoliberal Sensibility with Chinese Characterization and the Affective Politics of Chinese Women's Popular Drama
Tang Zixin	The Symphony of Hen: Affect, Lyricism, and the Modern Chinese Condition in <i>Yi Yi</i> : a One and a Two
Yuhan Zhang	Cì Jī (刺激): Sensation, Romanticized Violence, and the Affective Economy of a 1932 Murder Case

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**1-18** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES

**WOSK: 0420**

**(Counter)Pedagogies I: Affective Methods**

Chaired by Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth

Bessie P. Dernikos; Jaye Johnson Thiel	Following the Witch's Flight: Reimagining Professionalism in Early Childhood Literacy Education
Isabella Bartels	Poetry as Method: Sensed Speculation at the Limits of Educational Research
Adrienne Boulton	Surrealist Inquiry: Affective Pedagogies in the Dreaming of Educational Selves
Nasrin Tork	Atmospheric Sensory Methods: Cabinets of Curiosities and Anarchives Within Studio Practice

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**1-19** ● S25. THEORY (FOR NOW)

**WOSK: 0470**

**On the Angles of Theory: Diffraction, Being Affect, Atmospherics, Negativity & Hope**

Chaired by Walter Lucken IV

Steve Garlick	Diffraction of Neoliberal Theory Through Gender and Affect
Lena Kostuj	Being Affected in Spaces of Perceptual Divergence
Chad Shomura	Atmospherics of Theory
K Wang	Ugly Feelings, Melancholic Attachments

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6:20–7:20 PM

● **Dinner on Your Own**

Dinner on your own. Check the #MAKE website for restaurant recommendations.

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7:20–8:50 PM

● **Concurrent Panels**

**1-20** ● S8. DIRTY AFFECTS: AGAINST CLEAN LIVING

**WOSK: 0020**

**Dontello (the Ninja Turtle) once said, "I just thought there would be more to it; to the ooze, to you know, us!": Atmospheres of Relational Ooze**

Chaired by Michaela Frischherz

Margaret Schwartz	A Monstrous Genealogy: Microchimerism as Affective Smear
Nael Bhanji; Kelly McGuire	Fluid Fantasies: Affect, Purity, and the Fertile Politics of (White) Nationalist Futurity
Brubey (WanZhi) Hu	Maintained by Residue: Feminist Research-Creation Against Domestic Erasure
Quinn Daugherty	Disordered Landscapes and Dirty Subjects: Abject Aesthetics in Julia Lederer's <i>It's Nothing</i> (2019)

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**1-21** ● S11. FEELING BESIDE AFFECT: (UN)TRANSLATABLE & INEFFABLE

**WOSK: 0030**

**Postcolonial Translations and Methods**

Chaired by Alexis Lai

Nazak Birjandifar	More than Affect: Emotions, Ethics, and Hierarchy in the Letters of Ḥakīm Abū Al-Faṭḥ Ḡilānī
Alexis Lai	The Cruel Optimisation of Language in Post-Handover Hong Kong
Yuge Emily Li	Not Like Affect Theory: Rey Chow's Cultural Translation and Affective Translatability
Lauren Mark; Marina Basu	Moving Beyond Linguistic Colonization in Research: Experimentations in Method-Making as Relation

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**1-22** ● S13. FINDING FORM/LESS/NESS

**WOSK: 0010**

**Forms in Interference: Montage, Blur, Motion**

Chaired by Lindsey Freeman

Jie Zhou	When the Outline Dissolves: Fire, Blur, and Environmental Affect in Portrait of a Lady on Fire
Zeina Tarraf	Lists and Montage in Post-2019 Lebanon
Lindsey Freeman	Motricity and Desire: on Running Between Form and Formlessness
Mitch Renaud	Atmospheric Attention; in-Determination (After Cybernetics)

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**1-23** ● S16. INSURGENT RESIDUES OF EXTRACTION  
**Super Residues, Residual Materialisms**

**WOSK: 0420**

Chaired by Claire Fitch

Mathew Arthur	Super Residues
Morgan Legal; Sybil Willoughby	By-Places: Improvising (In)organic Sociality Amidst Urban Industry
Claire Fitch	Creation in Excess of the Neoliberal Knowledge Machine
Craig Campbell	Model Life and the Entangled Residues of Disparate Extractive Projects in Far West Texas.

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**1-24** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES

**WOSK: 0470**

**Strange Aesthetics III: Of Art Practices**

Chaired by Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland

Bianca McDonald	BURNOUT: Femininity, Humour, and Abjection in the Rural Space
Hazel Antaramian Hofman	Middle Voice of Subject Affectedness: Distributor of Aesthetic Gifts
Maegan Harbridge	Mark-Making as Sense-Making: Painting as a Site for Critical Perception
Paula Wuth	Art as an Interpretive Amplifier for Organizations

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**1-25** ● S22. STORYING WISELY: SPECULATIVE FICTIONINGS, AFFECT, AND THE POLITICS OF THE 'WHAT IF?'

**SCA: 4955**

**Speculative Inquiry and Methods**

Chaired by Ken Morimoto

Ken Morimoto	Dreaming of Potato Chips: Speculative a/R/Tography with Everyday Objects in Between Hope and Despair
Yuko Ida	Multiplicity of What-if Questions as Affective Forces Driving Experiments with Forms
Sakhi Upadhyaya	Rehearsing the Future as Past: Speculative Remembrance as Affective Pedagogy in Contemporary India
Bradley Sullivan	Speculative Fiction and Eco-Futures: A Call to Engage Pre-Service Teachers in Affective Writing Practices

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## Saturday, October 24

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**8:15–9:45 AM** ● **Concurrent Panels**

**2-1** ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES  
**Ruins and Residues of the Not-Quite and Might Never-Be**

**HARBOUR: 1600**

Chaired by Lisa Mazzei

Lisa Mazzei	Affective Silence: Provocations and Ontological Becomings
Juliana España Keller	Dancing with Spectres: Affective Lucidity and the Afterparty of Absence
Haleh Mir Miri	That Which Did Not Happen: Unlived Life, Affective Residue, and the Force of Absence
Petra Mikulan	The Afterparty of the Future: Absence, Anticipation, and the Exhaustion of Not-Yet

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**2-2** ● S11. FEELING BESIDE AFFECT: (UN)TRANSLATABLE & INEFFABLE **HARBOUR: 1520**

**Untranslatable Affect and Femininity**

Chaired by Weifan Mo

Jacina Leong

Qi, Fascianatura and the Cultural Specificities of Affect

Weifan Mo

Sensing the Current: Water, Femininity and the Feeling of Fate

Yilin Zhang

痴情司 (Chiqing Si): Transgression, Excess, and Punishment of Qing (情) as a Supernatural Force in Ming-Qing Romance and Ghost Literature

Maria Filocha

Affective Mediation in the Figure of Ophelia in William Shakespeare

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**2-3** ● S12. FEELING SICK AND SICKLY FEELINGS **HARBOUR: 7000**

**Disability Intimacy, Friction, and Rupture: on Disability's (Anti?)Social Affects**

Chaired by Zoë Fuad

Saran Mahasupap

Beyond Visibility: Affect, Queer Crip and Queer Interdependency in Juab Jon Sin Saeng Dao

Zoe Fuad

Crip/p//ing Fear: A Reparative Framework for Dis/abled Coalition

Jestina Ricci

Disability and Feeling Ugly: the Hunchback's Struggle Against Desire/Ability

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**2-4** ● S13. FINDING FORM/LESS/NESS **HARBOUR: 2945**

**Forms of Attachment: Intimacy, Coherence, and Collective Life**

Chaired by Steve Liu

Steve Liu

The Form/Force of Bodies in "Falling Together"

Negar Banisafar

The Inconvenience of Other Genres: Filmfarsi, the Iranian New Wave, and Inter-Generic Intimacy

Kevin Dong

Useful Delight of Harvest: Feeling in the Suihua Rural Cooperative, 1937–1941

Nicole Lee

A Pedagogy of Affective Coherence

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**2-5** ● S18. MINOR THEORY AMID TRANSACTIONAL FORMS (OTHER PEOPLE HAVE BECOME INCOHERENT TO ME) **HARBOUR: 2270**

**Pulling Things Apart in the Gravitational Field of Logistics**

Chaired by Robyn Taylor-Neu

Robyn Taylor-Neu

Sticky Figures: Animation and the Violence of Relation

Peixuan Zhao

Stickiness and the Threshold of Affective Injustice

Yuyue Sun

Un-Becoming Chinese Diasporas (I Have Become Incoherent to Other People)

Dilan Kizil

Affect, Body, and Lyrical Survival in Nine Parts of Desire

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**2-6** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES **HARBOUR: 2245**

**Strange Aesthetics I: Engaging Bodies in Spaces**

Chaired by Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland

Nicole Marchesseau

Hospital Location Codes as T(r)ipping Points

Vandhana Ravi

Artists in the Archive: Situating the Texts That Shape Our Lives

Riccardo Masiero; Roberto Verganti; Paolo Quattrone

Atmospheres of Knowing: Investigating Art, Space, and the Aesthetics of Management Education Through the Stockholm School of Economics Art Initiative

Eve Stowe

Look Both Ways: Towards a Queer Reimagining of Pedestrian 'Infrastructure'

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9:15–10:00 AM

● **Registration, Coffee, and Snacks**

**SCA: 2200**

Registration with coffee, muffins, scones, and banana bread. Registration tables can be found in the 2nd floor lobby and coffee and snacks are in the World Art Centre down the hall.

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10:00 AM–11:30 AM

● **Making Matters Musical Performance and Film Screening**

**SCA: 3200**

Join us for a series of performances and short films followed by a Q+A with the performers and filmmakers:

- "Making Sanctuary for a Vanishing Sound: Choor Khuur, Resonance, and Modular Synthesis," Xiaoyue Zhang and Anqi Liu (20 min)
  - "The Courage to Be," Katalin Halász (30 min)
  - "Similar Rubble," Robyn Taylor-Neu (2 min)
  - "Moist," Jennifer Lin LeMesurier (5 min)
  - "Recipes for a Spectacle: CAKE," Kyra Philbert (8 min)
  - "Women Cannibals and the Visceral Chamber," Julie Le Hegarat (5 min)
  - Q+A with the performers and filmmakers (20 min)
- 

10:00 AM–11:30 AM

● **Concurrent Panels**

2-7 ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES

**HARBOUR: 1520**

**Restoring Decolonial Traces Through Ecological Affectivity**

Chaired by Alana Brekelmans

Dylan Annandale	Defusing 'Settler Atmospheric': Absence and Affective Porosity in Environmental Deliberation
Emma Duggleby	Dry Waters: Tracing Anti-Colonial Life in Desert Washes
Alana Brekelmans	HAUNTING! RUBBLE! EXCESS!: Some Yarns About Presence and Absence in Outback Australia.
Volodymyr Amiot	Dirty All the Way Down: Gooning as Pharmacopornographic Cruising

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2-8 ● S9. ELEMENTAL AFFECTS AND ATMOSPHERIC WELLBEING

**HARBOUR: 2245**

**Temporal Ecologies and Elemental Milieus**

Chaired by Cher Hill

David Rousell; Jacina Leong; Merinda Kelly	Affective Counter-Histories: Atmospheres of Ruination, Rupture, and Re-Assembly
Emma Gibb	Reassembling the Self: Land/Sea and Life/Death in Atlantiques (2009)
Beth A. Martin	Petrichoric Ontology: Towards an Atmospheric Understanding of Being
Cher Hill; Zuzana Vasko	Wholistic Forest-Based Learning: an Elemental Approach to Teacher Education

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2-9 ● S17. MADE IN/VISIBLE: THREADING TECHNOLOGIES AND AFFECTIVE MEANING MAKEING

**HARBOUR: 1600**

**Wavering Epistemologies of Technological Events or How Did We Get Here?**

Chaired by Soham Sen

Radek Przedpelski	Affectations of Quantum Nature: Quantum Art Between Quantum Policy and Radical Practice
Meha Gupta	Confessions of a Quantum Thinker: "Sensory Assault" of the New Physics and Jack Whitten's Notes from the Woodshed
Rowan Melling	Absolute Knowledge, Sloppy Affect
MacKayla Kelsey	Techno-Somatics: Algorithmic Architecture, Mobile Atmospheres and Corporeal Intelligences

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**2-10** ● S18. MINOR THEORY AMID TRANSACTIONAL FORMS (OTHER PEOPLE HAVE BECOME INCOHERENT TO ME) **HARBOUR: 2270**

### Because the Weather Misunderstands Us

Chaired by Harshavardhan Bhat

James Garwood-Cole	The Weather in O'Hara
Patrick Nickleson	Misunderstanding the "Music" Out of Musicology.
Harshavardhan Bhat; Megan Gette	An Ohio Polycrisis for Every Landscape
Wendy J. Truran; Catherine E. Paul	Affective Quilting: Piecing Knowledges and Lives with Fabric as a Creative-Praxis

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**2-11** ● S20. OCCLUDED ATMOSPHERES: ESOTERIC AESTHETICS, NIGHT KNOWLEDGES, AND SENSORY SHIFTS **HARBOUR: 7000**

### Night Sweats—Bodies, Moods, Fluids, Desires

Chaired by jessie beier

Victoria Papa	Subtle Bodies, Occluded Desires
Sandra Huber	Water, Blood, Ectoplasm: Deviant Fluids and Esoteric Atmospheres
Rosie Clarke; Ela Przybylo	BED MOODS: Asexual Erotics in an Age of Exhaustion
valley weadick	Children of the Night: Trans Life After Dark

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**2-12** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES **HARBOUR: 2945**

### Sensational Affects III: Negotiating Community

Chaired by Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth

Keisha Maloney; Joanna Kocsis	Strategies for Navigating Affective Responses in Planning Pedagogy
Adriana Kapala	Affects and Archives: Some Reflections on Community Archives in Poland
Katie Fuller	Moving Through an Art Exhibition That Centers Racial Difference Using Affect as an Analytical Tool
Mazalit Haim	From a History of Tears to Hope on Display: Affective Curatorship and the Jewish Future at Anu—the Museum of the Jewish People

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**11:45 AM–1:15 PM** ● **Making Matters Workshops (Signup Required)** **SCA: 3750**

Please sign up for workshops here: [affectsociety.com/make/workshops](https://affectsociety.com/make/workshops)

● **Putting the Heart Back in Academia: An RTD Club Gathering** **SCA: 3750**

Magali Forte; Jacky Barreiro; Tanya Behrisch  
Workshop

● **Exploring Embodiment Through T'ai Chi** **SCA: 4650**

11:45 AM–12:45 PM

Paul Bowman

Workshop

● **Scrappy, Beautiful, Emergent: Stitching Together a Narrative of the #MAKE Conference** **SCA: 4390**

Wendy J. Truran; Catherine E. Paul

Workshop

● **Respiratory Justice: Elemental Techniques for Sensing Atmospheric Wellbeing** **HARBOUR: 2270**

Deborah Lupton; David Rousell; Chloe Wattfern

Workshop

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11:45 AM–1:15 PM ● **Visit Making Matters Kiosks**

Visit the Making Matters Kiosks and installations in the World Art Centre and Upstairs Lobby.

**SCA: 2555**

- An Arch for Trump: a Mail-Art Installation + Workshop, Florian Grundmüller
- Altar-Ing How We Gather: a Workshop for Wor(l)ding and Remembering Otherwise, Bretton Varga
- Econut: The Harvest Counter, Shihan Zhang
- Hydrofeminist Action Generator (H.A.G) | Mark(ed) Water Time, Dawn Roe
- I Won't Bite, Bianca McDonald
- Recipes for a Spectacle: CAKE, Kyra Philbert
- Arcana of Affect, Andie Shabbar
- The Outlines of Loss, Asilia Franklin-Phipps; Kay Gordon
- #haircutsforplanetarysurvival (a Queer Feminist Infrastructure for Climate Change), Astrida Neimanis

**SCA: 3205**

- Oneiric Mutirão: Moving with the Field of Dreaming, Bianca Scliar Cabral Mancini; Giovanna Soares Malpighi
- Meaningful Encounters Matter: Polyamorous Methods for Transdisciplinary Collaborations, Julia Jung
- Textile Thoughts, Patchworking Inquiries, Anastasia Y. Goodwin

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1:15–2:30 PM ● **Lunch on Your Own**

Lunch on your own. Check the #MAKE website for restaurant recommendations.

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2:30–4:00 PM

● **Making Matters Workshops (Signup Required)**

**SCA: 4650**

Please sign up for workshops here: [affectsociety.com/make/workshops](https://affectsociety.com/make/workshops)

● **Slow Formations**

**SCA: 4650**

Ileanna Sophia Cheladyn

Workshop

● **Welcome to the Drum Circle: Inviting Resonance and Creating Movement for Ceremony, Community, and Self**

**SCA: 4955**

Carman McKay

Workshop

● **Learning from the High Priestess: A Book Release/A Workshop**

**HARBOUR: 1520**

Ann Cvetkovich

Workshop

● **The Outlines of Loss**

**SCA: 4390**

Asilia Franklin-Phipps; Kay Gordon

Workshop

● **An Arch for Trump: a Mail-Art Installation + Workshop**

**SCA: 3750**

Florian Grundmüller

Workshop

2:30–4:00 PM

**Visit Making Matters Kiosks**

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- Textile Thoughts, Patchworking Inquiries, Anastasia Y. Goodwin

4:10–5:40 PM

**Concurrent Panels**

2-13

S8. DIRT/Y AFFECTS: AGAINST CLEAN LIVING

**HARBOUR: 1600**

Divine once said, "I have gone to parties where people just sit around and talk about dog shit": Shitty Pedagogies

Chaired by Michaela Frischherz & Desirée Rowe

Nadia Di Martino	Pedagogies of Contamination: Rethinking Dirt, Care and Professionalism in Australian Early Childhood Education
Sreemoyee Bhattacharyya	Pedagogy of Refusal/Refuse: the Material Politics of Dirt in Yasmin Zaher's the Coin
Michaela Frischherz; Desirée Rowe	Reveling in Rot: Queer Decomposition Pedagogies and the Promise of Stuff That Stinks.
Allyson Compton	ROIs and Island Time: Exploring configurations of waste in neoliberal education

2-14

S10. EXERCISING CORPO-REALITIES

**HARBOUR: 2270**

Exercise Performance and the Making of Affective Atmospheres

Chaired by Paul Bowman

Cooper Casale	Bonesmashing: Fascist Skin, Bruising, and the Non-Conscious
Kelsey Blair	Haunted Repertoires: Empowering Affects in Women's Basketball and Ballet
Toni Ingram	Physical Education and the Affective Choreography of Sexism
Ruiqi Wang	Performing Affect Through Masquerade: Eisa Jocson's Performances in 2015

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**2-15** ● S11. FEELING BESIDE AFFECT: (UN)TRANSLATABLE & INEFFABLE **HARBOUR: 1520**  
**Corporeal Narratives and Materiality**  
Chaired by Chufeng Meng

Chufeng Meng	Flooded Lives, Cluttered Worlds: Making Sense Beyond Narrativity in Kim Ae-Ran and Lee Chang-Dong
Aparna Ros P	The Capture of Affect: Articulations of Spatiality in Malayalam from Twentieth Century Kerala
Chenxi Ma	Relational Articulation of Pain in the Chinese Translation of Pathemata
Kelvin Ronghan Qin	"That Little White Pill": Knotted Identities and Ineffable Affect

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**2-16** ● S13. FINDING FORM/LESS/NESS **HARBOUR: 7000**  
**Affective Formations: Density, Adaptation, and Atmosphere**  
Chaired by Casey Boyle

Kurtis Lesick	Beginning and the Failure of Form
Nathaniel A Rivers	Exaptation: Form Making Form
Casey Boyle; Jenny Rice	Marshmallow Nationalism and the Formation of a Stay-Puft Present
Hannah Hopkins	On Dense Formations

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**2-17** ● S15. HEXEGESIS, OFS AND ONS **SCA: 4955**  
**Oneiric Moods**  
Chaired by David Cecchetto

James Belflower	14 Yawns: the Capacities of Boredom
Edith Skeard	I Kneel into a Dream; Recollection, Hallucination, and Sound Memory.
Eldritch Priest	Of Cannibals and Clowns: a Reverie on Reverie
Ted Hiebert	Riding Red Horses: from Hexegesis to Hexposure

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**2-18** ● S19. MULTISPECIES AFFECTS: MAKEING WORLDS IN PRECARIOUS TIMES **HARBOUR: 2945**  
**Encountering Affective Ecologies**  
Chaired by Ceall Quinn

Huy Hoang Nguyen	Atmospheres of Uncertainty: Multispecies Non-Knowing and the Holy Whale in Vietnam
Ceall Quinn	Greenhouse Atmospheres
Juanita Sundberg; Leticia Durand	More-than-Human Listening for Making Worlds Otherwise
R. Caroline Stampliaka	The Affective Ecologies of Greek Nomadic Beekeeping in the Context of Polycrisis

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**2-19** ● S24. THE MAKING OF AN AFFECTIVE COSMOS: BETWEEN ART, SCIENCE, AND PHILOSOPHY **HARBOUR: 2245**  
**Cosmological Sensibilities and Affective Entanglements**  
Chaired by Ewa Szumilewicz

Giovanna Soares Malpighi; Bianca Scliar Cabral Mancini	Oneiric Dreams: Archipelagic Correspondences of Relation
Yu-Cheng Cheng	Atmospheric Modernism: On Emergence, Chaosmospherology, Kairomorphosis, and the Aerocene in Virginia Woolf's Jacob's Room
Eret Talviste	Virginia Woolf's Iridescences as Instances of Cosmic Affect
Richard Polt	Remembering the Immemorial: a Swim in the Cosmic Ocean

5:50–7:20 PM

● **Concurrent Panels**

**2-20** ● S2. AFFECT-IONATE APPETITES: DESIRE, DISGUST, AND ALL THE FEELINGS IN BETWEEN

**HARBOUR: 1520**

**Consuming Beyond**

Chaired by Jennifer LeMesurier

Caddie Alford

Desiring Disgust at the Disgusting Food Museum

Louis M. Maraj

"Better Belly Buss than Food Waste": Un(knowing) Human Caribbean Immigrant/Laborer Affects

Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik

A Feast of Life, a Feast of Death

M. Gail Hamner

Gluttony: the Feelings of Capitalist Excess

**2-21** ● S3. AFFECTIVE BUILT WORLD: BODY-SPACE POLITICS BEYOND UTILITY

**HARBOUR: 1600**

**Bodily Affect in Architectural Settings**

Chaired by Katarina Bogosavljević

Lengjieng Chong

The Disrupted Body Schema: Mapping Affective Intensity Through Architectural Immensity

Katarina Bogosavljević;

The Affective Atmosphere of Carceral Isolation in Canadian Federal Prisons

Jennifer M. Kilty

Haoran Zhang

Making Reform Feel: the White Swan Hotel and the Ordinary Affects of Opening-up in Guangzhou

Desiree Foerster

Rendering the Invisible: VR as a Medium for Non-Dualist, Relational Aesthetics

**2-22** ● S4. AFFECTIVE OCEANIC ENCOUNTERS IN THE MAKEING

**HARBOUR: 2270**

**Embodied Methodologies and Sensory Attunements**

Chaired by Nike Romano

Lauren Thu

Floating in Sound: Sensing Oceanic Soundscapes Through Embodied Hydrophonic Listening

Delphi Carstens

Hydropedagogies of Unbecoming V2

Nike Romano; Vivienne

Wit(h)nessing and Witness of the Body: Affective Attunements Through Encounters with the Great

Bozalek

African Seaforest

Hannah R. Bacon

Ecological Grief, Solastalgia, and Making and Unmaking at the End of the World

**2-23** ● S5. AFFECTIVE POLITICS AND ENERGETIC TRANSDUCTIONS ACROSS ART AND DESIGN

**SCA: 4955**

**Affective Energetics in Theory and Practice**

Chaired by Christoph Brunner

Christoph Brunner; Jonas Fritsch

Field-Affects – Between General and Human Energetics in the Work of Gilbert Simondon

Ana Ramos

A Whiteheadian Vocabulary to Talk About Affect

Ziyue Yang

Beyond Manipulation: Puppetry as Energetic Transduction in Affective Art

Petra Mikulan; Adam Rudder

Ergosentimentalism: Affective Energetics, Racial Time, and the Limits of Relational Life

**2-24** ● S6. AFFECTIVE TRACES ACROSS GENERATIONS

**HARBOUR: 2245**

**Affective Traces Across Generations/Engagement**

Chaired by Tiina Lempinen & Helena Ristaniemi

Helena Ristaniemi; Tapio Nykänen

Strange Affective Assemblages of Sámi Activism

Malou Juelskjær

Eldering and Diffracting Intergenerational Climate/Eco-Anxiety/Grieving

Marissa Willcox

The Affective Body Across Feminist Generations: Becoming Instagram Bodies

Luisa Voss

TRAUMA DREAMS - Rage and Resentment in Gendered Fascist Passionate Moments

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2-25 ● S7. CURATORIAL AFFECTS

HARBOUR: 2945

## Curatorial Affects I

Chaired by Jennifer Fisher

Maddie Bruegger

Towards a Coalitional Curatorial Practice

Nael Bhanji

Ground Zero: Ordinary Hypervigilance, and the Curation of Productive Fear

Amanda Cachia

Feeling Access: Disability, Neurodivergence, and the Affective Architectures of Curatorial Practice

Sushant Naidu

Curating Disgust Across Time and Space: from 1937 Munich to 2025-26 New Orleans

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2-26 ● S18. MINOR THEORY AMID TRANSACTIONAL FORMS (OTHER PEOPLE HAVE BECOME INCOHERENT TO ME)

HARBOUR: 7000

## When the Why Disappears but the Wind Does Not Ask the Question

Chaired by Alecia Beymer & Megan Gette

Christopher Pham

The End of (Being) "Okay": On Censorial Time, Neoliberal Legibility, and Fugitive Possibilities

Presence O'Neal

Minor Gestures in the Dark: Dissociative Poetics and the School Lockdown Drill

Megan Gette

Between the Hush and the Hush-Hush: Mishearing the Permian Basin

Alecia Beymer

A Distance from Ourselves: the Permutations of Precarity and the Poetics of Relational Textures

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7:20 PM–late

## ● Dinner on Your Own

Dinner on your own. Check the #MAKE website for restaurant recommendations.

# Sunday, October 25

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8:15–9:45 AM

## ● Concurrent Panels

3-1 ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES

HARBOUR: 2245

## Absence and Educational Affects

Chaired by Erica Colmenares

Erica Colmenares

Always Affect-Ing: Toward a Sense-Able Hidden Curriculum

Katherine Wallace

Historical Affect

Anastasia Y. Goodwin

The Absent Theatre: a Reflection on Ten Months in an Empty Space

Annabella Cant

Unswaddling the Pedagogical Force of Absence: Somatic Understanding and the More-than-Verbal

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3-2 ● S6. AFFECTIVE TRACES ACROSS GENERATIONS

HARBOUR: 1600

## Affective Traces Across Generations/Memories

Chaired by Helena Ristaniemi & Tiina Lempinen

Keren Zaiontz

Authoritarian Afterglow: My Post-Soviet Toronto Childhood

Tiina Lempinen; Tuija Huuki

Wit(h)nessing the Intergenerational Hauntings of Affect Through Collaging of Childhoods

Ana Eclair Dragojlovic

Affective Intergenerationality: Haunted Speakability, Colonial Violence, and Decolonial Praxis

Sheila Fogarty

On Belonging: Memorial Reckoning Among Queer Irish People in Chicago

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3-3 ● S9. ELEMENTAL AFFECTS AND ATMOSPHERIC WELLBEING

**HARBOUR: 7000**

### Climate Affects and Atmospheres

Chaired by Deborah Lupton

Marcelina Piotrowski	Sensing Smog: Counter-Conduct and Self-Care in Climate Pedagogy
David Rousell; Yaw Ofosu-Asare	Rivers of Feeling: Mapping the Hydro-Affective Intensities of Climate Disasters with Young Researchers
Jason Young	E/Affective Burnout: Atmospheres, Energy and the Politics of Attention in Petro-Modernity
Corry Antang	Elemental Living Stories: Dayak Ngaju Narrative Futures for Tropical Peatland Restoration and Climate Adaptation in Central Kalimantan

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3-4 ● S20. OCCLUDED ATMOSPHERES: ESOTERIC AESTHETICS, NIGHT KNOWLEDGES, AND SENSORY SHIFTS

**HARBOUR: 2270**

### Atmospheric Media—Occult, Pneumatic, and Queer Abstractions

Chaired by Sandra Huber

Yani Kong	"Breath as Body: Pneuma as Medium in Contemporary Art"
Jenny Zhou	Photography as Mediumship: Searching for Ectoplasm and Night Knowledge in Shannon Taggart's Séance
Samuel Allen	From Covert Sense to Incipient Utterance: Edmund Teske's Queer Photographic Abstractions
Laurence Garneau	Celestial Rays and Atmospheric Perception: the Astrological Cycle at the Palazzo Della Ragione (Padua, 15th Century)

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3-5 ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES

**HARBOUR: 2945**

### (Counter)Pedagogies II: Affective Methods

Chaired by Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland

Ashley Hagy	Making (Refuge) Otherwise: Sensational Pedagogies and the Affective Economy of Refuge
Sylvia Kind; Tatiana Zakharova-Goodman; Alex Berry	Errant Textilities: Research-Creation Acts in the Early Childhood Studio
Safeera Jaffer	Art, Pedagogy, and Attunement to the Affective Atmosphere(s) of Power: Encountered Curiosities in Teacher Education
Zorianna Zurba	Sticky Beautiful: the Affective Collage of Zine Making Pedagogy

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3-6 ● S22. STORYING WISELY: SPECULATIVE FICTIONINGS, AFFECT, AND THE POLITICS OF THE 'WHAT IF?'

**HARBOUR: 1520**

### Speculative Media and Affective Time

Chaired by Michael Goddard

Vladimir Rizov	Philip K Dick, Paranoia and Totality: 'a Scanner Darkly' and Paranoid Police Power
Timo Alexander Zwarg	Feeling the Otherwise: Citizen Sleeper and the Affective Grammar of Speculative Fictioning
Michael Goddard	Audiovisual Media as Untimely Speculations of the Future: from DIY Time Travel Experiments to Fluid Fictional Futures
Yilin Zhang	Tender Disaster in the Otherworld: the Affective Excess of 'Making Kin' in Transcultural Fictions

9:15–10:00 AM

● **Registration, Coffee, and Snacks**

**SCA: 2200**

Registration with coffee, muffins, scones, and banana bread. Registration tables can be found in the 2nd floor lobby and coffee and snacks are in the World Art Centre down the hall.

10:00–11:30 AM

● **Concurrent Panels**

**3-7** ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES

**HARBOUR: 2245**

**Pedagogies of Absence**

Chaired by Kim Edmondson

Zhihao Tian

Affective Spaces After Displacement: Redevelopment Bases in a Gentrifying Shanghai

Kim Edmondson

Difficult Pedagogical Encounters with Ordinary Absences Amidst Climate Catastrophe

Jennifer Clary-Lemon

Hope Is the Thing with Broken Feathers: Witnessing Absence Through Glass

Bex Patterson-Markowitz

When I See Smoke in the Sky: Anticipation, Memorialization, and the Affective Atmospheres of Wildfire Recovery

**3-8** ● S4. AFFECTIVE OCEANIC ENCOUNTERS IN THE MAKEING

**HARBOUR: 2270**

**Ecological Disruption, Creaturely Atmospheres and Transdisciplinary Imaginaries**

Chaired by Vivienne Bozalek

Emre Sünter

Viscous Atmospheres: the Affective Ecology of the Marmara Bloom

Hanqing Zhang

Creaturely Atmospheres: Oysters, Affective Contagion and the Oceanic Life of Resettled Boat Dwellers in Northeast Fujian

Vivienne Bozalek; Nike Romano

Collaborative Echolocating Encounters: Orienting Within Proximities to Fascism

Julia Jung

A Tidalectic Take on Transdisciplinary Collaborations in Ocean Science and Marine Conservation Based on the Confluence of Polyamorous Theory and Queer Ecologies

**3-9** ● S11. FEELING BESIDE AFFECT: (UN)TRANSLATABLE & INEFFABLE

**HARBOUR: 1520**

**The Geography of Affect**

Chaired by Manuela Rosso-Brugnach

Manuela Rosso - Brugnach

Untranslatable Waters: Geopoetics, Language, and the Boundaries of Transboundary Governance

Li-Yuan Shen

As the Locality Stirs: Emotion, Affect, and the Fragile Bonds of Post-Development Guanxi

Chaoyu Mao

Affective Hindutva: Emotion Work and the Politics of Feeling Hindu in the U.s. Diaspora

Yutong Lin

Zomia Garden

**3-10** ● S14. FUTURES/CRITICAL/SENSE-MAKING

**HARBOUR: 7000**

**Futures/Critical/Sense-Making: Ecologies of Possibility**

Chaired by Gillian Russell

Estraven Lupino-Smith

Weedy Energies: Invasive Plants and Ecological Futures-Making Beyond Management

Andrea Vela-Alarcón

Transcorporeal Mourning: Practices of Re-Existence Despite and Beyond Extractivism

MacKayla Kelsey

How Do Bodies Future? Somatic Intelligence and Encounters of the Not/Yet

Alannah Lewis

Edge-Riding Futures: Atmosphere, Embodiment and the Practice of Holding Uncertainty

**3-11** ● S20. OCCLUDED ATMOSPHERES: ESOTERIC AESTHETICS, NIGHT KNOWLEDGES, AND SENSORY SHIFTS

**SCA: 4955**

### Ritual Attunements of Body, Form, and Field

Chaired by Yani Kong

WhiteFeather Hunter

Occulted Sensory Infrastructures in Laboratory Craft: the Minor Registries of Experimental Practices

Haley Kuchar

Ritual and the Farm: Attuning to More-than-Human Pedagogies

Quinn Daugherty

Autotheory and Anorexia: Atmospheres of (De)forming

Jason Perez

What Glows in the Dark: PTSD, Ritual and Night Knowledge in a Bioluminescent Lagoon

**3-12** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES

**HARBOUR: 1600**

### Sensational Affects I: In Film and Photo

Chaired by Kristopher Holland and Nandita Baxi Sheth

Katalin Halász

The Courage to Be

Zichen Yin

That-Has-Been, That-Cannot-Be-Hear: Violent Images and the Affective Counter-Pedagogy of the Civil Contract of Photography

Charlotte Seegers

Collaborative Video-Making as Infrastructural Imagining: Enacting Affective Cycles of Making

Clara Chin

Animating Animacies: Teaching Through Abstract Embodiment and Personal Storytelling

**3-13** ● S23. TAXONOMY, PSYCHOLOGY, AND BEYOND: AFFECT IN THE HISTORY OF THE SCIENCES

**HARBOUR: 2945**

### Taxonomy, Psychology, and Beyond: Affect in the History of the Sciences

Chaired by Jason Emmett Collins

C. Libby

Scythian Melancholy: Feeling Trans Before Sexology

Emma Palmer

Reading Affect in Marshall McLuhan's Understanding Media

Cristian Hernandez-Blick

A Feeling for Language: the Changing Role of Affect and Emotion in the Science of Nonhuman Animal Communication

Weiting Du

"Electronic Erectile Dysfunction": Ironic Pathologization and Vernacular Knowledge-Making in Chinese Digital Culture

10:00–11:30 AM

### ● Visit Making Matters Kiosks

Visit the Making Matters Kiosks and installations in the World Art Centre and Upstairs Lobby.

**SCA: 2555**

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- Econut: The Harvest Counter, Shihan Zhang
- Hydrofeminist Action Generator (H.A.G) | Mark(ed) Water Time, Dawn Roe
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- #haircutsforplanetarysurvival (a Queer Feminist Infrastructure for Climate Change), Astrida Neimanis
- Learning from the High Priestess: A Book Release/A Workshop, Ann Cvetkovich

**SCA: 3205**

- Oneiric Mutirão: Moving with the Field of Dreaming, Bianca Scliar Cabral Mancini; Giovanna Soares Malpighi
- Textile Thoughts, Patchworking Inquiries, Anastasia Y. Goodwin

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11:45 AM–1:15 PM **Concurrent Panels**

**3-14** ● S1. ABSENCE AND ITS AFTERPARTIES

**HARBOUR: 1600**

**The Afterparty of Loss**

Chaired by Asilia Franklin-Phipps

Victoria Papa

Best Friends Forever, After

valley weadick

Our Afterparty Is Elsewhere: Trans Disappearance as Possibility in Anti-Trans Atmospheres

Rachelle Sabourin

Sticker Through Grief: an Affective Subversion of Mourning and Memorial

Kay Gordon; Asilia Franklin-Phipps

The Outlines of Loss

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**3-15** ● S8. DIRT/Y AFFECTS: AGAINST CLEAN LIVING

**HARBOUR: 1520**

**Chamillionaire once said, “Catch me Ridin’ Dirty”:  
Engagements with Dirt & Dust:**

Chaired by Desirée Rowe

Liana Psarologaki

Who Cleans and Who Cares? the Affective Space of Domestic Cleaning

Hazim Ismail

Ethnographies of Plastic: Living as/with Contamination, Abjection, and the Affects of Refuse

Sophie Lachapelle

“They’re Garbage, What a Waste of Fucking Skin”: (Refuse)ing Settler-Colonial Narratives of Disposability, Disgust, and Danger in Local Houselessness Politics in Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Carlee Baker-Pustka

Dwelling with Dirt and Drugs: Rethinking Narcan Training and the Ethical Relation

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**3-16** ● S14. FUTURES/CRITICAL/SENSE-MAKING

**HARBOUR: 2245**

**Futures/Critical/Sense-Making: Affecting Method**

Chaired by Frederik Lesage

Lisa Bradley; Mindy Ptolomey

Making up Space: Quilting as Affective Infrastructure for the University Otherwise

Elizabeth Nijdam

Forecasting & Future Literacies: Tarot as Tool for Strategic Foresight & Critical Sense-Making

Jelisaveta Blagojević; Irena Cvetković

Sentimental Studies: Queer-Feminist Politics, Epistemologies of the Palimpsest, and Radical Passivity

Kristin Swenson

Relational Encounters, Mutual Affections, and Futures of Survival in Nomadland

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**3-17** ● S16. INSURGENT RESIDUES OF EXTRACTION

**HARBOUR: 2270**

**Imperial Matters, Insurgent Petromolecules**

Chaired by Sophia Jaworski

Sophia Jaworski

Insurgent Residues: Situating an Encyclopedia of Extractivist Petrochemical Material Afterlives

Isaac Thornley

Affective Infrastructure and Ideology Critique: a Psychoanalytic Political Ecology of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project

Sajdeep Soomal

Imperial Feelings and the Affective Economies of Chemical Division

James Reath

Molecular Dream Figures

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**3-18** ● S17. MADE IN/VISIBLE: THREADING TECHNOLOGIES AND AFFECTIVE MEANING MAKEING

**HARBOUR: 2945**

**Perpetuating Atmospheres of Technological  
Infrastructures or What We Live With**

Chaired by Meha Gupta

Maddie Bruegger

Breaking the Ice: the Dawn of Cooling (In)convenience Technologies

Chuxuan Zhang

Danmaku as Affective Ritual: Let's Play Videos and the Non-Representational Interface on Bilibili

Jiajun Lin

Homopostsocialist Diva-Cyborg, Queer Techno-Orientalism and Disidentificatory Futures: a Case Study of Lexie Liu's Pop Aesthetics

Judith Dutil

Smooth Is Fast (Smooth Is Sticky)

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**3-19** ● S24. THE MAKING OF AN AFFECTIVE COSMOS: BETWEEN ART, SCIENCE, AND PHILOSOPHY **HARBOUR: 7000**

### Cosmic Creativity - Building Affective Worlds

Chaired by Alain Beaulieu

Janae Sholtz	Expressing the Cosmic - Imperceptible, Infinite, and Affective – Through a New Image of Artisanal Thought
Sarah Sharp	On the Nature of Breath in Lucretius' De Rerum Natura
Tom Lönnqvist	What if Water Contains It All
Adrian Switzer	Other Worlds, Other Affects: Sun Ra's Cosmic Jazz

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1:15–2:30 PM ● **Lunch on Your Own**

Lunch on your own. Check the #MAKE website for restaurant recommendations.

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2:30–4:00 PM ● **Concurrent Panels**

**3-20** ● S15. HEXEGESIS, OFS AND ONS **HARBOUR: 7000**  
**Structural Incantations**

Chaired by Ted Hiebert

David Cecchetto; Katherine Behar	Before Bias
Abygail Gutierrez; Jack Grace	Postcolonial Possessions: the Cambridge Analytica Scandal as Collective Summoning Ritual
Zoma Wallace	In Lieu of Hospitality: Finding Chorosity in the Blue Note

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**3-21** ● S20. OCCLUDED ATMOSPHERES: ESOTERIC AESTHETICS, NIGHT KNOWLEDGES, AND SENSORY SHIFTS **HARBOUR: 1600**

### Portal Pedagogies & Threshold Ruptures

Chaired by Victoria Papa

Asilia Franklin-Phipps	Blacking Out: Violence as Pedagogy, Violence as Portal
jessie beier	Underground Atmospheres: Nuclear Cloud-Core and the Limits of Atmospheric Thought
Andrew Santana Kaplan	"At 4:45 A.m. the Door of No Return Is Visible": Dionne Brand's Nocturnal Po/Ethics
Laurie Gries	Alien Enchantments, Nightly Knowledges, and Ontobiographical Affairs

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**3-22** ● S21. SENSATIONAL AFFECTS, STRANGE AESTHETICS, AND (COUNTER)PEDAGOGIES **HARBOUR: 2245**

### Strange Aesthetics II: Bodies in Motion

Chaired by Nandita Baxi Sheth and Kristopher Holland

Yuko Ida	Soft-Boiled Egg Yuko's Leap into Kairos: Champurū as Anti-Fascist Counter-Pedagogies
Hsuan Chi Liu	Encountering More-than-Humans and Space Affectively Through Arts
Jennifer Jolie	Flesh and Fabric: the Affective Experiences of Fat People and Clothing.
Ghalib El-Khalidi	The Dancing Ape: How Play Makes the World.

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**3-23** ● S22. STORYING WISELY: SPECULATIVE FICTIONINGS, AFFECT, AND THE POLITICS OF THE 'WHAT IF?' **HARBOUR: 2270**

### Speculative Care, Embodiment, and Futurity

Chaired by James Estrada

Presence O'Neal	Cartographic Vignettes as Speculative Fictioning: a Feminist New Materialist Methodology in the Aftermath of School Shootings
Claudia Diaz-Diaz	Speculative Ecologies: Affect and World-Making in Women's Territorial Defense in Latin America
Alison Shields	An Artistic Exploration of Grief: What if I Collaborate with a Deceased Loved One?
James Estrada	If Men Had Birth Control

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3-24 ● S25. THEORY (FOR NOW)

HARBOUR: 2945

Theorizing Political Collectivity: Desire, Pride, Anti-populism, Shame

Chaired by Chad Shomura

Mingmin Gu

Affect, Futurity, and the Reconstruction of Collective Desire

Jenise Hudson

Faculty Worker Pride in Beth Burke's 1930s Interviews with Chicago Packinghouse Workers

Walter Lucken IV

The Cruel Pessimism of Anti-Populism

Sydney Sheedy

Atmospheres of Shame: Notes on the Anti-Deutsch, Palestine, and Historical Reckoning in Germany

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3-25 ● S26. MAKE-BREAK-FLOWS

HARBOUR: 1520

The Breaks

Chaired by M. Gail Hamner

Jennifer M. Kilty; Michael Orsini; Sophie Lachapelle

The Cruel Optimism of Carceral Affect

Bessie P. Demikos; Daniel E. Ferguson

The Scien[ce]tism of Reading as National Fantasy: Affect, Identity, and the Un/Making of "Citizen-Subjects"

Luke Moy

When Action Figures Decay: on Fan Time, Sense Making, and Creation Under Capitalist Entropy

Kirsten A. Miranda

Atmospheric Grief in 1000xResist: Notes on Containment, Perception, and the Wound

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2:30–4:00 PM

● Making Matters Short Films Screening

SCA: 4955

Join us for a screening of three short films followed by a Q+A with the filmmakers:

- "How to Make Banana Pot Roast," Rainn Forrest Jackson and Bea Hurd (30 min)
  - "Little Trees," Sophia Jaworski (14 min)
  - "The Form of Landscape," and Krawczyk (30 min)
  - Q+A with the filmmakers (25 min)
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4:15–5:45 PM

● Julietta Singh's "The Nest"

SCA: 3200

Screening of Julietta Singh's *The Nest* (89 minutes).

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5:50–6:20 PM

● Post-film Q&A with Julietta Singh

SCA: 3200

Post-film question and answer session with Julietta Singh.

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6:20–7:50 PM

● Spotlight

3-26 ● S12. FEELING SICK AND SICKLY FEELINGS

SCA: 3200

Disability Visibility, Obscurity, and IL/Legibility: At the Limits of Crip Identification

Chaired by Zoë Fuad

heidi andrea restrepo rhodes

Crip/Trans Fugitive Affects: Freeing from Cartesian Dysphoria

Calandra Marie Cavallaro

The Depressed Transsexuality of a Detransitioned Butch: Keira Bell's Blogs

Hil Malatino

Vocabularies of Trans Negativity

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8:00–10:00 PM

● Conference Dinner at Pizza Coming Soon

Conference dinner at Pizza Coming Soon. Ticket required.

179 East Pender Street

## SSA #MAKE 2026 Abstracts

### S1. Absence and Its Afterparties

Absence does stuff in the world. It pushes, pulls, impinges. It orients bodies towards or away from unfinished pasts and unmade futures, producing (and unspooling) its own material-semiotic inventory and strange time-space as it gathers up that which is no longer, has never been, or is not-yet. This panel is an invitation to think with the ways we come to know absence, particularly through affects and materialities that trouble simplistic divisions between here and not-here, and how we respond to all this through practices of knowing and unknowing.

We explore absence as a violent yet seething and generative force that meddles with time, space, and the ways we navigate the overlappings of both. In doing so, we linger somewhere between emergence and dissolution. Absences born of colonial dispossession, ecological destruction, and social violence accumulate as residues in landscapes, logics, bodies, and institutions to unsettle temporality and move us towards the unfinished and uncanny (Gordon 1997, Gordillo 2014; Sharpe 2016; Snaza 2020, Stoler 2013). But absences also lean forward, with promissory narratives, anticipatory modes of governance, and cruel optimisms populating imagined futures with affective investments that consume the present (Adams et al 2009; Ahmed 2010; Berlant 2011; Coleman 2023). In this way, dreamworlds of progress haunt the present as a particular con/figuration of ghost (Tsing et al 2017). By evoking 'the afterparty' of absence we consider the non-linear time-space flickering between presence and absence. The Afterparty is where people stay too long, where memories sediment, where time gets strange, and where anything can happen. We consider the afterparty a site of unexpected knowledge production, a potential space for remaking damaged worlds. It is here, dancing with spectres and the speculative, that we can embrace what Avery Gordon (1997) terms the 'something to be done'. The arts and non-Western epistemologies have long navigated knowledge produced by this time-space much better than conventional academic inquiry. What might it mean to take seriously the methods that these practices offer, departing from inherited ways of seeing, thinking and sensing and placing them alongside affective and new materialist theory/ies that have never neglected the capacities of absence and its myriad cuffs, folds, and tremors? We invite papers on hauntings, premonitions, ruins, decompositions, scars, slipstreams, archives, fermentations, investments, phantom limbs, altars, rot, quantum entanglements, wakes, barometric pressures, half-lives, abandoned mines and much more that explore the following questions:

- How are absences rendered knowable or unknowable?
- What does knowing or unknowing absences do to our navigation through time and space?
- What politics, orientations, practices, make residue or traces more noticeable?
- How are we provoked to know in excess of what is right in front of us? And how is that unknowing/differently knowing required of us in moments like the one that we are navigating now?
- How might knowledge practices and arts of making based in speculative care (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017), transcorporality (Alaimo 2010), and intra-relation (Barad 2003) help reconfigure trajectories into the past and future?

# Affective Silence: Provocations and Ontological Becomings

**Presenters:** Lisa Mazzei

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

As the stream organizers state, “absence does stuff in the world.” It is this absence in the form of silence that I take up in this paper. While silence may be encountered by some as nothingness, I address the nature of affective silence as sensation, expression, generative, and unsettling. Silence then is to be read and heard as purpose full and meaning full (Mazzei, 2007; see also Franklin-Phipps, 2023; Bang & Winther-Lindquist, 2017). Naming silence and absence as meaning full is necessary in order to render them as productive, not as empty or senseless. Affect by its very nature is silence. Sense, events, and encounter as described by Gillott (2026). If we adhere to affect as prepersonal, preindividual, and/or precognitive, then we are called to attend to these absences (in the form of silence) as provocations yielding ontological becomings. I first encountered the affective nature of racially inhabited silence in my research with white teachers. It was the unnamed hauntings, the spectres lurking in the unspoken, that if attuned to, presented encounters with what was being said and felt in the unexpected and unnamed. An excess of these silences overwhelmed to the point of rendering the traces more noticeable. The promissory note of this affective silence is that it says too much. While it does indeed say too much, the challenge is how to account for this absence. Not in order to know it or pin it down, but to consider the forces that create, and its force to create. This paper presents a return to some of my earlier work with racially inhabited silence named above in order to think this silence in the afterparty as provoked by the questions presented by the stream organizers. Thus, I reanimate my earlier thought in what might be considered voice after affect.

**Keywords:** Silence, Absence, Ontology, Hauntings, Expression

# Affective Spaces After Displacement: Redevelopment Bases in a Gentrifying Shanghai

**Presenters:** Zhihao Tian

**Affiliation:** University of Illinois Chicago

This paper focuses on redevelopment bases in Shanghai's inner city, which are vacant residential blocks during the transitional period (typically 3 to 5 years) after original residents move out and before developers take over. These blocks, often decades to a century old, trace their origins to the colonial and planned-economy eras. Unlike the "ghost cities" (guǐ chéng) discussed in existing literature, which refer to newly built but uninhabited towns resulting from overinvestment, Shanghai's redevelopment bases emerge from the gentrification and capital accumulation cycles of the inner city. Behind them lies the municipal government's ideological commitment to improving housing conditions for the downtown residents, a commitment realized through displacement. Based on fieldwork, this study finds that original residents displaced to the suburbs due to gentrification hold ambivalent attitudes toward the discourse of "ghost cities": some, grieving un-homing and criticizing displacement, label vacant redevelopment bases as such; others, out of a lingering sense of home toward the old neighborhoods, avoid the term. The redevelopment bases are not devoid of human activity. Three types of practices are identified: revisiting, photographing, and squatting. Original residents and history enthusiasts regularly visit and revisit these downtown redevelopment bases to explore personal life histories and urban memory, photographing and sharing their findings on social media. Trespassing becomes necessary during these visits, often leading to encounters with migrant workers who collectively squat in redevelopment bases. Compared to the more common but historically shallow "ghost cities" found elsewhere in China, Shanghai's downtown redevelopment bases, with their historical depth, become affective spaces of absence: those who left keep returning.

# Always Affect-Ing: Toward a Sense-Able Hidden Curriculum

**Presenters:** Erica Colmenares

**Affiliation:** San Jose State University

The hidden curriculum is conventionally understood as that which is "invisible" within formal schooling: the unspoken hierarchies, rituals, and relations that shape students' experiences alongside the official instruction. Yet the very language of hiddenness and invisibility reveals a rationalist, anthropocentric epistemology: one in which absence names whatever falls outside the scope of human recognition and control. This paper argues that the hidden curriculum is not actually absent. It is hyper-present--always affect-ing, always affect-full--and that its "hiddenness" is a production of frameworks that can only count what they already know how to see. This paper re-theorizes the hidden curriculum as an affective space: a space in which matter, bodies, and nonhuman forces--educational materials, school architecture, atmospheres, institutional climates--are continuously at work. Through an analysis of vignettes centered on homework assignments and disciplinary hearings, I trace how affect renders legible that which rationalist frameworks render absent. In this way, affect makes sense-able what rationalist paradigms have actively worked to keep unknowable. This work contributes to ongoing conversations about what counts as curriculum and how posthumanist methods and theories of affect can make "present" the affective residues and hauntings of schooling's most consequential absences.

**Keywords:** Hidden Curriculum, Posthumanist Theories of Affect, New Materialisms

## Best Friends Forever, After

**Presenters:** Victoria Papa

**Affiliation:** Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

This paper engages autotheory to explore how grief reconfigures absence as an ongoing condition of relation. Writing from the loss of my best friend, Kylee, who died by suicide in 2021, I turn to a series of encounters with spiritual mediums undertaken three years after her death. In these sessions, Kylee appears not only through affective impressions but through inside jokes—small, secretive forms of address whose meaning depends on a shared history. I read these jokes as esoteric transmissions: messages whose force lies not in public verification but in the intimacy of being “on the inside” of their meaning, challenging dominant demands for legibility, coherence, and proof. Attending to mediumship as a site of translation and mediation, I consider how absence becomes legible through forms of address that only hold within a shared relation. In conversation with Édouard Glissant’s account of opacity, Sora Han’s work on relational entanglement and grief, and Sianne Ngai’s theorization of minor, ambivalent affects, I suggest that these moments of recognition operate as subtle, relational modes of knowing that resist generalization and the normative frameworks that govern how grief is expected to be known and resolved. Here, humor—akin to the intimate codes of an afterparty—exceeds the mechanics of coping, emerging as a subtle, relational mode of attunement within grief, one that sustains connection without resolving loss.

**Keywords:** Grief, Mourning, Friendship, Humor, Mediumship, Esoteric

# Dancing with Spectres: Affective Lucidity and the Afterparty of Absence

**Presenters:** Juliana España Keller

**Affiliation:** Concordia University

Absence does stuff and not equally, sedimenting in nervous systems, accumulating in landscapes and pressing with differential force on bodies constituted through colonial dispossession, ecological destruction, and social violence. Taking Rosi Braidotti's posthuman "we" – differentially haunted, differentially unmade—as its anchor, this paper asks what mode of knowing is adequate to absence as an agentic force. *Affective lucidity* is a rigorous orientation forged within the shadows, where the collapse of certainty becomes not loss but liberation. How are absences rendered knowable or unknowable across time, space, and matter? Brian Massumi locates the first site of knowing in the interval: the skin is faster than the word, faster than the archive. What absence deposits in the body precedes its legibility as loss or wound. An intra-relational triad then sharpens the claim. Karen Barad's quantum entanglement of matter-meaning reveals how the apparatus produces absence through *agentic cuts*. We are constitutively shaped by the not-here. Stacy Alaimo's *transcorporeality* tracks those cuts as they leave material traces in flesh and somatic memory, carrying absence across bodily boundaries. Maria Puig de la Bellacasa insists that rendering the unknowable knowable demands speculative care: an ethically charged attunement to what has been deliberately excluded from what counts as real. Affect thinkers, Kathleen Stewart, attends to *ordinary affects*, Lauren Berlant proposes *cruel optimisms*, and Erin Manning's *poetics of relation* drawn from Edouard Glissant: together they enact affective lucidity in practice, attending to what the normative order cannot hold. Following Avery Gordon's insistence that haunting carries a "something to be done," this paper situates the afterparty as an uncanny intra-active time-space where memories sediment matter, temporality unspools as the site of an ethics adequate to worlds damaged, dispossessed, and made to disappear. The abyss is not what thought must avoid. It is where thought has always had to live.

**Keywords:** Absence, Affect Theory, Affective Lucidity, Haunting, The Afterparty, Intra-Action, Intra-Relationality, Quantum Entanglement, Apparatus, Transcorporeality, Speculative Care, Poetics of Relation, Minor Gesture, Posthumanism, Braidotti, Massumi, Barad, Alaimo, Puig De La Bellacasa, Manning, Stewart, Berlant, Gordon

# Defusing 'Settler Atmospheric': Absence and Affective Porosity in Environmental Deliberation

**Presenters:** Dylan Annandale

**Affiliation:** Penn State University

How does a town hall meeting devolve into “modern colonialism at its worst” (Blondeau 2023)? That is how the sole Indigenous participant characterized the deliberative proceedings of the Land Keepers Society town hall: A public forum hosted in response to the Cowichan Estuary restoration project on Vancouver Island, Canada, and its proposal to flood farmland. Examining the town hall's livestream, I foreground the “possessive logics” (Moreton-Robinson 2015) shared among participants and trace their role in the construction of an “affective public” (Cloud 2003; Papacharissi 2014) reoriented away from deliberative decision-making and toward shared feelings of ownership and affective solidarity around a mourned vision of settler agricultural heritage. Together, I argue that these dynamics construct a particular set of affective and discursive conditions—what Kristen Simmons (2017) articulates as “settler atmospheric” —that delimit the imaginable futures of the estuary. Given this deliberative atmosphere, I highlight a key moment that altered the meeting's trajectory: The silent exit of the sole Indigenous participant directly from the Q&A microphone. I argue that the individual's refusal (Simpson 2014) to participate demanded a moment of reflection among remaining attendees. Without seeking to invalidate participants' possessive feelings or attachments to place, I argue that this staging of absence not only rendered the composition or participatory criteria of their affective community visible, but enacted a moment of suspension (Choy & Zee 2015) that defused the overwhelming affective atmosphere. Making absence visible, I will argue, comes preliminary to an “ethics of exclusion” (Giraud 2019) when deciding contested environmental futures.

**Keywords:** Settler Atmospheric, Absence, Exclusion, Affective Publics

# Difficult Pedagogical Encounters with Ordinary Absences Amidst Climate Catastrophe

**Presenters:** Kim Edmondson

**Affiliation:** University of Saskatchewan

The felt intensities of the pedagogical encounter with climate catastrophe oscillates between one's capacity to register feelings of hope and despair, anxiety and calm, possession and loss. Labeled as difficult knowledge (Britzman, 2000) in education spaces, these undulating affects are described, yet always exceed, an internal bodily struggle. Notably, much of what constitutes the difficulties of these encounters lies in ambiguity (Paasonen, 2023)— the inability to affectively “pin down” what is difficult, and absence— the bait-and-switch of naming the difficulty as a present, rather than an absent force. Instead, these difficult intensities linger in the crevasses of present-absences as they traverse across bodies, histories, and fleeting temporalities of longing for what was, clinging to tatters and traces of what remains and hoping-dreading what may come. This paper is inspired by the ordinary affects (Stewart, 2007) of thinking-feeling one's way through flickers of felt intensities that comprise the everyday. Specifically, this paper presents a series of short vignettes that flirt with the ephemeral absences of existentially threatening encounters with climate catastrophe by attuning to the affective atmospheres of smoke, rain wind, politics, plans, futures, and exits to attend to the question: what difficulties do absences produce? References Britzman, D. P. (2000). *If the story cannot end: Deferred action, ambivalence and difficult knowledge*. In R. I. Simon, S. Rosenberg, & C. Eppert (Eds.), *Between hope and despair: Pedagogy and the remembrance of historical trauma* (p. 27-56). Rowman & Littlefield. Paasonen, S. (2023). *Ambiguous affect: Excitements that make the self*. In G. J. Seigworth & C. Pedwell (Eds.), *The affective theory reader, vol. 2* (pp. 85–102). Duke University Press. Stewart, K. (2007). *Ordinary affects*. Duke University Press.

**Keywords:** Climate Change, Ordinary Affect, Public Pedagogy, Social Studies Education, Difficult Knowledge

# Dirty All the Way Down: Gooning as Pharmacopornographic Cruising

**Presenters:** Volodymyr Amiot

**Affiliation:** University of Calgary

Worlding is most queerly generative at the dirty threshold between determinacy and indeterminacy. Using agential realism, my work frames dirt as a material-discursive-affective technology for the simultaneous production and management of indeterminate erotic relationality through the dis/placement of agential cuts as hygienic boundaries. Under regimes of power, indeterminacy is differentially expelled as dirt, affectively abjecting bodies, spaces, and practices that threaten normative hegemony. However, through the contingency of these cuts, dirt's containment is always already its own undoing. I present a doctoral research framework for a diffractive ethnography that traces dirt in queer eroticized spaces. I contend that queer spatial practices enact friction within the pharmacopornographic regime through collective ekstatic embodiment that dissolves the individuated subjectivity produced under neoliberal governance. Alongside fieldwork, the methodology involves an interpretive practice of gooning, using pornography to induce a prolonged masturbatory trance-like state. This dirty practice inhabits a critical contradiction: while pornography relationally elicits affective intensity through erotic arousal as ekstatic becoming, it simultaneously produces subjects through individuating mechanisms. It thus enacts an intermediate metaxic embodiment that occupies the indeterminacy of the individuating agential cut – the dirty boundary between self and world. This mode of embodiment constitutes cruising as an ontological condition of relational response-ability. In gooning as pharmacopornographic cruising, the apparatuses of neoliberal individuation are made legible precisely where their naturalization falters. The pharmacopornographic regime is re-membered through a composting practice that incompletely surfaces this legibility as fragments of representationalist discourse. Partially individuated embodiment generates partially determinate knowledges as politically eroticized form.

**Keywords:** Dirt, Methodology, Queer Space, Agential Realism, Diffractive Ethnography, Pharmacopornographic Regime, Cruising, Ekstasis

# Dry Waters: Tracing Anti-Colonial Life in Desert Washes

**Presenters:** Emma Duggleby

**Affiliation:** University of Utah

The desert, I have often been told, is a place absent of water. If, as this paper argues, this settler colonial scarcity narrative renders water invisible in the here and now, then the afterparty's practice of "staying too long" refuses to abandon (Taylor, 2024) water in arid spaces as it flows along its own temporal rhythms and spatial strata: retreating underground, flooding and drying, and spreading to connect distant ecosystems. Rather than feed settler narratives of the desert as deficit (Tuck, 2009) and wasteland (Voyles, 2015) underpinning unsustainable and dispossessing settler ways of being, this paper asks what it means to instead take up Melanie K. Yazzie and Cutcha Risling Baldy's (2018) theorization of "water view" in arid dry washes. Orienting to and from channels of water that move across staggered, flash flood timescales offers a complication to anticolonial discussions of relation and connectivity, asking what it might mean to live with water and place through cycles of presence-absence. This paper thus argues that water in desert washes teaches anticolonial relationality as a multiplicitous process based in a desire (Tuck, 2009) and struggle (Yazzie and Baldy, 2018) to sit with water's own ways of knowing and being, especially in its ever-shifting ebbs and flows. Against proposed water-guzzling infrastructures heedless of increasing drought, a desert water view fundamentally turns toward arid waters as a method of "staying with" the complexities and impurities (Konsomo and Recollet, 2018) that characterize desires for more sustainable, connected, and just anti- and decolonial lives otherwise.

**Keywords:** Decolonization, Water, Desire, Relationality

# Handling Precious Materials: Post-Mortem Writing and Co-Existence

**Presenters:** Carrie Rentschler

**Affiliation:** McGill University

This talk centers on the coexister, the “shaken being,” to examine what gets activated in the space of witnessing and remediating another’s life post-mortem (Lagerkvist 2022). I am my partner Jonathan Sterne’s “co-existent,” his most intimate witness. As I come to write about his work and help bring unfinished projects to fruition after his death, I am at once widow and editor, griever and writer, disabled survivor and fallible memory holder, and, above all, an animator of what and who is absent. I am a container of, and for, precious materials: memories, intimate stories, feelings, personal artifacts, unfinished work, notes, recordings, and textual drafts (see e.g., Tollefson and Barney 2019). To be a co-exister is to handle the stuff of life after death, but can anyone really handle it? This talk explores the affective spaces opened by witnessing and curating the remediated afterlife of an intimate partner in these containerized states, as I become a maker of existential media about disability, life and death – my own and his. With examples from Jonathan’s Cancer Crawl blog series, which I am collecting into a book as a “posthumous remediation of his narrated life” (Sidonie and Watson 2020), and my own writing on chronic illness, this talk reflects on writing and editing as a coexister to tarry with (and sometimes deploy; it’s complicated) claims about the a-liveness of the dead in their post-mortem writing (e.g. Lury 2012, Stage 2018). As one who is the closest “party to the after,” I analyse the process of writing about his blog and his other writing on disability as itself a kind of limit situation. Drawing on Jonathan’s (2021) political phenomenology of impairment, I examine how the grieving witness-writer, her own limits, chronic living, and visceral experiences of finitude, structure writing as a practice of co-existence.

**Keywords:** Coexister, Intimate Witness, Finitude, Writing in the Limit Situation, Remediated Life After Death

# HAUNTING! RUBBLE! EXCESS!: Some Yarns About Presence and Absence in Outback Australia.

**Presenters:** Alana Brekelmans

**Affiliation:** University of Queensland

A place still widely depicted as a 'frontier', Outback Australia is imagined by many non-Indigenous Australians as the liminal zone in settler-colonial ideology, where territorialisation and deterritorialization, presence and absence, and limit and excess intermingle. In the settler-colonial grand narrative, the frontier represents a set of time-space relations where the 'new world' of the coloniser is being rolled out. In popular media and policy its represented as an Absence: A 'never-never', somewhere out there and back then, awaiting the presence that settler colonial dreams will bring. And yet, such frontiers tremble. Presence and absence intermingle. The rubble of settler colonial dreams accumulate. This paper examines the affective forces that circulate in this strange time-space and how such affects might be recognised in both settler colonial structures of feeling orientating forms towards settler colonial ideologies and in excessive affects that erupt from the unfinished event in order to demand alternative futures. I follow the genre of the 'yarn' as a particular kind of worlding. In Australian English, 'yarn' can refer to everyday talk, fabulation, legend, knowledge transmission, and intimacies. In Aboriginal English and Creole, yarn takes on the additional meaning of sharing knowledge in right relation. I ask how in yarns various kinds of narratives, affects, atmospheres, and materialities come together and come apart. I draw from various vignettes of ordinary life to advance of theory of unassimilable substances and affects that interrupt colonial logic, revealing those limits by exceeding them. Along the way, I think with abandoned uranium mines, ghost towns, drunken yarns in pubs, dust in cattle yards, and roadside memorials.

**Keywords:** Haunting, Time-Space Narratives, Absence, Outback Australia, Ethnography

# Historical Affect

**Presenters:** Katherine Wallace

**Affiliation:** University College London

This paper outlines the theoretical orientation adopted in my history education doctoral research which troubled history education research practices with affect theory. The historical practice is in itself a practice of making the absent past knowable, a process of making the 'unknown' known. The translation of this historical practice for disciplinary history education focuses on the negotiation of the past taking place in the mind. For the history classroom, this renders everything else, 'everyday' knowledge, classroom furniture, textbooks, gestures, feelings, etc. as absences in history education research focused on the classroom. The theoretical orientation historical affect is a specific orientation informed by Deleuze's (1968, 1969) destabilizing theory of time and affect theory (Hickey-Moody, 2013; Massumi, 1995, 1996; Stewart, 2007) for history education research that shifts the past from vibrating in a history student's mind to vibrating in the classroom assemblage. Traces and residues of the past emerge in a classroom assemblage where the state-of-affairs is historical. These emergences are more-than-human historical affects, Historical affect does much to trouble disciplinary history education and the common-sense assumptions that underpin the historical practice. In the spirit of the afterparty, historical affect is an orientation that has made time 'strange' and in the context of history education, anything can happen, because everything changes with every new history lesson. The historical affect afterparty shows us the past is becoming, not fixed, and that traces of the past should be preserved in a variety of forms rather than captured as code. But ultimately historical affect is an invitation for history educators to leave both the disciplinary party and the historical affect afterparty, because the lessons of the afterparty come into their fullest when you leave and step into the new day.

**Keywords:** History, Historical Practice, History Education, Affect, Deleuze, Becoming, Assemblage

# Hope Is the Thing with Broken Feathers: Witnessing Absence Through Glass

**Presenters:** Jennifer Clary-Lemon

**Affiliation:** University of Waterloo

In 2023, Chicago's McCormick Place made history for killing over 1000 birds in one night (ABC, 2023), due to its position in the Mississippi Flyway, a mass bird migration route. Someone had to pick up the bodies. Such work is done by local collision monitors who make it their work every migration season to walk daily through an early morning downtown at the crack of dawn, before the street sweepers come to carry away the evidence. As Leslie Head says of hope in *Hope and Grief in the Anthropocene*, it is a practice rather than a feeling (2016, p. 74). This talk situates the complex affective terrain of what happens when humans witness repeat bird-window collisions *as a practice*, and the critical, creative responses that ensue. The human bird-glass collision monitor deals in both absence and haunting while preserving tenets of hopeful affect that is complex. Rather than a simple optimism or positive affect, hope in this case becomes a way to notice and comment on temporal specifics of absence while acknowledging a world constantly in flux: hope as something that contains possibility, carries within it melancholy and grief, something that risks disappointment and has no guarantee, and is something that is everyday (Anderson, 2006; Head, 2016; Barnett, 2025). In witnessing "bad deaths," as Tsing et al. suggest (2017, p. G7), monitors must come to terms with those ghosts while finding fortitude to, in Haraway's terms, "stay with the trouble" (2016). This presentation presents interview data with collision monitors that turns to the hopeful afterparties that live beyond the moment of avian death and present themselves through advocacy work, in art, and in etched glass that offer a variety of responses to the question of *how might we see a window?*—as an invitation, a boundary, a mirror.

**Keywords:** Hope, Anthropocene, Environmental Rhetoric, Bird Collision, Avian Decline

# Our Afterparty Is Elsewhere: Trans Disappearance as Possibility in Anti-Trans Atmospheres

**Presenters:** valley weadick

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

This work in progress seeks to juggle the tension between trans in/visibility and anti-trans violence. On one hand, in atmospheres of trans animus, vulnerabilities follow visibility. In 2017 the editors of *Trap Door* highlighted the paradox through which visibility is offered as the only route towards more livable lives, and yet being visibly trans means experiencing physical and political violence that preceded and continues in the present anti-trans backlash (Tourmaline et al., 2017). On the other hand, anti-trans violence produces invisibility, absence, disappearance, dissociation as both an imperilled reaction and inspired practice of survival. To disappear, to absent oneself, to turn invisible carries the residue of those violences and raises haunting possibilities of dissociation (Malatino 2022, Pelling 2025, Wallenhorst 2021), harassment, madness and death (Thom 2019). And yet in contrast to these well-founded possibilities and fears, trans absence, in all its coerced and imperilled contours seems to offer some possibility to flourish otherwise. Shortly before her death, Black trans singer Jackie Shane, who had lived an entire other unknown life after disappearing from the public eye, explained to the radio producer who tracked her down, "I thought I was well-hidden, and I wasn't. You found me... I wasn't comfortable with that, but I can adjust" (*CBC Q*, 2019). As much as trans existence is rendered hypervisible and spectacular by anti-trans rhetoric, it continues to circulate in ways that are covert, hidden, secret, intimate, and absent from the mainstream animus that seeks to destroy us. Our afterparty is elsewhere.

**Keywords:** Trans, Transphobia, Visibility, Invisibility, Disappearance, Secrecy

# Sensing Absence: Feminist Protest Practices and the Making-Present of Absent Lives

**Presenters:** Valentina Proust

**Affiliation:** University of Pennsylvania

Some forms of absence can represent a challenge to the act of representation. When people are disappeared or taken away and murdered, as has happened and continues to happen through state and patriarchal violence in Latin America, they leave a void in time and space that defies the ordinary ways we carry stories and make lives present in the public sphere. Looking to understand how this phenomenon works, this paper draws on my dissertation research into feminist protest in Chile and Argentina to ask how feminist collectives navigate this representational problem through sensorial practices, and what kind of political knowledge that process produces. What I find is that feminist collectives turn to sensorial actions, such as sight, sound, and touch, as resources for making absent bodies present as ways of keeping their weight felt and to continue being politically alive in the public sphere. For example, the use of red paint smeared unevenly across hands and faces of protesters at the first Ni Una Menos demonstration makes violence to be materially present on living bodies, pointing through them toward the bodies that are no longer there and that cannot be part of the protest. Another example is how the names of femicide victims, carried through voices that sing the lyrics of Canción sin Miedo, travel transnationally as sonic memory, making absent lives to be felt across bodies and borders. To analyze how these practices work, I draw on Ahmed's understanding of affect as something that circulates between bodies, objects, and signs, and on feminist approaches to cultural memory. Together, these allow me to trace how feminist sensorial practices inhabit the afterlives of violence, the time-space where loss continues to press on the present, and how they transform that accumulated grief into embodied counter-memory and political demand.

**Keywords:** Sensorial Actions, Memory, Feminist Protests, Latin America

## Settler Feelings and Energy

**Presenters:** Donnie Johnson Sackey

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

This paper attends to how settler feelings become attached to dominant energy infrastructures and imaginaries, exploring the tensions between settler affect and forms of energy attunement grounded in the earth's movements. In doing so, the presentation considers what forms of relation become possible when affective attachments to extraction, reliability, and progress are loosened.

**Keywords:** Settler Feelings, Attunement, Energy Infrastructures, Energy Imaginaries, Energy Justice

# Settler Feelings and Environment

**Presenters:** Megan Poole

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

When it comes to the climate crisis, scientists say that we are out of time, past the point of a livable earth for humans in the decades to come. This paper will consider what it means to be out of time, arguing that environmental disaster brings the affective valences of time into relief—not linear, chronological time or present, felt time, but the deep disruption of time, if not its absence. Because music theorist Susanne Langer posits that music makes time audible and feel-able, jazz will be our guide, given its reputation as a style where musicians play “out of time,” or off tempo, and jazz’s geographic roots (Mississippi River Delta) in an environmental region experiencing degradation amid the climate crisis.

**Keywords:** Settler Feelings, Climate Crisis, Environmental Disaster, Felt Time, Rhythms

# Settler Feelings and Time

**Presenters:** Michael Lechuga

**Affiliation:** University of New Mexico

This paper discusses how the rejection of settler feelings signals a return to an ecological orientation to time that abided by cyclical cosmological and ecological parameters rather than a linear myth of time—starting with a Christian creation narrative on one end and the final manifestation of settler destiny on the other. I critique the violence that emerges out of settler feeling-time and discuss how by returning to ways of knowing rooted in the cosmologies and ecologies of Turtle Island, we might reorient to the earth in ways that drastically vacate some of the material attachments we have with things like public memory, investment futures, manifest destiny, colonial nostalgia, and other formations of settler society rooted in linearity.

**Keywords:** Settler Feeling-Time, Temporal Linearity, Violence, Cyclical Cosmologies, Ecologies of Interconnection

# Staying Present with Absence: Somatic Experiencing and the 'Void' of Whiteness

**Presenters:** Sydney Sheedy

**Affiliation:** Radboud University

My paper takes this stream's invitation to think with absence through what I see as the paradox embedded within whiteness: on the one hand, the myth of absence is part of the narrative of white supremacy which helps to construct its neutrality. On the other hand, the machinery of whiteness does work through a process of 'unhoming,' wherein loss and severance are integral to its territorialization. In other words, I am interested in how people grapple with whiteness as an atmosphere of actual and imagined absence. This paper investigates how the feeling of that something has been lost has become part of the dense atmosphere of our current politics on both the left and the right. I demonstrate that this grief has compelled a tighter grip on archives of racial and national purity as well as spurred on movements that aim to recuperate what has existed before and despite regimes of disqualification. This paper will analyze somatic experiencing modalities as an unexpected site of knowledge production about racial disavowal and the requisite void(ing) of white supremacy. In more politicized forms of somatic work, reconnecting with the body is seen as vital to ending systems of domination and supremacy, where these stories move beyond individual experiences of trauma to how systems of oppression have taken root in us in different ways. I argue that practitioners hold up forms of embodied sensing as reparative for descendants of white Europeans whose disconnection from body and spirit both spurs on and results from colonial dispossession. Put differently, I argue that political somatic work, reflected in collectives such as *Embodied Ancestral Inquiry*, aims to build habits of sensing that resist whiteness as a void, instead constructing the body as a repository of cultural memory and abundance for those capable of connecting with it.

**Keywords:** Absence, Whiteness, Loss, Somatic, Memory, Reconnection, Void, Colonization

# Stickering Through Grief: an Affective Subversion of Mourning and Memorial

**Presenters:** Rachelle Sabourin

**Affiliation:** McMaster University

Following the death of my close friend and artistic mentor Justin in 2021, my friends and I, connected by grief, embarked on a collective stickering project using Justin's graffiti tag. This initiative, spanning across North America and Europe, was conceived as a tribute to honour Justin's memory by occupying space and mapping our collective loss. The act of stickering emerged as a powerful medium for expressing collective grief, offering a form of affective mapping and anti-temporal mourning. This paper analyzes the stickering project to reveal how creative practices can function as a form of witnessing and transformation. It highlights the ways in which graffiti's autobiographical nature can evolve into a communal practice outside of its common subculture, pushing against the conventional cultural contexts within which graffiti typically operates. My analysis of this project draws on theoretical frameworks such as affective mapping, relationality, and testimony as developed by scholars including Dominick LaCapra, Kelly Oliver, Judith Butler, Leigh Gilmore, and Shelley Hornstein. Through this lens, the paper examines how the stickering project navigates the dynamic interplay between past and present, space and time, embodied experiences, and empirical knowledge. I attempt to further explore this anti-temporal dimension through the notion of 'grief-time,' modelled after 'queer-time,' as articulated by Jack Halberstam and Carolyn Dinshaw. This paper considers the transient nature of both graffiti and grief, underscoring the stickering project's role in confronting and negotiating the temporal aspects of mourning. It demonstrates how artistic and communal expressions can offer new insights into the processes of memory-making, creating an active practice of remembrance. This exploration of our collective endeavor underscores the transformative potential of creative practices in the face of loss and the complex ways in which they interact with the cultural and temporal dimensions of human experience.

**Keywords:** Affective Mapping, Queer Time, Grief, Mourning, Public Art

# That Which Did Not Happen: Unlived Life, Affective Residue, and the Force of Absence

**Presenters:** Haleh Mir Miri

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

This paper theorizes the *unlived life* as an affective force that persists not as lack, but as a lingering residue within the body and imagination. Situated between loss and desire, the unlived life inhabits a liminal temporal zone where what has not been lived continues to act, generating a non-linear and uncanny temporality in which past and future remain entangled. Drawing on psychoanalytic and affect theory, particularly Freud, Winnicott, and Loewald, alongside Bergson, Benjamin, and Agamben, the paper argues that absence is not lack, but a generative affective force shaping perception, imagination, and subjectivity. At the centre of this framework is the figure of the *child-female*, a temporal and affective configuration through which the persistence of unlived possibilities becomes legible. Emerging within gendered regimes of surveillance and social and institutional constraint that curtailed the horizons of girlhood in post-revolutionary Iran, she embodies both the sediment of foreclosed desires and the capacity to reactivate them. As a hyphenated body-mind, the child-female holds together lingering loss and imaginative potential, allowing what was once suspended to re-enter the field of possibility through recollection, imagination, and (p)reenactment. She inhabits a temporal regime in which past, present, and future are folded into one another, enabling the unlived to return not only as loss, but as a force that reshapes how life might be lived. These residues unsettle linear temporality and open a space akin to what this stream calls the “afterparty”: a suspended time-space where memory, fantasy, and unrealized futures co-exist. By approaching the unlived life as a force of absence that acts, accumulates, and haunts, the paper demonstrates that absences are not voids, but dynamic presences that provoke alternative modes of sensing, remembering, and imagining otherwise futures.

**Keywords:** Absence, Affective Residue, Childhood Memory, Uncanny Temporality, Unlived Life

# The Absent Theatre: a Reflection on Ten Months in an Empty Space

**Presenters:** Anastasia Y. Goodwin

**Affiliation:** Vanderbilt University

The absences of theatre programs that were sunset, restructured, or otherwise eliminated in US colleges in the last decade is difficult to quantify, though rough estimates would suggest at least over a hundred (Lawton & Pollock, 2024). When the institution where I had worked for four years and was beginning to find my stride as a costumer-educator-artist announced that it would be eliminating its theatre major and closing all production operations by the end of the upcoming academic year, most students chose to transfer while the faculty worked from home to wrap up remaining courses and find work elsewhere. In this paper, I reflect on the affective “afterparty” that took place between September and June in the literal empty space of the theatre building, where the *Deadly*, the *Holy*, the *Rough*, and the *Immediate Theatre* (Brook, 1978) lingered by the silent power tools and the near-permanent ghost light. I attempt to attune to the pedagogies of absence (Franklin-Phipps, 2025) in order to sense the possibilities for undisciplined knowledges that may have emerged in this afterparty; as well as the sudden forced absence of pedagogies that dared to attempt grappling with the politics of race and queerness through making theatre on a small liberal arts campus in a rural midwestern town. Finally, I move to reimagine the intra-active entanglement (Barad, 2007) of theatre and education as the kind of empty space where new becomings can happen, and where both absence and presence can lead to liberation and creation. References (abbreviated) Barad, K. (2007). *Meeting the universe halfway* Brook, P. (1978). *The empty space, a book about the theatre: Deadly, holy, rough, immediate*. Franklin-Phipps, A. (2025). *The Void Is Not Blank: Pedagogies of Absence*. Lawton, J. & Pollock, R. (2024). *Escalating drama department cuts and mergers impact us all*. HowlRound Theatre Commons.

**Keywords:** Theatre, University Arts Education, Program Closing, Absent Pedagogies

# The Afterparty of the Future: Absence, Anticipation, and the Exhaustion of Not-Yet

**Presenters:** Petra Mikulan

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This essay begins from a deceptively simple proposition that some of the most forceful absences we live with are not those tied to what has been lost, but to what never stabilizes enough to arrive. Drawing on my work on temporal grief and anticipatory life, I approach absence as a condition that precedes loss, organizing perception, attention, and energy through the constant orientation toward what is not yet here. Life, particularly within feminized and racialized economies of care, is structured through a diffuse demand to anticipate, i.e. to pre-empt needs, absorb disruptions, and prepare futures in advance. This produces a temporal formation in which the future is neither open nor deferred, but already partially lived and already partially exhausted. Absence, here, appears as saturation—a density of not-yet's that governs the present. What emerges is a form of temporal grief that remains largely unrecognized: grief for what has been continuously prepared for but never allowed to arrive. Situating this within conditions of ecological instability and collapsing horizons of intelligibility, the essay traces how promissory narratives of progress and stable futurity continue to organize affective investment. These attachments operate as what Lauren Berlant describes as cruel optimisms, binding subjects to futures that cannot hold. Absence thus functions as residue, but more importantly, as anticipatory governance of time. Turning to the 'afterparty' as method and scene, I consider a temporal zone where endings fail to resolve and futures fail to consolidate. Here, absence thickens, circulates, and demands a response. Rather than resolving this condition, I ask what it might mean to refuse anticipatory compulsion and to un/settle absence in order to provoke it as a mode of to-be-un/made - as a site of speculative care and un/knowing.

**Keywords:** Time, Absence, Futurity, Anticipation, Afterparty

# The Man-Not on My Screen: Following the Affective Traces of Black Death

**Presenters:** Vanessa Mabonso Nzolo

**Affiliation:** University of Aberdeen

Thelonius Stokes (b.1995), an African American fine art painter and performance artist argues that his work aims to “unveil blackness and its emotional capacity” as he covers himself in black paint and expresses animated affects to the camera. As another Black man’s murder in Europe has become viral online content, I wonder how to feel about Stokes’ statement in a world where Black death haunts our present and endlessly circulates online as memetic material (Russell, 2024). To consider his claim, I (re-)enter the conversation on affect as capacity (Clough, 2008), the limitations of affect-theory to speak on blackness (Palmer, 2017), and blackness as inherently productive capacity (Ashley & Billies, 2020). In this paper, I will follow the affective traces Stokes’ performance invites us to follow, receiving his affects as symbols of ontological relevance rather than illegible signs read as evidence of our non-being (Palmer, 2017). I will argue that his affects speak from a history of Black cultural process wherein his performance is embedded in a tradition of satire and appropriation (McKittrick, 2016; Wynter, 1970); his character being a counter-appropriation of the non-feeling not-quite-man and a commentary on the affective violence of race (Fanon, 1952). A satirical take on the phobic object of the white imagination, the Man-Not (Curry, 2017). However, his performance does not critically engage with the anti-black visuals he employs, leaving his painted body as a dumping ground for anti-black affect. Can this affective contextualisation of Stokes’ performance unveil blackness and its productive capacity for theorising what it means to be human (Wynter, 2003), or is it merely a failed attempt at recovering the affects we lose in the afterlife of slavery (Hartman, 2008)?

**Keywords:** Haunting, Traces, Anti-Blackness, Performance Art, Emotional Capacity

# The Outlines of Loss

**Presenters:** Kay Gordon; Asilia Franklin-Phipps

**Affiliation:** CUNY Kingsborough

Our multidimensional/interdisciplinary paper explores the presence of absence, and the shape of loss – and how it shapes us. What are the methods for discerning, recognizing, accounting or engaging that which is both here and not? Gone, mourned/unmourned, leaving us unmoored or differently anchored? And if/when we refuse to move on, how does this refusal constitute its own movement? What is left, after a thing, a person, a possibility is long gone, but with lingering affects? Inspired by Ann Cvetkovitch's study of depression & melancholia (2012), Christina Sharpe's exploration of the "wake" (2016), Karen Barad's "disruption of continuity" (2007), Jorge Semprun's life as a ghost, Kathleen Stewart's unlayering of the everyday to render visible taken for granted traumas, and Lauren Berlant's understanding of our attachments to that which harms us (2007), we cut & tear into/apart mundane & readily available materials of everyday life to compose into new forms & meanings. We use art, text, sound to explore what matters about affect & absence: in this visual, textual & sonic dialogue we (re)consider absence & loss, individual & collective, grasping affective methods for knowing, sensing, & feeling absence. -What have you lost, present/past, personally/collectively? -What absences do you feel? Where & how do you feel them? -What do those absences do to you and/or the world? -(How) are those voids filled? And/or what are the boundaries of those voids? -When do you most feel loss? What becomes of those feelings/where do they go/how do they move? -Who/what helps you hold loss in ways that are meaningful without becoming consumed with despair or apathy? -How do you live with loss/absence? With what never was, or what could have been? -How do you encounter loss that is not yours? Why would you encounter it all?

**Keywords:** Presence of Absence, Loss, Ghosts, Poetry, Art, Hauntological, Refusal, Cruel Optimism

# Unswaddling the Pedagogical Force of Absence: Somatic Understanding and the More-than-Verbal

**Presenters:** Annabella Cant

**Affiliation:** Capilano University

This paper begins not with speech, nor with its simple absence, but with the minor disturbances that gather when speech decides to while: a hesitation, a withheld gesture, a rhythm shared before it is understood, a body leaning toward or away from relation. These small somatic events, often dismissed, are approached here as affective forces that reorganize how bodies come to know, respond, and relate. In early childhood settings, such moments are typically read through developmental logics as delay, refusal, or not-yet-language; in post-secondary classrooms, they are interpreted as disengagement or a failure to articulate thought. This paper values them as drivers of learning. Thinking with my authored framework, *Unswaddling Pedagogy* (Cant, 2017), I approach educational practice as a loosening of the bindings that make educators assume deficiency whenever communication appears outside normative linguistic expectations. An unswaddling orientation does not search for a more authentic child or student beneath language. It attends to learners as already composed through affective, sensory, gestural, rhythmic, and relational forces, and to teaching as something unsettled by forms of expression that remain unfinished. I respond to the conference's invitation to consider absence not as deficiency but as a generative atmospheric force. When sounded speech withdraws, the room tilts. Attention moves toward somatic cues that usually sit beneath the surface of classroom life. In their emergence, the textures of relation shift. Drawing on the course: *Being with American Sign Language in Pedagogical Contexts*, co-taught with a Deaf instructor at Capilano University, I show how ASL becomes a site where somatic cognitive tools—emotion, rhythm, gesture, metaphor, embodied curiosity—become sensible. Here, absence is invited as a field of intensities through which learners think without conventional structured sounds or signs. *Unswaddling Pedagogy* attends to meaning-bearing motilities, often missed by conventional practice. I theorize education as sensing what absence does.

**Keywords:** Absence, Affect, Somatic Events, Unswaddling Pedagogy, American Sign Language, Embodied Learning, Non-Verbal Communication, Gestural Knowing, Somatic Cognitive Tools, Educational Atmospheres, Unfinished Expression, Relationality, Early Childhood Education, Post-Secondary Pedagogy, Affective Forces, Embodied Curiosity, Pedagogical Attunement, Speech Withdrawal, Meaning-Bearing Motility, Learning Otherwise a Tighter Final Keyword L

# When I See Smoke in the Sky: Anticipation, Memorialization, and the Affective Atmospheres of Wildfire Recovery

**Presenters:** Bex Patterson-Markowitz

**Affiliation:** University of Arizona

In the aftermath of wildfire, absence accumulates yet spills over. Once familiar landscapes left as barren moonscapes can change local driving routes because the absence is so deeply felt. The presence and absence of the event itself lives in bodies which tense with wisps of smoke on the horizon; people anxiously phone local fire departments during routine neighborhood trash fires. Monsoon rain clouds, once cause for celebration in parched corners of the American Southwest, now generate dread. Drawing on fieldwork with rural communities in Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico navigating wildfire recovery, this paper attends to the non-linear time-space of wildfire's afterlives: where a fire is over yet at the interface of bodies, landscape, and memory never over. I trace two registers of this time-space. The first is sensory and somatic — the ways that what is labeled as PTSD and anticipatory anxiety evoke a now-absent past while simultaneously pulling people toward imagined futures of recurrence. The second is material and creative — the memorialization of lost homes and communities through debris pulled out of ashes and placed on altars or in pop-up museums, where what remains stands in for what is gone, allowing absence and presence to entwine. Running throughout I offer a methodological reflection on my own bodymind as a site of affective transmission. I have never lived through a wildfire, but from this work experience my own hauntings — dreams of road closures, traffic routed in one direction, a fire not far behind. This paper takes seriously what it means to be affected by work on the presence and absence of fire, to feel the echoes and reverberations of experiences that are not one's own. The paper closes speculatively, sharing some of my attempts to trace these echoes and reverberations in my own body-mind through creative practice.

**Keywords:** Afterlives of Wildfire, PTSD, Anticipation, Memorialization

## S2. Affect-ionate Appetites: Desire, Disgust, and All the Feelings in Between

Living in the murky shadow of late capitalism is weird. And yet, we must eat.

To eat or consume necessitates yielding to the affective pressures that maintain certain appetites as credible, certain foodways as tenable, and certain identities as economically viable. As Ben Highmore reminds us, “because food is orchestrated around the body,” it “intensifies” the swirl of affects, both good and bad, that inform the intersection of physiological tendencies and cultural values (2010, 126). Consumption is shot through with hierarchies of the human/animal, laborer/consumer, technological/natural, racialized, whiteness etc... Eating ethically is an imperative that undoes itself even as it is spoken. Simultaneously, eating and consumption can be agentic, life-sustaining, and creative, a source of sensory pleasure and discovery. Generational wisdom, diasporic legacies, and innovative identity performances emerge from the possibilities found on the way to the plate. The intimacy of shared eating and consumption can be a gift. Or, food-related methods might trigger the question of “what more I could do for my soup,” a radical invitation to active engagement with the world that productively disrupts habitual forms of knowing and valuing (Mol 2021, 62).

Because negotiations among multiple forms of eating and consumption are laden with affective assumptions, this stream invites participants to explore eating, appetite, and consumption as processes that engage and/or forestall a range of affective possibilities. Participants might explore these spaces through investigating discourses directly related to food and eating. For example, dominant rhetorics often maintain self/other boundaries through references to extreme or deviant eating, fostering atmospheres of fear and disgust that stick to certain bodies and populations. Participants might also turn toward the metaphorical, considering where the undergirding epistemologies of consumption ripple outward to other forms of behavior and thought. For example, patterns of consumption practices are rooted in or dovetail with broader flows of public feeling, and exploring those connections might provoke generative questions about both.

Possible topics might align with the following starting points or journey elsewhere.

- Which discourses encourage limits on the affect surrounding eating and consuming? What “feminist killjoy” perspectives are productive starting points to shake loose these formations? (Ahmed 2023, LeMesurier, 2023)
- Where are forms of racialization enmeshed in affects related to particular objects of consumption and/or demographics? (Wazana Tompkins, 2024)
- What forms of writing and composing about eating and consumption assume a universal body that is anti-Black? (Jackson, 2020)
- What eating-related discourses and rhetorics offer glimpses of a new “poetics of relation” or poetics of question that reconfigure relationships of eater/eaten? Food and the land? (Glissant, 1997)
- What “minor feelings” might reframe dominant epistemologies around food, eating, and appetite? (Hong 2020)
- What ways of eating and/or consuming, or forms of attention to eating and consuming, engage dominant affective infrastructures in surprising, subversive, mundane ways? (Stewart 2007)

# A Feast of Life, a Feast of Death

**Presenters:** Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik

**Affiliation:** Boston University

When might a particular affective atmosphere be construed through the senses so as to construct knowledges of death and life? This paper takes as its departure point the atmosphere of the feast, contending that feasts are sites of life/death and abundance/scarcity. Robin Wall Kimmerer begins her recent book, *The Serviceberry*, with a feast on berries in the presence of various birds. Her ultimate point is that the natural world is full of cycles of reciprocity and gifts. This parallels Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito's notion of *communitas*—the gift shared in common. Esposito in “thinking community through *communitas* will name the gift that keeps on giving, a reciprocity in the giving of a gift that doesn't, indeed, cannot, belong to oneself” (Campbell, 2006). A feast is a space of abundance that is dependent upon death. It does not ignore the death inherent in the creation of it. In affect theory, the gifts that do not belong to oneself are the affects themselves, for as much as they permeate my skin they also permeate yours; no one can be said to “own” an affect, just as no one can “own” any aspect of the feast. The relationship between *sabor* (to taste) and *saber* (to know) in Spanish suggests a sensuality to cognition, which Mendez-Montoya extrapolates in *The Theology of Food* as “knowledge as participation” (2012). In this vein, regardless of the medium, a feast is a collection, an assemblage or accumulation, an anthology of whatever assorted things may be gathered together that a group of people participates in. A feast might be figurative, literal, illustrative, poetic, or suggestive of other things. This paper explores the feast as an atmosphere. I am interested in the ways the particulars of differing feasts create a tapestried whole.

# Black Women's Bodily Texts: a Method for Future Makings of Civility

**Presenters:** Alexis McGee

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

The “talking book” trope often personified inanimate objects to not only make meaning for Black (male) authors but also signal to largely white readers a moment where Black authors come to consciousness about their positionality in a White, Eurocentric culture of dominance and power. This trope, for Black authors, aimed to counter predominate ideologies about Blackness as unintelligent and/or absent from society and culture; however, rather than emphasise inanimate objects, Black women writers amplified the body as a central site of knowledge-making and affective theory. This rhetorical repositioning of Black voice theorised the affective ways the body could be used to change one’s present and future. Works like the slave narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs, which centered the experiences of Black women and the frequent violences imposed on their bodies to help call for abolition, and Ida B. Wells’ “Red Record” and anti-lynching pamphlets, which documented atrocities done unto Black bodies so that readers would be confronted with the paradox and afterlives of slavery (namely the ways white communities targeted and carried out unfair and unjust punishments on people of African descent under the guise of “civic duty”), collectively work together setting the groundwork for Black feminist methods, borne from the body, that interrogate notions of civility. Thus, this presentation examines Jacobs’ and Wells’ works to help illuminate some of the affective methods Black women authors use/d to negotiate and remake futures—often when a future seemed untenable—by asking how does one make a future when society is hell-bent on viewing Blackness as nonhuman and unworthy of having a past, present, and/or future?

**Keywords:** Black Feminist, Body, Rhetoric, Affect

# Desiring Disgust at the Disgusting Food Museum

**Presenters:** Caddie Alford

**Affiliation:** Virginia Commonwealth University

In early 2021, New Yorker journalist Jiayang Fan took a virtual tour of the Disgusting Food Museum in Malmö, Sweden. A few months later, she published “The Gatekeepers Who Get to Decide what Food is “Disgusting:” a simultaneously exacting and moving inquiry into disgust and taste. Fan wrote that the museum made her feel like both “a tourist and like one of the exhibits:” twenty-nine of the museum’s dishes were Asian. While feeling disgust is “natural,” Fan permits, understanding “why we are disgusted requires us to reconfigure the way we see the world.” For example, scholars trace the emergence of disgust from the early modern period throughout the nineteenth century as an effect of the imperial gaze on colonized people (Shahani; Tompkins), while Jennifer Lin LeMesurier coined “gut orientations” to link bodily appetite to circulating racial hierarchies. Disgust about food has long been a proxy for xenophobia, racism, and fatphobia. I was at a conference in Copenhagen in 2024 and took the short train ride over to Malmö—I wanted to examine the rhetoricity of the museum’s arrangement and technical communication. I took photos, tasted sauerkraut juice, compared pictograms, and collected materials like vomit bags and photobooth pics of me grimacing at fusty cheese air. What I hadn’t anticipated was that here, of all places, disgust would be evacuated from its “affective economy” (Ahmed 2004) only for something like shame to resonate on me later. In this interdisciplinary presentation, I draw on my fieldwork through affect theory, food studies, and rhetoric to consider what happens when whiteness desires disgust. In addition to the “representational trouble” that affect theory initiated (Avramopoulou 2025), the Disgusting Food Museum signals a revealing relationship between affect and rhetoric: although the museum stylizes disgust about food as (white) progressive politics, it ultimately activates reactionary rhetorics.

**Keywords:** Rhetoric, Disgust, Affect, Whiteness, Food, Reactionary Rhetorics

# Gluttony: the Feelings of Capitalist Excess

**Presenters:** M. Gail Hamner

**Affiliation:** Syracuse University

What does capitalism feel like, Ann Cvetkovich once asked. In part, it feels gluttonous. Gluttony is well known as a vice of excess, specifically of over-eating or over-consuming. In the Middle Ages, gluttony did not signal excessive consumption *per se* but illuminated a fracture in a monk's right relations with God and community. With the intensifications of industrial capitalism, gluttony underwent an inversion; excessive consumption can now be seen as the *mot d'ordre* of our times. Gluttony is the force of subjectivation produced and rewarded by capitalism. Gluttony constitutes the consumerist practices of possessive individualism that mark personal success: *Consumption should feel good!* (though it often doesn't). The mandate to consume, to be a consumer, swirls with anxieties and fears. Anxiety to reach the happiness promised by consumption--a brutal lie that catalyzes depression and despair--or to meet the mandates of consumption without adding (more) to climate crisis (how to buy groceries without buying single-use plastics?). Fear of what I consider capitalism's manufactured scarcities: not enough gasoline, too few microchips, a near-future without enough drinking water--fears that catalyzes hoarding, aggression, and violence. We are all formed by capitalism to be gluttons and our consuming excesses are rewarded when they are market driven and, recursively, when they drive markets. Importantly, our gluttonous practices are punished when they center and loop back only to our own corporeality. To be a proper consumer is literally to keep gluttony at arm's length in commodities: lavish homes, clothes, personal style, vacations, etc. But not in/on our very flesh. I seek a dialectical inversion of capitalist gluttony. What would a non-capitalist, virtuous glutton look like? What world of collective excess can we imagine? I examine the policies and affects of the revolutionary Paris Commune (March-May, 1871) and the Ten-Point Program of the Black Panthers (1966) in answer.

# Learning with and Through the Swirl of Affects: the Pedagogical Agency of Non-Human Entities in Tea

**Presenters:** Ran Xiang

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This paper presents one of the interview case studies with Chinese tea ceremony learners, Mr. L, as part of my dissertation research. Through in-depth conversations with Mr. L, I argue that the non-human entities exercise profound pedagogical agency in his learning experiences. Mr. L does not simply learn about tea from a teacher; he learns with and through the space, the objects, and the materiality of tea. The spatial atmosphere of a tearoom acts as a sensory boundary that orients him into a mindful state. Tea objects are functional tools and emotional anchors that shape the learners' practical skills and state of mind. The materiality of tea itself produces bodily attunement. Through prolonged engagement with the properties of tea, Mr. L develops intuitive dialogues with his physiological and emotional needs, ultimately cultivating a broader tolerance of gustatory experience and heightened self-awareness. This type of learning does not produce cognitive knowledge. Instead, it produces highly visceral, embodied and aesthetic knowledge. Mr. L has developed heightened sensual acuity and an aesthetic appreciation for simplicity. Ultimately, the Chinese tea ceremony learning is an act of profound self-cultivation, as it produces a different relationship with oneself and a deeper self-awareness. This paper demonstrates that mundane and everyday tea consumption can simultaneously be agentic, life-sustaining, and a source of sensory discovery and self-cultivation.

**Keywords:** Affect, Food, Sensory, Materiality, Tea

# The Affective Life of a Spoon

**Presenters:** Nadia Di Martino

**Affiliation:** James Cook University and University of Newcastle

I am a spoon. Stainless steel. Washable. Sanitised. Developmental. I travel easily through Australian early childhood education and care (ECEC), carrying food from bowl to mouth while quietly carrying other things too: independence, professionalism, hygiene, and proper childhood. Beside me is a hand. The child prefers the hand. The educator reaches for the hand. Suddenly, I become visible. This paper follows a seemingly mundane feeding encounter to examine how practices of care become racialised within Australian ECEC. For many Nepalese and Indian participants, hand-feeding was understood as an ordinary expression of relational care. Yet within professional practice settings, the spoon emerged as the preferred technology of feeding, associated with developmental progress, autonomy and professional educator conduct. Rather than asking whether spoons or hands are better for children, this paper attends to the affects that circulate between bodies, objects and pedagogical norms so that the spoon appear neutral while the hand becomes excessive. Thinking with Deleuze and Guattari's conception of difference, I argue that feeding practices become sites where racialised differences are rendered sensible and governable. The spoon is never just a spoon. It participates in the production of desirable childhoods, legitimate forms of care and professional educator subjectivities. By tracing the affective life of a spoon, this paper explores how ordinary objects become implicated in the everyday racialisation of care and belonging within contemporary ECEC.

**Keywords:** Care, Infants, Culture, Hand Feeding, Nepal, India

# What Food Becomes: Affective Mutations of Eating in the Self-Writing of Chinese Women with Eating Disorders

**Presenters:** Liyufan

**Affiliation:** University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

On the Chinese social media platform Rednote (*Xiaohongshu*), a line from *Friends*—“They're just food, they're not love”—has sparked over 460,000 posts. If food is not love, what has it become? This paper traces the affective mutations of food within the self-writing of young Chinese women living with eating disorders, elucidating how eating—as an irreducible affective, relational, and embodied practice—is rewritten under disordered appetites. Based on months of netnographic immersion in the eating disorder community on Rednote, I read the patient-authored texts—including confessional posts, technical guides, poetic laments, and fragmented reflections—not as data to be coded, but as scenes where affect leaves its traces. These texts are the residue of intensities that exceed what medical or psychological language can carry. This paper traces three stages of food's mutations. First, food initially serves as a warm transitional object—grandmother's cooking, shared meals free from counting calories. However, this primal affective connection ruptures as the body comes under the other's gaze. Shame and disgust come to stick to food and body, overwriting the tenderness eating once carried. Second, within the community's complex purgative systems, food is refashioned as a technical matter—no longer categorized by taste or meaning, but by functional attributes: the “base layer,” lubricants, and color-markers. Food becomes suspended between craving and disgust, abject in the precise sense: neither desired nor simply revolting, but irresolvable. Finally, desire endures, yet it exists in a fractured form—suspended between death and yearning, between the wish to disappear and the wish for life elsewhere. The obsession with thinness and purgative rituals renders the disordered state habitable, even as it forecloses well-being. What ultimately remains is a melancholic attachment to a mode of being-in-the-world that the body can no longer support; this ontological tension runs through the texts as their affective ground.

**Keywords:** Affect, Eating Disorders, Abjection, Self-Writing, Netnography

# “Better Belly Buss than Food Waste”: Un(knowing) Human Caribbean Immigrant/Laborer Affects

**Presenters:** Louis M. Maraj

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

When one immigrant Trini-American funeral attendee shouts “allyuh! We scarin’ the white people,” and then attempts to assuage this fear with his explanation to them that “This is how we sad,” the narrative action of the *Atlanta* episode “trini 2 de bone” peaks. The character’s attempt to flatly account for the funeral’s comess (often-intense, messy drama) reveals the ways in which the FX show, in this episode, perhaps accounts for a kind of expansive Caribbean affect: in grief, bacchanal ensues that defies the typical logics of Western discourse (producing white fear). “Better Belly Buss” draws on Glissant’s (1997, 2009) theorizations against “system-thought” to disarticulate these media representations of Black Caribbean care (in such grief, but also in stereotypical child-caring) made to fit consumable tropes within the North American imaginary—Black Caribbeans as unintelligible, as replaceable domestic child-rearers, and, pronouncedly, as purveying personification(s) of spicy/“unusual” food. While the episode seemingly endeavors to illumine Caribbean culture’s representative diasporic expansions in addressing its unintelligible exceptionality to white audiences, it congeals what cultural philosopher RA Judy (2020) describes as “the unfungible flow of liquid Blackness” ... “multiple semiosis at play... [that] have inflecting iterations of fluidity,” through ma(r)king edible/symbolic/discursive anticolonial potentials of creolization. In its mediation, Black Caribbeanness returns—in slavery’s afterlives, as “Plantation America” (Beckford 1969)—to that most malleable/broken-in place fueling the Western imperial project, triangulated through a U.S. media narrative of Black exceptionalism, as that biting kick of something like the “spicy curry mango” from whence the *Atlanta* episode departs.

**Keywords:** Food, Black Diasporic Identity, Media, Creolization, Black Studies

### S3. Affective Built World: Body-Space Politics Beyond Utility

How might affect help us rethink the built world beyond utility, function, and other tangible measures of value? What becomes visible when space is approached not only as form, program, evidence, or infrastructure, but as something sensed, inhabited, remembered, and negotiated through bodies? And how might attention to body-space interaction open new conversations across geography, philosophy, psychology, sociology, media studies, anthropology, architecture, and other fields concerned with space, subjectivity, and lived experience?

This stream begins from a concern with a recurring tendency in the social-scientific and humanistic study of architecture: a pull toward the measurable, the instrumental, and the materially demonstrable. Questions of performance, use, evidence, policy, and representation often dominate how architecture is analyzed and justified. Yet built environments are never only functional or visible arrangements. They are also lived through atmospheres, intensities, attachments, estrangements, sensory pressures, memories, anticipations, and pre-cognitive orientations that shape how bodies enter, endure, avoid, or become with space.

Affect offers a way to engage these intangible but consequential dimensions of architecture without reducing them to either personal feeling or decorative atmosphere. In a Spinozist sense, bodies are defined by their capacities to affect and be affected, while Deleuzian readings of affect emphasize the relational and processual character of such encounters (Spinoza 1677; Deleuze 1988). Affect thus allows us to ask what space does: how it presses on bodies, modulates attention, organizes nearness and distance, enables or restricts relation, and participates in the making of subjectivity, collectivity, and power. Following Massumi, affect may be understood as registering bodily intensity prior to its full capture in qualified emotion or representation (Massumi 2002). In this sense, affect is not simply another theme to be added to architectural discourse, but a possible method for rethinking architectural knowledge itself.

While architecture remains one important point of departure, this stream is intended as a broader invitation to scholars and practitioners working on affect and the built world in multiple registers. We welcome contributions that engage embodied perception, spatial politics, environmental psychology, non-representational theory, phenomenology, media environments, memory studies, urban atmospheres, and virtual or hybrid spaces. The stream is especially interested in how body-space interaction can be examined across built, social, psychic, philosophical, and geographic registers, and in how affect may connect these different ways of thinking space.

Papers in this stream may explore, but are not limited to:

- Affect as method in architectural research
- Body-space interaction and pre-cognitive encounter
- Architecture beyond utility, function, and evidence
- Atmosphere, mood, sensation, and orientation
- Spatial politics and the affective life of power
- Memory, attachment, estrangement, and architectural experience
- Embodied phenomenology and affect theory
- Architecture in dialogue with geography, philosophy, and psychology
- Non-representational and more-than-representational approaches to space
- Virtual, mediated, and hybrid spatial environments
- Adaptive reuse, obsolescence, and affective transformation
- Methods for studying intangible dimensions of built environments

# A Home with Infinite Rooms: Temporal Loitering in *Colossal Youth* (2006)

**Presenters:** Emma Gibb

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This paper interrogates direction as both a spatial and temporal cinematic logic by analyzing *Colossal Youth* (dir. Pedro Costa, 2006), a film that suspends teleological movement in favor of recursive drift. I argue that the film articulates a form of indirection through Raúl Jambrina Rojo's concept of "temporal loitering," in which movement through space is severed from narrative progression and reorganized through repetition, delay, and return. Drawing on Gaston Bachelard's phenomenology of inhabited space and Marcella Schmidt di Friedberg's account of the labyrinth as a structure of disorientation and control, I conceptualize Ventura, the film's aging protagonist from Cape Verde as a "displaced wanderer." His movement through Fontainhas and Casal da Boba, Lisbon's social housing projects, produces a spatial practice that resists the directive regimes of modernity, wherein mobility is aligned with progress, legibility, and integration. Rather than moving toward a destination, Ventura circulates within bounded environments that simultaneously constrain and proliferate pathways of self, rendering direction both excessive and unavailable. This complicates the figure of the flâneur, whose wandering presumes autonomy and perceptual coherence. In contrast, Ventura's drift is marked by cognitive fragmentation, migratory displacement, and the erosion of memory. Yet this apparent loss of direction does not foreclose agency. Instead, it reconfigures it: through repetition and affective attachment, Ventura reterritorializes space, producing transient configurations of "home" that emerge from phenomenological encounters rather than stable coordinates. Situating indirection as a condition produced at the intersection of spatial control and temporal disjunction, this paper argues that *Colossal Youth* offers an intervention into logics of agency and directionality. For Ventura, movement through prescribed space is refigured as a symbiotic continuum of "home" despite his conditions of displacement and fragmentation. Indirection, in this sense, becomes not merely a deficit but a mode of inhabitation that practices self-expansion and deterritorialization.

**Keywords:** Wandering, Labyrinths, Spatial Poetics, Phenomenology, Cinematic Space, Housing Projects, Displacement, Lisbon, Portugal, Migrants

# Making Kin with Space

**Presenters:** Allyson Compton

**Affiliation:** Iona University

Learning is an intensely embedded, embodied, and transversal process. Learning-bodies become as co-constitutive and relational – contingent upon interactions with content knowledge, human participants, and nonhuman materiality. In this proposed paper, I consider how various (sp/pl)aces produce complex configurations of belonging among and across participants at two professional learning experiences (PLE) about local histories of educational activism. Exploring diverse containers of learning – the physical space in which learning unfolds – this study exposes how space acts upon participants and as a participant in ways that forge dynamic and entangled kinships. Taking up a framework of kinship supports a deeply relational analysis of learning and space. Space-as-participant simultaneously facilitates kin-making and acts as kin in learning experiences. In conceptualizing kinship, we draw upon Haraway (2016), who defines kin as “something other/more than entities tied by ancestry or genealogy” (p. 103), and Krawec (2022), who situates kinship in historical terms, noting that though we are all related, “we have forgotten our history, forgotten our creation stories” (p. 18). Sites of activist learning, such as those at the center of this study – classrooms, churches, street corners, universities – are often haunted by the past. Specters of lost or unrealized futures create a persistent presence of dormant potentials. These hauntings produce affective states with powerful implications for learning. Because affects are atmospheric (McCormack, 2023), attending to sticky (Ahmed, 2004) histories that cling to spaces can yield differently textured representations of complex learning experiences. In this way, space mediates and intervenes in learning pastpresentfuture (Varga, 2024) renderings of significant events. With these curiosities in mind, we ask: In what ways did space-as-participant engage in the development of a “process of belonging” (Samura, 2016) alongside human participants? How does making kin with space facilitate belonging?

**Keywords:** Space, Place, Kinships, Hauntology, Pastpresentfuture, Affect Theory

# Making Reform Feel: the White Swan Hotel and the Ordinary Affects of Opening-up in Guangzhou

**Presenters:** Haoran Zhang

**Affiliation:** Macau University of Science and Technology

China's Reform and Opening-Up is often understood through economic policy, political transition, and urban modernization. Yet less attention has been paid to how this historical transformation was felt through ordinary spatial experience. Opened in Guangzhou in 1983, at the early stage of China's economic reform, the White Swan Hotel emerged as a state-promoted project through which post-Cultural Revolution China sought to renegotiate its relationship with the outside world. This paper asks how the hotel functioned as an affective apparatus that made the abstract political project of "opening" sensible through bodily engagement. Following Kathleen Stewart's attention to "ordinary affects" (2007), the paper examines the spatial, material, narrative, and embodied conditions through which Reform and Opening-Up became sensible, memorable, and inhabitable in this early reform moment. It draws on a rare hotel-administered archival publication, original architectural documentation, situated walkthroughs of the hotel today, and, most importantly, eight oral history interviews. Rather than treating archival anecdotes or interview memories as frozen records of feeling, the paper reads them alongside spatial and material evidence as traces of how affects such as curiosity, aspiration, pride, estrangement, nostalgia, and return circulated through the hotel's everyday use. The analysis focuses on two groups of ordinary users. For local Cantonese residents, the White Swan materialized a newly imaginable, globalized future through its atmosphere, service rituals, comfort, public accessibility, and encounters with foreign guests and unfamiliar spatial standards. For overseas Chinese visitors, especially Cantonese returnees, the hotel operated as a threshold between distance and belonging, mediating the emotional experience of returning to a homeland undergoing transformation. The paper argues that the White Swan Hotel did not merely symbolize Reform and Opening-Up; it demonstrates how state-scale historical transition becomes sensible through body-scale affective engagement by shifting attention from architectural representation to ordinary body-space encounters.

**Keywords:** Ordinary Affects, Reform and Opening-Up, White Swan Hotel, Guangzhou, Spatial Memory, Overseas Chinese, Body-Space Encounters, Affective Hospitality

# Refugee Narratives and Affective Spatiality in Hong Kong Literature: Centered on XI XI's Tigerland

**Presenters:** Qin Junjie

**Affiliation:** Beijing Normal University

Literature has long been closely intertwined with geographical space. With the rise of affect theory, this relationship has been reframed within a complex dialectic of body, space, and power. Affective geography emphasizes embodied spatial experience and attends to affective forces that escape symbolic representation yet continue to shape social and political orders. Within this theoretical context, a re-examination of spatial writing in regional literature becomes particularly significant. Hong Kong literature is often characterized as highly urbanized and regionally specific; however, its historical experience also encompasses multiple episodes of spatial reconfiguration driven by mobility. Since the twentieth century, the “Vietnamese boat people” crisis constitutes a crucial case. Among the literary responses to this event, Xi Xi's novel *Hu Di* (Tigerland) is especially representative. The semantic slippage from “Hu Di” to “Land of Suffering” reveals the tension between refugee camp space and refugees' embodied affective experiences: pain, as an affect, circulates among refugee bodies but is suppressed, fixed, and obscured by sovereign regimes of border governance. Yet this repressed pain does not disappear; rather, it generates fragile forms of hope under sustained constraint, allowing affective flows to exceed the emotional boundaries of “Land of Suffering” and produce latent political potential. This paper argues that Xi Xi's writing not only articulates the complex affective structure of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong, but also offers an important perspective for understanding how this historical event reshaped Hong Kong's urban spatial experience and historical memory.

**Keywords:** Affective Geography, Hong Kong Literature, Vietnamese Boat People, XI XI, Tigerland

# Rendering the Invisible: VR as a Medium for Non-Dualist, Relational Aesthetics

**Presenters:** Desiree Foerster

**Affiliation:** University of Chicago

This talk uses affect as a lens to reflect representations of mystical-type and uncanny experiences in Virtual Reality (VR). I investigate how sensory modalities and virtual environments are employed to translate the indeterminate and invisible qualities of bodyminds that exceed common concepts of the mind/body dualism into tangible encounters. Analyzing VR artworks like Bertin's 'Manic VR' and Ben Joseph Andrew's 'Turbulence: Jamais Vu,' I will explore how these experiences evoke a liminal consciousness and transitional selfhood that are characteristic of mystical-type experiences (e.g., in psychosis in Manic VR) and illness (vertigo in Turbulence). In 'Manic VR,' we take on the position of a witness, where the experience of bipolar disorder is neither romanticized nor pathologized but rendered through the emotional and sensory instability of shifting atmospheres. In 'Turbulence: Jamais Vu,' the VR headset is used to visually disrupt our relationship with our surroundings, making at once our body and the world appear unfamiliar. Drawing on research in affect studies, atmosphere, and new materialism, I argue that atmosphere serves as a central mechanism in VR for rendering invisible and relational processes tangible. I show how these atmospheres enable imaginative and felt experiences that resonate with the felt bodymind they seek to represent. The two pieces are discussed as part of a spectrum of non-dualist, relational aesthetics that emerges in some artistic applications of VR.

**Keywords:** Virtual Reality, Non-Normate Bodies, Mystical Experiences, Atmosphere, Aesthetics

# The Affective Atmosphere of Carceral Isolation in Canadian Federal Prisons

**Presenters:** Katarina Bogosavljević; Jennifer M. Kilty

**Affiliation:** University of Alberta

In a landmark 2019 case, the Supreme Court of Canada found federal prison segregation unconstitutional, leading the Correctional Service Canada to create and implement Structured Intervention Units (SIU) to replace them. This paper interrogates the body-space interaction in Canadian federal prisons with a focus on the experiences of non-uniformed prison staff working in segregation/SIU. We mobilize the notion of an affective atmosphere to describe non-uniformed staff experiences of segregation/SIUs and their interactions/relations within these spaces. Drawing on 18 qualitative interviews with non-uniformed correctional staff in Canadian federal prisons, we examine how carceral isolation is lived, sensed, and justified as a requisite component of everyday institutional life via two themes. First, we examine the atmospheric pressures and sensory feelings of segregation spaces which captures how isolation produces an immersive environment of sensory deprivation, psychological strain, and fraught relational dynamics between staff and prisoners that generates a “crazy-making” atmosphere. Our second theme explores how the CSC attempted to engineer a less punitive isolation space through policy reform (the creation of SIUs) that is supposed to shift how isolation cells are experienced. While the CSC discursively frames SIUs as humane, voluntary, and even therapeutic spaces, participants characterized SIUs as a necessary evil to protect both staff and incarcerated people, which showcases that isolation spaces continue to be used as holding pens for people deemed unruly. We argue that attending to the affective life of carceral space sharpens abolitionist critiques by revealing how power persists through the felt normalization of harm.

**Keywords:** Affective Atmosphere, Corrections, Segregation, Canada

# The Disrupted Body Schema: Mapping Affective Intensity Through Architectural Immensity

**Presenters:** Lengiang Chong

**Affiliation:** University of Macau

While affect theory has been widely used to explore the non-representational impact of built environments, the specific somatic mechanism by which architectural scale translates into visceral intensity remains undertheorized. This paper seeks to fill this gap by analyzing how architectural immensity directly disrupts the subject's body schema. Building on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, the body schema works as an unreflective, automatic system that coordinates everyday practical navigation. I argue that when a body enters a space of monumental scale, this immensity disrupts the body's habitual orientation. Because this monumental scale cannot be integrated into the subject's body schema, the unreflective capacity of everyday navigation is suspended. By integrating Brian Massumi's distinction between autonomous affect and qualified emotion, I show that the suspended motor intentionality precipitated by this bodily disorientation is experienced directly in the body as raw "affective intensity." This somatic tension takes place before conscious cognitive interpretation or explicit cultural naming. By mapping how physical scale causes a breakdown in habitual embodiment, this study provides a concrete, specific mechanism for the production of spatial affect.

**Keywords:** Affect Intensity, Body Schema, Architectural Immensity, Embodied Phenomenology

# We're All in This Together – Countermobility and the Collective Renegotiation of the Railway Journey

**Presenters:** Gordon Titchener

**Affiliation:** Deep Mapping Institute

"We're all in this together." So begins the safety pamphlet tucked into the seatback mesh of an Amtrak trans-continental train. But what, precisely, are we in? The railway journey was presented as an archetype of modernity by Schivelbusch (1977), and Kirby (1997), an essentially visual technology turning people into autonomous projectiles within an accelerated sublime. While the Mobilities paradigm championed by Sheller and Urry (2006), Creswell (2011) among others suggests that late capitalist reality is a prescribed navigation through a system of interrelated networks, the work of multimodal ethnography and the application of Non-Representational Theory (NRT) exemplified by Vannini (2012) have stressed that mobility is essentially an affective, lived experience in which meaning is socially-constructed quite independently from the functional frames in which travelers find themselves. Drawing on the author's ethnographic fieldwork in the Southwestern United States, this paper explores the tension present in spaces which remain controlled and contrived, if not places that epitomize modernist values such as speed and efficiency, but places that now act to showcase past achievements in the service of a constitutive rhetoric of nostalgia. Contemporary rail travel in this way embraces the mythic promise of pseudomobility, in much the same way a cruise ship may sail in endless circles rather than act as a vital transportation service. These spaces offer unexpected affordances as heterotopic arenas in which identities are performed simultaneously in multiple dimensions and allow resistance to hegemonic practices to emerge across sensory frontiers. To take this particular journey is to fall through the cracks of a fragmented narrative and emerge as an embodied, empowered self. It is a kaleidoscopic *dérive* (after Debord) in which meaning is made and unmade with every unsteady mile. These subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) subversive practices of countermobility reject an increasingly hollow iconography of national exceptionalism.

**Keywords:** Mobility, Public Memory, Constitutive Rhetoric, Nostalgia, Derive, Multimodal Ethnography, NRT

## S4. Affective Oceanic Encounters in the MAKEing

This panel plunges into oceanic waters to frolic between the boundaries of methods and explore what might happen when we swim away from Knowledge towards an energetics of the otherwise. Inspired by the littoral zone—a shifting space between high and low tides and affected by earth's proximity to the moon—the panel considers watery Methods, Atmospheres, knowledges and Energies. Through its dense, dynamic, permeable, affective atmosphere, the ocean invites an “energetics of the otherwise: for sensing, imagining, and connecting with new found energies, not in ways that ignore the piling up of violence upon violence, but on the contrary in ways that attend to the sparking up of energies within the debris, for thinking and connecting and caring otherwise” (Barad 2025, p 407).

We invite contributions that explore the sea as a space of affective contagion, where the watery potential of swimming-with MAKEs fresh imaginaries to animate and enliven ecological and political entanglements otherwise. Contributions for the panel might be inspired by, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- What forms of "knowing-otherwise" emerge when the human is no longer the apex predator, but a clumsy, displaced visitor, a transient dweller (Oppermann, 2025) in a marine ecology? How might these watery embodied knowledges (with a lower case k) un/make, refresh, reboot, wash through us in unquantifiable ways?
- What political, ethical, ontological and epistemological lessons can be learned from oceanic creatures, and what Stacy Alaimo (2025) refers to as 'creaturely aesthetics' in the ocean? How do they disrupt conventional scientific epistemologies and a colonising environmental gaze? Consider for example practices such as the echolocation of the toothed whale, shapeshifting of cephalopods, sessility of kelp forests, the lateral line of fishes and cleaning stations in coral reefs?
- The ocean can be regarded as a litmus test for ecological planetary damages. How do human activities such as releasing effluent and factory waste into the ocean, deep sea mining and other invasive and destructive acts impact on the planet including the ocean and its creatures?
- What happens when we immerse ourselves and become-with the porosity of the ocean and the shock of cold water? How might such encounters untether humans from conventional notions, such as the bounded self?
- How might group ocean swims or communal snorkeling practices be creatively regenerative for collective capacities to deal with fascist and other contemporary destructive challenges?
- How could affective oceanic encounters queer taken-for-granted assumptions like space, time and matter and bring indeterminacy's radical potential to the fore?
- How do indigenous and local histories of swimming, diving, and navigating unsettle and decentre Western, rationalist paradigms of Knowledge? How do haunted histories of segregation, privatisation of coastlines, fishing livelihoods and generational trauma shape the affective atmosphere of the beach and the ocean for marginalised bodies?

# A Tidalectic Take on Transdisciplinary Collaborations in Ocean Science and Marine Conservation Based on the Confluence of Polyamorous Theory and Queer Ecologies

**Presenters:** Julia Jung

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia Okanagan

Tidalectics as popularized by art curator Stefanie Hessler is based on the neologism developed by Barbadian poet and historian Kamau Brathwaite. Emerging from a period of post-colonial anger and hope, Brathwaite's poetry draws on the circular, lunar-influenced rhythmic unresolved movements of the ocean as an alternative to terrestrial linear and colonial ways of thinking. My research uses a tidalectic lens to examine the confluence of polyamorous theory and queer ecologies and their potential to generate knowledge/s and applied practice. Tidalectics is a methodology of hybridization modeled after oceanic spaces of mixing and cross-fertilization, such as coastal zones. This is the approach I take while bringing those two disciplines together: creating a space for queer ecologies to mingle with polyamorous theory in a way that is attuned to synergies and unexpected emergences while staying attuned to incommensurability. Bringing the theory back to the ocean, my research ultimately aims to support transdisciplinary ocean professionals in their collaborations. I hope to develop both theoretical and practical interventions that foreground social equity, interconnectedness and knowledge plurality. My research responds to a paradigm shift in mainstream ocean science and marine conservation that is increasingly acknowledging the need for co-design and interdisciplinary collaborations. While there has been a reckoning with ocean science's colonial history, this has largely focused on systemic and individual perspectives. I propose relationships in transdisciplinary collaborations as a further promising nexus for such work that opens up alternative imaginaries for relating to the ocean and each other. This paper will present the theoretical foundation for this using a tidalectic lens to bring queer ecologies and polyamorous theory in conversation with each other with the aim of supporting ocean professionals transdisciplinary collaborations.

**Keywords:** Tidalectics, Transdisciplinarity, Collaborations, Ocean Artscience, Queer Ecologies, Polyamorous Theory

# Abyssal Atmospheres of Remaindered Intimacy

**Presenters:** Christopher Pham

**Affiliation:** Independent

Trickling through moisture as a queer refugee mourning and melancholia (Vu, 2023), this paper traces how moisture's leftover liquids might welter and coalesce into different materialities and milieus of water and queer remembrance of Black and Indigenous histories, stirred by the fore- and ongoingness of colonial racial capitalism. Drifting with the "orthography of the wake" (Sharpe, 2016), "black shoals" (King, 2019), and "ocean passages" (Suzuki, 2023), it eddies within the surfaces and cataracts of empire to attune to the ambient senses of the "remaindered life" (Tadiar, 2022), its "southern cartographies" (Gandhi, 2022), and the recursive headwaters of Critical Refugee Studies scholarship (Espiritu, 2014; Nguyen, 2012). A literary and literature review of sorts, this work pools together the descent of Vietnamese American diasporic displacement into the various streams of relationalities, passages, and lifeworlds shared by Black and Indigenous communities: the abyss. In this sense, the ocean—and water writ large—may posit itself as a backwash of high tides, spilling a genealogy of violence throughout the atmospheres of the sociopolitical and ecological: global racial formation, colonial racial capitalism, and intimacy. And as it recedes, water may bare the remnants and splotches of abolitionist, trans-, crip minutiae of refracted—if not smothered—ontoepistemic dwellings. This study is only a shimmer on how water may splash, sluice, or murmur throughout the abyssal, turbid velocities weathered by modernity—confluencing diasporic and refugee lifeworlds as dapples of queer fragments, refluxing to a more-or-less than otherwise within the slaking infrastructure of empire.

# Collaborative Echolocating Encounters: Orienting Within Proximities to Fascism

**Presenters:** Vivienne Bozalek; Nike Romano

**Affiliation:** University of the Western Cape

In the opaque and turbulent waters of contemporary fascism, how might scholars orient themselves and find new ways of knowing, doing and being otherwise? Inspired by the biosonar capabilities of marine mammals such as toothed whales and dolphins, this paper proposes "echolocation" as an affective, collaborative methodology for navigating precarious political and ecological environments. Echolocation is a complex, active process of call-and-response, involving the emission of pulses into the darkness and a careful attunement to the returning echoes to discern the proximity, speed, shape, and texture of surrounding entities. We experiment with this more-than-human sensory modality as a framework for collaborative scholarly practice, translating the marine sensibility into a method of co-writing, reading aloud, and affective responding. By engaging in these echolocating encounters, we attune to the resonances and reverberations of our shared landscape. A true echo requires sufficient distance between the source and the surface to be perceived; it is not merely a repetition of the original sound, but a return signal carrying vital new information for orientation. This practice allows us to sound out the magnitudes and directions of intensity, capacity, and physicality within our current political moment. We explore how the echoes generated through our collaborative intra-actions materialize as markers of proximity, helping us to calibrate our positions relative to the shifting, unfolding velocities of contemporary fascism. We ask how echolocation as an oceanic practice might help calibrate the wavering distances connecting the self with affective multipliers. By indexing creativeness, artfulness, and familiarity, this collaborative sounding-out holds differences and repetitions to keep "proximities in proximity" (Varga & Franklin-Phipps, in press) Ultimately, we argue that embracing the marine practice of echolocation offers a profound sensibility for affective orientation, generating ways of affirming our capacity to resist and think otherwise through the call and response of collaborative encounters.

**Keywords:** Collaborative Encounters, Echolocation, Proximities, Facism

# **Creaturely Atmospheres: Oysters, Affective Contagion and the Oceanic Life of Resettled Boat Dwellers in Northeast Fujian**

**Presenters:** Hanqing Zhang

**Affiliation:** University College London

This research explores the sea as a space of affective contagion, where energies circulate, adhere and mutate across bodies, materials and histories. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork with the Lianjia boat people in northeast Fujian, southeast China, I attend to the affective atmospheres generated in the littoral zone following state-led resettlement from water to land. I ask how these historically marginalized bodies, resettled from boats to concrete apartments yet never fully severed from the sea, continue to inhabit oceanic life through the residues and debris that resettlement leaves behind. Central to this inquiry is the figure of the oyster, a creature whose material and sensory presence condenses entangled histories of labor, livelihood and loss that define these Lianjia boat people's life on the shore. Operating simultaneously as economic object, olfactory archive and remnant of an oceanic past that refuses erasure, the oyster exemplifies the 'creaturely aesthetics' of the shore, the animating force of nonhuman presences in the making, unmaking and remaking of home. The porosity of the ocean, with its capacity to seep into bodies, buildings and memory, structures an affective field in which haunted histories surface unpredictably: in the smell of low tide, in the textures of the oyster shore, in the charged encounter between a resettled body and the water it once inhabited. Reading these phenomena through the lens of affect theory and amphibious anthropology, I argue that the coast and the sea function as active atmosphere agents in the lives of those for whom the ocean was home, generating forms of animate relations that neither resettlement policy nor heritage discourse fully contains.

**Keywords:** Affective Contagion, Amphibious Anthropology, Lianjia Boat People, Oyster, Home, Atmosphere, Creaturely Aesthetics, Littoral Zone, Resettlement

# Ecological Grief, Solastalgia, and Making and Unmaking at the End of the World

**Presenters:** Hannah R. Bacon

**Affiliation:** Louisiana State University

New Orleans has 'reached the point of no return' and must be relocated inland before it is under water, so claims a recent Guardian article. This proposed techno-scientific solution to climate catastrophe is incapable of recognizing the ecological grief and solastalgia of the present. The 'I think you should leave' as self-fulfilling prophecy is dangerous. It paints the city as a lost cause, portraying citizens that stay as ignorant and naïve, and thus responsible for their future pain. New Orleansians history and relationship to the land is not negligible, replaceable, and interchangeable. This presentation is about unmaking and making the end of the world, specifically the willingness to unmake a city of Black cultural capital, and the way in which that world is made and remade despite generations of governmental negligence. Louisiana currently loses approximately a football field of coastland every 100 minutes. The land polluted with lead, air toxified with carcinogens. Even more grave, Louisiana recently sacrificed billions in environmental payouts from petroleum industries that were designated for coastal restoration project. New Orleans is not sinking passively into the ocean; it is strategically being sunk as a furtherance of racial capitalism. How do we protect cultural lived practices in an atmosphere of anticipatory abandonment, a self-fulfilling prophesy of divestment? How do we attend to the ecological grief and solastalgia locally and across communities? What local affective communities, and cultural resistances are such a threat to these industries that the only solution is displacement and climate refugeeism?

**Keywords:** Ecological Grief, Solastalgia, Unmaking Apocalyptic Futures

# Floating in Sound: Sensing Oceanic Soundscapes Through Embodied Hydrophonic Listening

**Presenters:** Lauren Thu

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

For humans sensing within worlds, the affectual agency of matter is interpretable in relation to the thresholds of our sensory capabilities. For instance, as land-based mammals, our ability to see for long distances across a spectrum of colours helps us to sense where we are and what is happening around us. However, the sensory landscape of the ocean is different from land. In the ocean, sound travels slower and further, it refracts and bends under pressure. Upon submersion, land-based vision primacy washes away to reveal an atmospheric sonic world of crackling, whirring, clicking and grunts. This paper introduces a question of how we might sense and attune with the vibrational and relational agencies of ocean soundscapes through more-than-human design approaches, and asks what might emerge through listening-with the ocean through embodied experiences. Through the use of DIY wearable hydrophones, this research follows repeated swims in the Pacific ocean off the coast of Vancouver, Canada, sensed through a combination of somatic practices and sound recordings made while swimming and floating. The mediation of sound through ambient recording devices parallels the technological entanglements inherent to the ocean. Anthropogenic sounds in this research are asserted to be temporally, materially, and politically inextricable from the ocean's acoustic ecology. In this sense, the ocean is not other worldly - it is the locus of the hydrocommons. This work speculates that listening and designing-with these entangled soundscapes might generate experiential, diffractive, and soniferous imaginings otherwise unavailable to land-based, vision-centered epistemologies, opening new affective capacities for attuning and becoming-with the ocean.

**Keywords:** Oceans, Soundscapes, Sensing, Technology, More-than-Human Design

# Hydropedagogies of Unbecoming V2

**Presenters:** Delphi Carstens

**Affiliation:** University of the Western Cape

Reflecting on the porous boundary between my own body and that of a beloved polluted and overfished coastal marine ecosystem, as well as the overlaps and discontinuities between human and marine 'languages', this paper follows nutrient updrafts and chemical gradients over continental-shelves onto the lightless abyssal plains that, like littoral zones, have morphed into hot-zones for capitalist rapacity. Conjuring a defamiliarizing mode of hydro-ecological storytelling that plays with the affective, aesthetic and onto-ethical weird pedagogical implications of watery anthropogenic disruptions, I juxtapose sudden temporal disturbances against longer destructive/creative cycles of deep time and oceanic interdependencies. Zooming in and out between light-filled coastal shelves and the stygian darkness of the deep-ocean floor, I play with affective, communicative and temporal and diagnostic transcorporeal frames. Contrasting attempts to process the diverse communication of littoral and abyssal lifeforms against the ultimate unintelligibility of systems of communication that are radically different in both type and degree from ours, I also introduce points of sensory convergence that bring together themes of interspecies resonance. Stacey Alaimo's *The Abyss Stares Back* (2025), Ned Baumann's *Venomous Lumpsucker* (2022), James Bradley's *Deep Water* (2025) and the artist Mer Maggie Roberts glistening deep-time oceanic conjurations of uncanny watery topographical anomalies, provide speculative laboratories for the task at hand: Generating a mode of hydro-ecological storytelling that embraces the destructive/creative task of casting lines of flight into the dark in order to think and teach with the unthinkable.

**Keywords:** Littoral Zones, Abyssal Plains, Hydro-Ecological Storytelling, Transcorporeal Frames, (Bio)semiotics, Speculative/Weird Pedagogy

# Littoral Ontogenesis: Anecdote, Exile, Language

**Presenters:** Emile Fromet de Rosnay

**Affiliation:** University of Victoria

Returning to Mauritius after decades of geographical and linguistic exile, homecoming arrived in the body: the immanent mixture of Creole, French and English, was felt before it could be theorized. At the same time, seaweed was accumulating on the white beaches – warmer waters, agricultural runoff –, threatening the tourist industry's pristine image. Two forms of ontogenetic appearance. Francis Bacon expelled anecdote from method, transforming experience (*experimentum*) into experiment; posthumanism risks a parallel move, reducing linguistic expression into matter's generalized agency – and while Barad's intra-active framework is indispensable for thinking past the rational colonial subject, it risks conflating semiotic and semantic (Benveniste), thereby dissolving the irreducibility of enunciation and with it the singular speaking body: linguistic exile, the ecology of a language being standardized into extinction, recuperating lost dialects of the sea. The littoral/literal: the threshold zone where embodied encounter and enunciation meet, where language becomes littoral. Two asymmetric but rhyming colonial littorals – Finnerty Cove (unceded Lekwungen territory, Pacific) and Mauritius (post/neo-colonial Indian Ocean) – are sites of a single ongoing inquiry. The Cove project and the Mauritius project are ongoing instances of a practice ecology oriented toward littoral ontogenesis: singular form coming into being at the threshold, irreducible to the systems that produced it. Creole as ontogenetic event. Seaweed as ontogenetic appearance. Creation-as-ignorance (Marguerite Duras) as shared methodological stance. The project enacts a procedural poetics generated from the vocabulary of a swim, constraints emerging from encounter rather than imposed upon it – not a Raymond Roussel arriving in Africa with his method intact, but an emergence from inside the water. What Bacon called groping in the dark – contingent, anecdotal, singular – is the condition of possibility for littoral ontogenesis: where the creative and the theoretical are not illustration and argument, but a single ontogenetic threshold.

**Keywords:** Littoral Ontogenesis, Ontogenesis, Gesture, Enunciation, Semantics/Semiotics, Preindividual, Research-Creation, Practice Ecology, Procedural Poetics, Sonic Ethnography, Experimental Film, Indian Ocean, Salish Sea

# Viscous Atmospheres: the Affective Ecology of the Marmara Bloom

**Presenters:** Emre Sünter

**Affiliation:** Kadir Has University

In 2021, the Sea of Marmara became coated with a thick layer of marine mucilage: a dense, sticky proliferation that disrupted marine life, fishing practices, and collective sensory relations to the sea. Commonly framed as the predictable outcome of pollution, rising temperatures, and political negligence, the mucilage bloom is typically approached through models of linear causality and environmental management. This paper argues that the Marmara bloom demands a different conceptual vocabulary. Rather than treating mucilage as a passive symptom of ecological collapse, I read it as an affective material event that transformed the sea from a background environment into an immersive medium of ecological intensity. Drawing on Karen Barad's notion of intra-action and Gilles Deleuze's concept of quasi-causality, I propose that the bloom did not simply reveal an already existing environmental condition. Where intra-action describes matter as relationally constituted through ongoing differentiations, quasi-causality accounts for how events exceed their physical conditions without escaping them. The bloom materialized diffuse ecological intensities that had been unfolding beneath perceptual and political thresholds. The mucilage operated as a more-than-human atmospheric effect at the surface of the sea. As the sea thickened, lost transparency, and enveloped coastlines in a viscous atmosphere, backgrounded ecological processes acquired affective density. Rather than synthesizing Barad and Deleuze, the paper explores the productive tension between them through the Marmara bloom itself. If Barad foregrounds the relational constitution of matter and Deleuze conceptualizes events as exceeding their physical actualization, the mucilage emerges precisely at this unstable threshold. I propose the concept of viscous atmosphere to describe how ecological events acquire material density, affective force, and atmospheric persistence at once. The Marmara bloom shows how ecological events become atmospheric not metaphorically, but materially: through intensities that thicken collective sensation and reshape the very conditions of inhabiting the sea.

**Keywords:** Marine Mucilage, Affective Ecology, Intra-Action, Quasi-Causality, Viscous Atmosphere, More-than-Human

# Wit(h)nessing and Withness of the Body: Affective Attunements Through Encounters with the Great African Seaforest

**Presenters:** Nike Romano; Vivienne Bozalek

**Affiliation:** Cape Peninsula University of Technology

This presentation employs a diffractive methodology to read Bracha Ettinger's *wit(h)nessing* and Alfred North Whitehead's *withness of the body* through each other, and our experiences of swimming and freewriting with the Great African Seaforest in Cape Town, South Africa. Whitehead's withness of the body positions the body as an instrument of perception that vibrates with the world, resisting the bifurcation of nature into mind and matter. Rooted in *causal efficacy* – a primitive mode where the past viscerally presses into the present – this perspective anchors the mind in the physical world, confirming our entanglement with the environment. Ettinger's matrixial theory offers a relational field of co-emergence. Her notion of wit(h)nessing counters the separative, mastering phallic gaze through a touching matrixial gaze. This requires self-fragilisation, rendering boundaries permeable to co-affective encounters and establishing a copoetic rapport with unknown Others. For Ettinger, this is an ongoing ethical practice of care-carriance, where psychic traces are carried and sustained. We are curious as to whether encounters in the ocean can activate a borderspace of affective attunement in which wit(h)nessing and withness of the body might occur. To do this we swim with concepts such as self-fragilisation, becoming-with, bifurcation of nature, matrixial gaze, care-carriance, wit(h)nessing, withness of the body, causal efficacy, and body as instrument. By affectively attuning to these philosophical concepts through the seaforest we cultivate multisensory ways of doing educational inquiry. Understood in this way, research becomes a practice of care ethics that refuses extraction and mastery.

**Keywords:** Wit(h)nessing, Withness of the Body, Withnessing-as-Inquiry, Great African Seaforest, Affective Attunement, Diffractive Methodology

# Written by the Divine: on Senegal's Edge, Making Thick Community with the Ocean

**Presenters:** Margaret Rowley

**Affiliation:** University of Iowa

In Senegal's Layène Sufi epistemology, the ocean lives thickly with people along the shore. Humans and the sea are *mbindeefu Yàlla*: creation, or creatures "written by the Divine," and their lives are profoundly interwoven. For the Layène, the ocean provides food, physical and spiritual healing, and even potable drinking water. The liminal space of the shore—in the Wolof language, *geej* means both beach and sea—has long been a source of spirituality, an emissary of God, and an affective force in Layène daily life. When the Layène community gathers on the beach to sing prayer, the ocean's voice joins in, resisting the dominant Euro-American narrative of the sea and other "natural resources" as "manipulatable material, determinate, homogeneous, and subject to mechanical laws" (Asad 2003, 27). This project theorises an affect of thick togetherness between the community and the ocean around the Wolof word *far*, a polysemic term that can mean togetherness, importance, and thickness. Today, the sea along Senegal's coast is a Divine creature in turmoil: acidified, polluted with plastic and waste water from humans and manufacturing, warming, and chipping away at the coastline, steadily pulling fragile chunks of sand into its depths. Climate crisis, pushed across the water from industrialized nations, disproportionately harms the material lives of many who were formerly colonized. This ethnographic project draws on the fragile shoreline's liminal space: how is industrialization affecting the intensities where the water meets the land? What does it mean to cultivate thick multispecies community amid climate catastrophe? On the roaring, hissing edge of the water, the Layène relationship with the ocean sounds the consequences of a one-world world (Law 2015) and—within thick, multispecies Divine community—possibilities of otherwise.

**Keywords:** Senegal, Islam, Africa, Ethnography, Sound Studies, Affect, Islamic Ecology, Climate Crisis

# “Joburg’s Swimming Pools: Watery Contemplations, Atmospheric Imaginings”

**Presenters:** Pamila Gupta

**Affiliation:** University of the Free State

What follows in this paper is a series of watery contemplations on Johannesburg’s swimming pools which, for some residents—including myself—, are the closest thing to an ocean we have in this dry landlocked urban metropolis. First I want to think about the design of pools as voluptuous, as inciting a range of emotions, from wondrous to increasingly endangered (Elias, 2019), as capturing sea and sky combined, and a corporeal and submerged sensorial feeling of wetness, something I have written about elsewhere in relation to the monsoons (Gupta 2021). Next I want to reflect on these infrastructures as a ‘form of landscape’ (Abbas 2010) that can be mapped onto Johannesburg and its surrounds (Northern suburbs, Southern suburbs, and townships) in relation to its colonial and apartheid past and which is connected to deeper histories of racial segregation and mining. Joburg’s swimming pools also invoke an atmospheric imaginary that speaks to the city’s dryness, one which constantly catches in one’s throat, eyes, skin, and hair and is inescapable. Jumping into a pool on a hot lazy Joburg day reminds us of what it feels like to cool down one’s body temperature and be surrounded by the colour blue (Meloy, 2002; Solnit, 2005; Taussig, 2009) even if it is fleeting. Swimming pools provide water oases in Global South cities such as Johannesburg, yet they are as ominous as they are gentle and tranquil in that they portend our dry futures in an era of the Anthropocene and pending water crises. Eerily empty, hollowed out, rusted, repurposed and abandoned swimming pools increasingly dot the Joburg landscape, with non-human ‘creaturely aesthetics’ (Alamo 2025) taking over, yet another layered affect of changing climatic times.

**Keywords:** South Africa, Johannesburg, Swimming Pools, Water, Apartheid, Anthropocene

## S5. Affective Politics and Energetic Transductions Across Art and Design

Energy and energies have emerged as core concepts in increasingly expansive research across the natural sciences, the humanities, and the arts. In Western contexts, energy is conceptualized as a force of life, a materializing commodity, a physical quantity, an analytic perspective, an economy, an ecological concern, an experiential encounter, and more. Complementarily, but also differently, non-Western perspectives such as Daoist philosophy introduce relational, regenerative, and cosmological alternatives that challenge extractivist logics. Douglas Kahn has insisted on working with “energies” in the plural while emphasizing their artistic, aesthetic, and affective dimensions. Similarly, Bruce Clarke staged STS-oriented discussions of energy and thermodynamics in *Energy Forms* (2001) and later expanded this discourse toward literature and the arts (2002). More recently, these debates have opened onto historical arcs linking thermodynamics and labor within historical materialism to discussions of energy in embodied and affective contexts (Daggett 2021). Likewise, the relation between life and energy has formed a philosophical line extending from evolutionary biology and vitalist philosophies, positioning energy as a transsubstantial force beyond mere quantification (Caygill 2007). These lineages resonate in our globally entangled present and position energy as a resonant concept across contexts and domains. Beyond naming the major processes and devastating projects of modernization, the field of the Energy Humanities has argued that moving away from fossil-based energetics requires the crafting of new experiential spacetimes and worldings “reimagined in the wake of the experience of the expanded, extended selves of fossil fuel modernity” (Diamanti and Szeman 2020, p. 141).

Energy and its intersection with affect, as a force exceeding both the numerical and the emotional, can already be found in the writings of Gilbert Simondon from the 1950s onward. In his relational account of the physical, organic, and psychological (social), he draws on the concept of potential energy, as developed in early twentieth-century physics, to propose a radical approximation of material (actual) and potentiating (virtual) tendencies in the fabrication of procedural reality. On this basis, Simondon proposes what might be called a “human energetics,” radically rethinking the humanities in relation to the natural sciences. We find this especially resonant with the artistic, affective, and materialist understandings of energy outlined above.

In this stream, we are interested in interrogating the ways in which energy and energies, in deep resonance with affect, might contribute to ongoing investigations of processes of intensification and transduction in contemporary technologically infused experiential fields across human, non-human, and more-than-human bodies and dimensions. Building on Simondon’s proposition of a human energetics and Eastern somatic and contemplative traditions such as Daoist practices, we wish to explore how energetic transduction might be not only theorized but also practiced and navigated across art and design—and beyond. We invite contributions that energetically and affectively engage with, question, creatively problematize, and further explore topics such as:

- How can we rethink and redesign not only the fossil-fueled energetic foundations of modernity, but the entire notion of energy, in order to imagine more livable futures today?
- What energies are needed to grow collective capacities to make life otherwise?
- What affective politics are enacted across technoscientific stratifications, and how might an energetic approach open up possibilities—and potential—for countering such developments?
- What is lost or gained when energy is theorized as affective, relational, and embodied rather than quantifiable and transferable?
- What forms, methods, and encounters might cultivate “sympathetic resonance,” not as a spiritual retreat from politics but as one of its energetic foundations?

# A Whiteheadian Vocabulary to Talk About Affect

**Presenters:** Ana Ramos

**Affiliation:** Independent and 3Ecologies

Affect is not exactly feeling. It is an inflection of feeling. Here, inflection is to be understood as modulation, and as such, affect is feeling in movement. In Alfred North Whitehead's vocabulary (1978), feeling is the act of passing from data to felt experience, yielding in satisfaction. This yielding is energy in action. The subject of this experience falls short of the perceptible level of human experience. Whitehead calls this subject an actual occasion. At this molecular level of experience, feeling and affect are like the two sides of the same coin. These two sides are constituted by an objective and a subjective inclination. On the objective side of experience, we will have feeling, which is the crystallization of available data into the satisfaction of the actual occasion. The subjective aspect of experience is how this crystallization happens. In Whiteheadian vocabulary, this is called the "subjective form," i.e., *how* this experience comes into being. Subjective form is key to understanding expression. Until now, by experience, we have been supposing one single actual occasion. When you have a gathering of "subjective forms," a multidimensional wave forms. Affect is the wave through which the expression of the event travels. Affect is not content. It is a movement: energy expansion. In this sense, energy embodies and propels the unity of the subject (the event) into expansion. What is gained when energy is theorized as affective is a glimpse into expression from a non-anthropocentric view that locates experience at the level of the event.

**Keywords:** Affect, Feeling, Energy, Actual Occasion, Subjective Form, Expression

# Beyond Manipulation: Puppetry as Energetic Transduction in Affective Art

**Presenters:** Ziyue Yang

**Affiliation:** Shanghai Theatre Academy

This paper proposes a process-oriented ontology of affective art by reconfiguring energy as an affective, relational, and transductive force. Drawing on Brian Massumi's affect theory, Gilbert Simondon's concept of transduction, and Deleuze's philosophy of the virtual, it argues that energy should not be understood as a quantifiable resource or transferable entity, but rather as a field of intensities continuously generated across bodies, media, and environments. Within this theoretical framework, contemporary puppetry is introduced as a key site of investigation. The paper examines how nonhuman agencies operate within performative settings through bodily manipulation, material vibration, and spatial orchestration, thereby constituting mechanisms of affective transduction. Moving beyond conventional interpretations centered on control and representation, puppetry reveals a decentralized distribution of energy in which puppeteer, puppet, audience, and environment form a dynamically entangled network of affective resonance. In this process, affect does not emerge from the transmission of meaning but operates as a pre-cognitive modulation of intensity that acts upon the body prior to representation. By foregrounding the concept of energetic transduction, the paper further analyzes how affective intensities circulate, accumulate, and amplify within puppetry and related installation-based performance practices. In this context, energy is approached as a pre-individual field of potential that modulates perception and generates tendencies and tensions, enabling the emergence of what Massumi terms semblance as an event. Puppetry is no longer understood as a representational art form but as a generative affective mechanism in which transduction converts virtual potential into lived intensity. The paper argues that contemporary puppetry, as a more-than-human performative practice, reveals art as an ecology of becoming structured by energetic processes. Transduction functions as the key mechanism through which virtual potential is actualized into experiential intensity. This perspective not only redefines the ontology of art but also contributes to reimagining sustainable modes of sensibility and politics.

**Keywords:** Affect, Energy, Puppetry, Intensity

# Cosmotechnical Energetics: Affective Matter, Qi, and the Transduction of Design Ethics

**Presenters:** Chenxi Cui

**Affiliation:** Guangdong University of Technology

This paper proposes "affective matter" as a conceptual figure through which the energetic transductions theorized by Simondon become inseparable from the design-ethical composition of more-than-human worlds. Drawing affect theory (Massumi, Anderson) into entanglement with new materialist accounts of vibrant matter (Bennett, Barad), I argue that materials, atmospheres, infrastructures, and sensing technologies are not inert carriers but energetic participants whose intensities are continuously modulated within design configurations. To resist the residual humanism of Western design ethics—still organized around principle, judgment, and the deliberative subject—I bring Simondon's "human energetics" into resonance with Chinese cosmotechnical traditions, particularly the Daoist conception of 气 (qi) as a relational, regenerative force, and 道法自然 as a non-extractivist orientation toward the unfolding of relations. Read against the fossil-fueled energetics of design modernity, qi operates as a transducer concept: a way of thinking energy as affect-with-matter that exceeds quantification while refusing exoticist self-appropriation. From this framing, I sketch three strategies—Sensing-With, Affect-With, Designing-With—as energetic practices that redistribute the apparatuses, relations, and assemblages through which design participates in ethical futures. Each strategy treats ethics not as a principle to be applied but as a tuning of intensity, threshold, and sympathetic resonance across heterogeneous bodies. The paper asks what affective politics become possible when design no longer manages energy as resource, but inhabits it as transductive and recalcitrant—a condition for crafting livable worlds across contemporary technoscientific stratifications.

**Keywords:** Affective Matter, Energetic Transduction, Qi / Daoist Cosmotechnics, More-than-Human Design Ethics, Sympathetic Resonance, Sensing-with / Affect-with / Designing-With

# Designing for Energetic Differentials: Affective Field Modulations in Interactive Environments

**Presenters:** Kristina Mah; Jonas Fritsch

**Affiliation:** University of Melbourne

This paper proposes designing for energetic differentials as both a methodological orientation and an ethical imperative that resists the flattening logics of universal design and the empathic collapse of proximity and instead proposes a sensitivity to what moves across irreducibly different bodies and experiential worlds without an urgency to resolve the gap between them. Drawing on two artist-designer-practitioners, we explore how praxis through the creation of interactive systems might function not as representational tools but as transductive surfaces capable of externalising, modulating, and redistributing affective intensities that ordinarily remain imperceptible. Inner Suchness was an interactive installation combining digital video projection and augmented reality, developed through an autoethnographic practice of Tonglen meditation, a Buddhist practice for compassion cultivation. The work translates the first-person lived experience of a longitudinal practice, enacting familiarisation with inner gestures through movement, light, and interaction. Externalising Auditory Hallucinations is part of a collaboration with the Danish Center for Art and Mental Health, aimed at using sound, sonification and affective scaffolding as a form of therapeutic intervention. Here, digital technology is used as a co-creative material for shifting perceptions through aesthetic explorations of different ways to be human. In the paper, we situate these projects within a broader exploration of energetic transductions across Eastern and Western cosmologies and philosophies, asking how we can think about design that engages energetically and affectively with people through differentials rather than sameness? In doing so, we interrogate how designing for energetic differentials might crack and tear fissures in seemingly consolidated affective-felt perceptual fields tending towards the more-than across art and design.

**Keywords:** Energetic Differentials, Affective Transduction, Sympathetic Resonance, Praxis

# Ergosentimentalism: Affective Energetics, Racial Time, and the Limits of Relational Life

**Presenters:** Petra Mikulan; Adam Rudder

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This essay interrogates the convergence of energy and affect through the concept of ergosentimentalism: a historically sedimented nexus linking fossil-fuel energetics, aesthetic sentimentality, and racialized governance of life. Building on genealogies of thermodynamics, labor, and feeling, I argue that contemporary ecological and pedagogical discourses often reproduce an inherited “human energetics” that conflates relationality, vitality, and affective responsiveness with forms of energetic capacity rooted in 19th-century fossil-fuel modernity. These formations bind energy, waste, and labor to moralized imaginaries of progress, embedding racial hierarchies within the very aesthetics of ecological care. Engaging recent debates in the energy humanities, I suggest that affective-relational accounts of energy—often mobilized to imagine more livable futures—risk reinscribing what they seek to displace. The emphasis on connectivity, transduction, and planetary entanglement frequently intensifies rather than unsettles a normative “stress on life as relation,” wherein the capacity to affect and be affected becomes an unevenly distributed energetic attribute. In this sense, energy operates not merely as a material resource or analytic category, but as an affective regime that organizes differential capacities across bodies and populations. Through a stratigraphic reading of aesthetic public pedagogies and artistic practices such as *Sun & Sea* (Barzdžiukaitė et al. 2019), I trace how ergosentimentalism sustains itself by mobilizing hope, urgency, and care as affective fuels for ongoing extraction, even under conditions of ecological collapse. These practices produce what might be called an affect-energy-work loop: a system of continuous investment in futures that remain structurally foreclosed. Rather than extending relational energetics, I ask what it might mean to divest from thermo/dynamic models of change altogether. This entails rethinking energy as a site of political struggle over whose lives are sustained, exhausted, or rendered expendable. In doing so, the paper contributes to ongoing efforts to reimagine energy beyond extractivist, racialized, and future-oriented regimes of life.

**Keywords:** Sentimentalism, Relationality, Time, Affective Energetics

# Field-Affects – Between General and Human Energetics in the Work of Gilbert Simondon

**Presenters:** Christoph Brunner; Jonas Fritsch

**Affiliation:** Erasmus University Rotterdam

In a 1966 lecture entitled “Forme, information, potentiels,” French philosopher of technology Gilbert Simondon proposes what he terms a Human Science (*science humaine*) intended to replace the inherited schism between the natural, human, and social sciences. He does so through what he calls a human energetics. Drawing on the concept of potential energy from physics, Simondon foregrounds the constitutive role of relationality and the field. Energy here denotes a relative and field-related dimension of reality: the presence of unresolved tensions, gradients, and capacities for transformation prior to their stabilization in determinate forms. Affect names this energetic differential at the level of relation: the manner in which potentials exert pressure, orient becoming, and modulate the emergence of individual, collective, and more-than-human forms. Human energetics are therefore not energies derived from human activity—for instance physical labour—but rather the field of relations expressed as affective-energetic potentialities that come to compose what might relationally be considered the human understood as as one possible resolution, modulation, or amplification of preindividual tensions within the field of affective life. This paper departs from Simondon’s tentatively Eurocentric understanding of human and general energetics by asking under which circumstances, and toward which ends, field-orientations of potentiation have operated within post-Enlightenment politics of “the human” as a trope of Western epistemic and ontological predominance. The question is therefore not only how Simondon’s energetics allows us to rethink the human beyond the nature/culture divide, but also how the very composition of fields, potentials, and affects has historically participated in the making of “the human” as a privileged figure of epistemic, political, and ontological orientation. We therefore ask: under which circumstances can a becoming-(more-than-)human take on a potentiating or depotentiating function? Or, to put it in Spinozist terms, when do field-affects become joyous or sad affects?

**Keywords:** Transduction, Potential Energy, New Humanities, Relationality

## Sailing: Force-to-Form

**Presenters:** Matthew-Robin Nye

**Affiliation:** Concordia University and 3Ecologies

I have a 22' sailboat manufactured by Tanzer Industries, named 'Zermatt' by a previous owner, turning 50 years old this year. Zermatt was manufactured in Vaudreuil-Dorion, across the lake from where it is presently moored at the Oka Marina. Tanzer 22s are a frequent sight on Lac de Deux Montagnes, in part because its aerodynamics and seaworthiness were designed and tested in the conditions of this particular lake. In other words, the boat was made for the lake it presently sails on. Zermatt, which also functions as a small camper, naturally cuts through, along, and against the winds which sweep down the Ottawa River Valley toward its confluence with the St. Lawrence river, at the eastern edge of the Island of Montreal. I have come to learn that sailing, is, of course, an art as much as it is a technical practice. It is a technique of existence. How might bodily engagement with energy infrastructures be renewed in service of more just ecological futures? In this study, what I am attempting to draw out are practices that engage with renewable energy – like sailing, but also in sweeping snow off of solar panels or chopping wood in order to heat a home, or attuning to when to open or close a home's windows in summer – where what sidles alongside these temporary bodying activities is a scoring of movement. TO sail is to attune to a dynamic environment is a form of speculative-pragmatism – an act of immediation – against technologies of transportation that have otherwise been automated and subsumed by contemporary energy infrastructures. This research-creation project is merely weeks old, but has been germinating for some time. At present, the hope is that it will be funded by a year-long grant which itself focusses on research-creation and energy infrastructures.

**Keywords:** Transduction, Individuation, Energy Infrastructures, Sailing, Process Philosophy, Research-Creation, Speculative Pragmatics

# The Energies of Clothed Bodies: a Vital Materialist Proposition for Transforming “Sustainable Fashion”

**Presenters:** Anastasia Y. Goodwin

**Affiliation:** Vanderbilt University

Nearly all human bodies we encounter over the course of our lives are clothed bodies. The industry that designs and produces clothing worldwide is responsible for more carbon emissions than all international flights and maritime shipping (Maiti, 2026). Moreover, this industry continues to operate as source and mechanism of violent colonialist oppression including enslavement, disenfranchisement, and displacement (Thanhauser, 2022). Though calls for “sustainable fashion” grew through the early 2000s and 2010s, without coordinated international policy changes, they amounted to little more than large-scale greenwashing by global fashion conglomerates. Now it appears that the public is largely giving up on the idea of refusing fast fashion (Cline, 2026). Thus, energies of most clothed bodies in today’s global north seem to have little resonance with energies of (mostly young female) overworked and underpaid bodies in the global south, not to mention those of the earth and the critters (Haraway, 2016) whose bodies continue to contribute their vitality to global supply chains (Tsing, 2015). The question is, can the act of clothing our bodies tune these energies otherwise, and how would we go about it? As I reflect on a semester spent teaching US-based university students the fundamentals of making clothes, I propose, following Bennett (2010), that the attunement to the vital energies of all kinds of bodies begins with deep engagement with their materialities through touch, movement, smell, and sound. Thus, making becomes the source of affective and political energetic transduction, as well as way to generate sympathetic resonances across multiple bodies. References (abbreviated) Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant matter* Cline, E. (2026). *Everlane, Shein, and the limits of the ethical consumer*. *The Atlantic* Haraway, D. (2016). *Staying with the trouble* Maiti, R. (2026). *The environmental impact of fast fashion, explained*. *Earth.org* Tsing, A. (2015). *The mushroom at the end of the world*

**Keywords:** Design, Sustainability, Fashion, Textiles, Vital Materialism

## S6. Affective Traces Across Generations

The past is porous and intertwines with the present in myriad ways; time lives in bodies, objects, spaces, beliefs, traditions, and practices (Barad, 2017; Barad, 2019). Within Baradian thought, past, present, and future materialize and intra-act; the past is a material and entangled force mattering in the present, carrying responsibilities for justice and response-ability. These temporal entanglements are affectively charged: the past becomes present and is felt through bodily sensations, atmospheres, and intensities. Past and future actualize through the everyday practices, experiences, storytelling, memories, and values of family, kinship, and local communities, but also through corporeal knowledge, silences, and breakages.

Temporal entanglements thus challenge linear, progressive notions of historical time bound to colonial, capitalist, and nationalist networks, opening instead toward relational and plural temporalities (Barad, 2019). Drawing on this, memories and experiences of the past can be approached as relational, affective, and sociomaterial processes. This simultaneously resonates with diverse knowledge systems, for example, with Indigenous worldviews where time is often considered spiral, place-based, and relational, and where histories of land, ancestors, humans, and more-than-humans are inseparable (e.g., Marker, 2018; Lehtola, 2022; Simpson, 2017).

Exploring affectivity, temporality, and generations is essential for addressing contemporary social issues. Experiences such as discrimination, oppression, disadvantage, and violence can affect across generations, but so can resistance, support, and community-building practices. Leaving affective traces across generations, these legacies are not fixed but rather continuously formed and reconfigured. This stream encourages mapping those lines of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) that open up possibilities for change and transformation across generations. We invite explorations of how affective traces of collective events do not transmit or become inherited linearly across generations, nor reside exclusively within the psychic realm, but materialize, for example, through myths and silences (Cho, 2008), communal relations (Walkerdine & Jiménez, 2012), and everyday material-affective practices (Huuki & Juutilainen, 2016). We challenge stream contributors to move beyond pathologizing and individualizing understandings of trauma and adversities and, in doing so, to resist neocapitalist forces that produce, direct, and capture desire and affect.

This stream invites contributors to explore trans/inter-generationality through dis/continuities, fractures, and changes. We encourage especially analyses of how temporal entanglements and affective encounters produce the social world across and beyond generations. Presentations may examine themes related to trans/inter-generationality from empirical, theoretical, and methodological perspectives. How does the past become affectively present in everyday lives? What kinds of tensions and frictions arise at the intersections where the present collides with the values, beliefs, and practices of previous generations? What methods can be used to trace and map trans/inter-generationally in affect research?

Our stream invites presentations and discussions on, but not limited to:

- Affective approaches to tracing and mapping trans/inter-generationality
- Alternative approaches to linear and chronological temporalities in studying trans/inter-generationality
- Ethical considerations and responsibilities for researching sensitive and cross-cultural questions on trans/inter-generationality
- Creative examples of how to attune to trans/inter-generationality in affect research
- Resistance and refusal as ways of knowing and/in being across generations and temporalities
- Gender, sexuality, class, and ethnicity as trans/inter-generational phenomena
- Trans/inter-generationality in Indigenous studies, for example, meanings of past generations and temporalities
- Memory studies and the body as an archive of past experiences and future orientations

- The transmission of trauma across generations
- Childhood and youth as entanglements of transgenerational family relations
- Kinship beyond traditional family relations: how kinships are built in more-than-human communities across time
- Entanglement as a method in affect studies of generation

# Affective Intergenerationality: Haunted Speakability, Colonial Violence, and Decolonial Praxis

**Presenters:** Ana Eclair Dragojlovic

**Affiliation:** University of Melbourne

In this talk I theorise affective intergenerationality through the lens of silence, developing a theoretical framework for understanding how silence operates across generations as an affective, communicative, and politically charged force situated at the intersection of colonial violence, heteropatriarchy, and decolonial praxis. Drawing on the concept of "haunted speakability", I challenge binary oppositions between liberatory speech and passive silence, to argue instead that intergenerational silence constitutes a complex affective space that reverberates across time, exceeding and preceding verbal articulation (Dragojlovic, 2021). Engaging with queer feminist and decolonial scholarship, I critically explore the privileging of speech as the primary vehicle for empowerment, whilst attending to the generative dimensions that intergenerational silence can simultaneously harbour. Central to my discussion is the notion of "transversal listening" – an attuned, relational, and intersubjective mode of ethnographic engagement that takes seriously what resonates through and within silence across generations (Dragojlovic, 2023). I further consider how unlearning as a decolonial praxis might dismantle the intergenerational reproduction of heteropatriarchal normativity and colonial structures of power. I argue that thinking about the affective forces of intergenerationality can constitute points of entry into deeper ethical engagements with historical injustice, intergenerational care, and the politics of visibility.

**Keywords:** Intergenerationality, Haunting, Decoloniality, Affective Space, Transversal

# Authoritarian Afterglow: My Post-Soviet Toronto Childhood

**Presenters:** Keren Zaiontz

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

My paper will reflect on how my 1980s and '90s Jewish childhood in a cul-de-sac monster home sheltered feelings of displacement that persisted long after the Nazi genocide. Many European Jews who had survived WWII, and lived in Soviet Republics--working as physicians in Tashkent, or machinists in Kyiv, such as my maternal grandmother and paternal grandfather--were reminded almost daily that despite their national allegiances they could never be European "enough" and were better off wandering. It is this diasporic experience of wandering, comically identified in the figure of the Wandering Jew, that repeated itself in what I call the post-Soviet suburbs of Toronto. My parents were quintessential Soviet citizens--my father, a decorated free-style wrestler; my mother, a deeply superstitious woman who could recite the periodic table of elements by heart. From their respective Soviet capitals, they grew up in an atmosphere of stagnant totalitarianism in which the state remained in the grips of its own fantasy of permanent revolution while its people stood in bread lines. This cognitive dissonance was rarely commented upon except through deadpan humour in which reality itself was the butt of jokes--proof that the entire population was trapped in an unwilling suspension of disbelief. When my family immigrated to Canada in the early 1980s, suburban home ownership became a kind of obsession for my parents, the only basis on which they were united as a couple. Paying off their mortgage early put an end to my parent's wandering, but their sense of contingency remained hidden between sofa cushions and at the back of sock drawers. Home became a site where the traumas of displacement and the theatre of totalitarianism played out in everyday interactions. My auto-affective analysis will be intertwined with literary analysis of Maria Reva's *Endling* and archival segments from my paternal grandfather's KGB dossier.

**Keywords:** Autotheory, Authoritarianism, Postmemory

# Blood, Camera, Action: the Viennese Actionists and Post-Fascist Affective Inheritance

**Presenters:** Camille Brijer

**Affiliation:** University of Amsterdam

The 1960s art-collective known as the Viennese Actionists made visible how pain and disgust do not simply shock a present audience but inscribe affective traces that reverberate across generations. Building on affect theory and abjection, I argue that Actionist performances turn the body into a volatile archive in which Austria's disavowed fascist past is re-experienced, displaced, and contested at the level of sensation. Instead of representing trauma, works by Hermann Nitsch, Otto Muehl, Günter Brus, and Rudolf Schwarzkogler stage it as an intersubjective event: blood, screams, sexualized humiliation, and ritualized wounding operate as "sticky" affects that circulate between performers and spectators, binding them into a shared yet asymmetrical field of feeling. Situating these actions within postwar Austria's "politics of innocence," I show how their 'negative' affects press against a national narrative that casts Austrians as mere victims of Nazism. The performances' affective excess is read as a tactic that forces repressed histories back into embodied awareness. Pain here functions as a generative rupture: it undoes the spectator's presumed distance, exposes the vulnerability of the social body, and opens a fragile space for new forms of subjectivity grounded in corporeal exposure. By foregrounding affect's durability – how bodily responses to Actionist work echo familial silences, inherited moral codes, and contemporary right-wing nostalgæ – I propose that these performances dramatize the transmission, distortion, and possible re-routing of traumatic affects across time. This approach contributes to broader discussions on how aesthetic practices can interrupt affective continuities that sustain post-fascist orders.

**Keywords:** Affect, Postwar, Viennese Actionism, Memory

# Eldering and Diffracting Intergenerational Climate/Eco-Anxiety/Grieving

**Presenters:** Malou Juelskjær

**Affiliation:** Aarhus University

In public debates concerning ongoing climate- and ecological catastrophes, generations are often pitted against each other, iterating generational individualism (Hourdequin 2024) within a linear/chronological notion of time. With activist groups, the fight for climate justice predominantly takes place in generational silos (e.g. Fridays for Future, The Green Youth Movement, Extinction Rebellion, Fossil Fuel Free Future, Grandparents for Climate Justice) and is affectively charged as well in generational opposition (e.g. you are stealing our future) and in solidarity with other- and future generations and with other, intersecting justice issues. In this geopolitical atmosphere (Berlant 2017), ten people aged between 17 and 67, self-identified living through climate/eco-anxiety/grieving, met throughout last year. Together they open-endedly grappled with and shared dilemmas and ways of being and becoming while staying with - un-solving - fluctuating intensities of affects and emotions. They met alternately inside a room/a circle of chairs, and at a former industrial agriculture plot, to pay attention to and assist the plot in biodiverse/future-forest becoming (audio- and video recordings were participants in the gatherings). A micropolitical intergenerational- and multi-species care intervention. The presentation will explore generationality and generationing in the circulation and transmutation of affects and temporalities, in specific moments in the intervention and through two analytical strategies: As a diffractive exploration, following a baradian take, where diffraction is a matter of differential entanglements, 'a material practice for making a difference, for topologically reconfiguring connections' (Barad 2007, Juelskjær 2024). And as eldering (Akomolafe 2026) where an elder is not an identity or age group but an 'a vocation that enlists the more-than-human in the asundering of the known'. As effect, new concepts and insights related to inter-generationality and generationing may be proposed.

**Keywords:** Intergenerational Affects, Eco Affects, Spacetimemattering, Eldering, Diffraction

# Homeless Home: Intimacy, Queer Subjectivity, and Anticolonial Temporality in *How Much of These Hills Is Gold*

**Presenters:** Tang Zixin

**Affiliation:** University of Hong Kong

This paper examines how the queer subjectivity of Sam in C Pam Zhang's novel *How Much of These Hills Is Gold* (2020) is affectively impacted by inter-generality. Set in a reimagined Gold Rush, the novel tells the story of two Chinese American orphans, Lucy and Sam, who search for a new home after burying their indigenous father. This paper argues that Sam, who attempts to change their gender throughout the novel, connects the family's past as a nuclear family and its future as a legacy of the tension between diaspora and indigeneity through their affective practices. This connection is made possible through Sam's intimacy built within the family and with non-human agencies that carry specific cultural implications, such as the skull of "虎" (tiger) from Chinese culture, as told by their mother, and the buffalo in Indian culture, as inculcated by their father. These affective engagements with both human and non-human actors shape Sam's queer subjectivity. Furthermore, by analyzing Sam's queer becoming through their emotional experiences, this paper argues that the novel disrupts the linear temporal narrative of colonialism, which easily justifies colonial occupation by claiming that native peoples are "already gone." The novel layers the secrets of the family throughout the story to reveal Sam's queer becoming affected by their mother's death and father's expectation. In doing so, this novel presents a temporality in which indigeneity is never gone. Rather, indigeneity and "foreign" cultures to America are intertwined in ways that are conflictual but necessary, forming together an anticolonial response. This affective and temporal entanglement ultimately addresses the question the author raises in the beginning: whose land is this, truly?

**Keywords:** Queer Diaspora, Inter-Generationality, Affect Studies, Anticolonialism.

# On Belonging: Memorial Reckoning Among Queer Irish People in Chicago

**Presenters:** Sheila Fogarty

**Affiliation:** Universidad Alberto Hurtado

This paper presents findings from a year of research on queer belonging and Irish diasporic memory in the city of Chicago, Illinois, United States. Exclusion of queer people from Irish society, history, and diasporic Heritage spaces has been rationalized as a colonial inheritance. How do experiences of belonging emerge in queer Irish diasporic memory? How might these experiences interact with a larger Irish diasporic memory? Guided by decolonial, queer, and diasporic theories, I approach this project through comparative and affect anthropology, using archival ethnography, participant observation, ethnographic interviews and autoethnography. First, I follow unstable categories of gender and sexuality through a paper trail of colonial and heritage discourses that precede the first overwhelming wave of emigration from Ireland and the rise of Irish heritage industries. These pieces show how gender and sexuality have long served as sites of (1) material and discursive extraction for stabilizing capitalist empire and scientific rational thought and (2) custodial claims over Irish culture by different actors. I turn to fieldwork with Irish people in Chicago, focusing on three autoethnographic vignettes of my work with queer Irish Americans. Here, we explore queer Irish belonging in relation to an intergenerational collective and personal memories. Belonging emerges in these narratives as a kind of everyday intuitive, corporal, and honest reckoning with the world, beginning with the fragile intimacies people have with others, with affective spaces, and with themselves. This honest reckoning reifies and revives mnemonic practices that have existed outside colonial-modern rational organizing of space and time.

**Keywords:** Queer, Belonging, Memory, Heritage, Diaspora, Affect

# Strange Affective Assemblages of Sámi Activism

**Presenters:** Helena Ristaniemi; Tapio Nykänen

**Affiliation:** University of Oulu

The presentation explores contemporary Sámi youth perspectives on Sámi activism. The Sámi people are the only recognized Indigenous peoples within the European Union. Sámi communities have faced and continue to face colonization, assimilation, and challenges in maintaining their cultures and traditions, which have also sparked resistance and questioning of prevailing power dynamics. Since the early twentieth century, Sámi activism can be considered as developing through three interconnected waves rooted in continuing conflicts over land, language rights, and livelihoods. In our presentation, we approach Sámi activism as affective assemblages, in which historical and temporal dis/continuities, material environments, intergenerational relations, and neoliberal conditions entangle, producing experiences of both familiarity and strangeness. The analysis is based on interviews with five young Sámi who discussed their political engagement and experiences of civic participation. The interviews highlight young people's ambivalent relationship with the concepts of *activism* and *the activist* as simultaneously strange and familiar. Affective familiarity is entangled with intergenerational experiences of survivance, relations with land, community, and tradition, but also with fatigue, frustration, and a sense of obligation shaped by repetitions of colonial power structures. Affective strangeness emerges as intensities and frictions related to activist identities, public visibility, and participation practices shaped by colonial histories. Rather than framing strangeness as a simplistic negative experience, we argue that affective strangeness can be productive, enabling forms of resistance, reconceptualization, and imagining of alternative forms of political engagement. In this way, affective strangeness makes visible the contradictory relationship between activism and Sámi, delineates the boundaries of the vocabulary and practices of participation in Finnish democracy, and paves the way for Sámi forms of political action.

**Keywords:** Sámi, Indigenous Activism, Strange Activism, Affective Assemblage

# The Affective Body Across Feminist Generations: Becoming Instagram Bodies

**Presenters:** Marissa Willcox

**Affiliation:** Goldsmiths University of London

In this paper I'm exploring intergenerational relationships between media, affect and the body in feminist thought. Building on Rebecca Coleman's (2009) foundational work in *The Becoming of Bodies*, I theorise of the body as emergent and enmeshed with Instagram through an affective lens of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Coleman argues that bodies are not fixed entities but processual assemblages, always becoming through their relations with images, other bodies, and more-than-human agents. I extend this framework with a look back to Barbara Creed's (1993) work in *The Monstrous Feminine* a classic text on radical abjection to reinterpret the monstrous body in media texts as the feminine reproductive body. Coming to the current moment, I argue that the same interpretation can be applied today, through social media images and AI generated images being the sources of either transformation and creation or monstrosity and abjection. My research draws on empirical work through a longitudinal digital ethnography of feminist and queer artists on Instagram, conducted first over five years with ten artists and developed further through extended case studies with four of them. I began the research in 2018 and am continuing to follow their work through digital ethnographic methods. Through the monstrous feminine and a Deleuzo-Guattarian frame of becoming, I trace the feminist body across generations of affect theory to the present day, where the artists in my work remake their bodies through art, images, and AI as a form of radical abjection, a process I read through the experiences of the feminist and queer artists on Instagram to develop what I theorise as the becoming of an "Instagram body": a concept that names how bodies are continuously made, unmade, and remade through their entanglement with platform logics, art making, AI, community formation, and intergenerational feminist theory.

**Keywords:** Generational Feminism, The Affective Body, AI, Social Media, Art

# TRAUMA DREAMS - Rage and Resentment in Gendered Fascist Passionate Moments

**Presenters:** Luisa Voss

**Affiliation:** Lund University

Capturing how fascist passions attach to questions of gender and sexuality over time in the German context, I develop a feminist affect theoretical lens on trauma as a social (movement) issue and public feeling (Cvetkovich, 2012) in gendered fascist passionate moments. In doing so, I frame anti-gender politics and antifemisms in Germany as forms of fascism, thinking with Judith Butler's use of fascist passions as a way to situate the so-called contemporary anti-gender movement as an affective, psychosocial phenomenon (Butler, 2025). More concretely, in this presentation, I aim to explore how rage and resentment as political feelings might be connected to collective trauma in relation to fascism. Analyzing an assemblage of traumascapes – that is, empirical sites where trauma circulates – I ask what a focus on trauma can reveal about (past and present) fascist passionate attachments to gender and sexuality and social movement collectivity as kinship in the German setting. Locating trauma in the socio-cultural sphere evolving in the confliction between fascist passionate and queer/feminist-affected bodies, trauma becomes a contested concept. To that end, and with the aim to write a cultural history of rage and resentment within trauma, I speculate how fascism has been and is a source of trauma. I begin from trauma as a socio-cultural phenomenon, but open up for subjective, somatic and otherwise embodied forms of it interacting with the socio-cultural (and the other way around), allowing me to think about feeling historical (Berlant, 2010) in terms of trauma.

**Keywords:** Affect, Fascist Passions, Rage, Resentment, (Transgenerational) Trauma, Gender and Sexuality, Social Movements, Anti-Gender, Anti-Feminism.

# Untimely “Shock to Thought”: Affective Encounters with Temporal Entanglements and Frictions through a Deformed Vision and Rhythmic Sensations

**Presenters:** Masayuki Iwase

**Affiliation:** Independent

My presentation is based on my short experimental docufiction titled *Deformation of Vision and Rhythmic Sensations* (2026) featuring my 79-year-old father who lives alone in Okazaki city in Japan and who suffers from advanced vision loss resulting from glaucoma and Alzheimer’s disease. Because of these medicalized and pathologized based on a deficit model and neoliberal paternalism, he is confronted with social exclusion, being a visually impaired, demented nuisance in his business and a digitally unconnected analog elder behind the times. The docufiction visually and sonically depicts his mundane yet chaotic everyday life recorded by a modular action camera mounted on his forehead to resemble the symptoms of his glaucoma, boldly hollowing out to actualize his remaining right iris, though with a narrow, hazy vision field developing blacked-out spots. The presentation illuminates temporal entanglements and frictions arising from the intersections where my father’s disabled body and outdated habitual memories collide with the present increasingly regulated by the time-money continuum of able-bodied digital economy. The specific scenes through which such affects are sensed include a measurement of the lifespan of his remaining right eye in the burn time of a candle; his frugal breakfast in the living room; his nap at work; an untended and overgrown Japanese garden of his home; his stress with using a flip phone; and his cigarette smoking with a cup of coffee brewed by a much older, tireless owner at an old-school *kissaten*. The docufiction’s sonically calibrated deformed vision affectively encountered by the audience on-screen evades its proneness towards clichéd, readymade images in a sensory-motor perception-affect-action linear nexus and brings forth instead an untimely “shock to thought” (Deleuze, 1989, p. 156) as violent rhythmic sensations that affectively “attain all the drives of the body, the nonorganic vitality of the body without organs” (Sauvagnargues, 2013, p. 142).

**Keywords:** Docufiction, Glaucoma, Dementia, Deformation of Vision, Temporal Entanglements, Temporal Frictions, Rhythmic Sensations, Untimely Shock to Thought

# Wit(h)nessing the Intergenerational Hauntings of Affect Through Collaging of Childhoods

**Presenters:** Tiina Lempinen; Tuija Huuki

**Affiliation:** University of Oulu

Kati: [*Looking at the crafting materials and laughing*] “This brings back childhood memories, and that’s why I’m laughing (...) because when we were children, in our childhood home, we couldn’t afford curtains, so we had shower curtains on the windows. I was ashamed of them. So, I’m thinking about how I could include them in this collage.” This presentation traces how the past resonates in the present through quiet sensations, corporeal attunements, and small material details that emerge in a research encounter through creative collage-making. Focusing on Kati’s recollections, we approach hiding as an intergenerational family practice. By practising wit(h)nessing (Ettinger, 2009) as a form of inquiry, we attune to Kati’s childhood memories through our own histories, tracing how the past actualizes in the crafting of the childhood home. We place particular emphasis on intergenerational flows of classed precarity, mental health struggles, and social discrimination. Thinking with Guattari (1995; 2000), we approach hiding as an existential territory: an ongoing process that organizes ways of feeling, doing, and relating across generations. Rather than locating pathology within the family, we view hiding as an emergent family practice shaped by sociopolitical, material, and historical relations. We propose that these existential territories linger across generations as affective hauntings: the living conditions and adversities of previous generations emerge in everyday family practices, informing what must be hidden and what is felt but left unspoken.

**Keywords:** Intergenerationality, Wit(h)nessing, Collaging, Childhood Memories

# **“It Was What He Had Refused to Name, and It Was Now with Me”: Intergenerational Traces of Illness, Trauma, Shame, and Care in Indian Life Writing**

**Presenters:** Angel Maria Varghese

**Affiliation:** University of Warwick

In this paper, I engage in close reading of two Indian life writings, *It's All in Your Head, M* (2020) by Manjiri Indurkar, and *If I had to Tell it Again* (2017), by Gayathri Prabhu, with a focus on 'shame', considering shame as not a monolithic concept, but rather a cluster of experiences ranging from modesty to dishonour that are tied to cultural codes in the South Asian context. I engage with these cultural complexities by tracing intergenerational dependencies, ambiguities, continuities, and diversity of shame experiences amongst parents, children, and grandparents presented within the illness, trauma, and care landscape in the selected memoirs. For instance, Prabhu writes in her memoir, "Ten years ago, just when I had thought I had become my own person, purged of many of my father's traits, and was floating on the open seas in my own style, untethered to him, it (depression) came knocking on my door. And it looked familiar. It was what he had refused to name, and it was now with me" (Prabhu 31), exemplifying the enmeshment between intergenerational illness and shame in the Indian context. According to Sara Ahmed, when an individual's lived experiences depart from socially accepted 'scripts' for normative experiences, such as in the case of mental illness or trauma, the resulting sense of failure is experienced as shame (Ahmed 107). Building on this, I argue that when experiences of illness and trauma are forced into a moral framework that treats deviation as failure, these experiences become sites where shame is wrongly inscribed on the survivor rather than on the system that produced it; affective traces that are then reproduced and negotiated across generations. I conclude by examining how local narratives of illness, trauma, and care allow us to think beyond existing inter-generational notions of affective legacies.

**Keywords:** Shame, Illness, Trauma, Care, Indian Life Writing

## S7. Curatorial Affects

This stream will focus on the generative affects of the curatorial. Curating involves configuring atmospheres, moods, energies and modalities of connection that transmit affect (Brennan 2010; Blackman 2016). Immersive installations, phantasmagoric projections, intimate performance, site-based biennials and civic events mobilize art as events that convey affect (O'Sullivan 2001; Fisher 2016). The curatorial might be considered as a field of capacious relationality where artworks comprise points of intensity for exhibitionary enactments that trace lines of variation (Seigworth 2022). Artists and curators configure spatial contexts in a number of ways—to situate artworks, generate intensity and mediate social bonds. Curatorial labour also extends to mobilizing personal networks, where generating relational climates produces energies essential to underwriting curatorial production in often under-funded and precarious conditions (Reckitt 2016). The curatorial field can be extended to modalities of display that encompass the performative style of subcultures, fashion shows, and decorum. Where museums, galleries, art world events, and artworks themselves function as contact zones where affect is transmitted, this panel invites submissions that inquire into how curatorial affect shapes relations between artworks, intuitions, spaces, audiences, social networks and sensibilities. A range of contributions are sought, from exhibition case studies, curatorial memoirs and auto-ethnographies, to speculations into modalities of curatorial agency governing the transmission of affect.

Possible themes for exploring curatorial affect

- affect theory as a mode of curatorial and exhibitionary analysis
- spatial intuitions, exhibition affects and artworld atmospheres
- transpersonal affect as feeling states that govern artmaking genres and curatorial subcultures
- generative affects in curatorial intervention and site-responsive infrastructural activism
- affects in relational aesthetics (registers of conviviality or mutually respectful agonistic struggle)
- configuring affect (mood, atmosphere and intensity) in museums, art, exhibitions and display cultures
- politics of affect in curatorial attitudes, habits, self-formation and art subcultures
- performance art affects as loci of sensations, connections and embodiments
- navigating exhibitions: eye level trajectories vs multisensorial immersions vs disembodied viewing of virtual exhibitions- accessing exhibitions: disability and neurodivergent curatorial modes
- codified affects, artistic style and attitude- spectral curating/haunted museums/intangible states
- experiential modalities: exhibitions as contact zones for art's affects
- case studies of the aesthetics of affect in art, exhibitions and display culture
- curating as the mediation of specific contexts, senses, interfaces, and cognitions

# Curating Disgust Across Time and Space: from 1937 Munich to 2025-26 New Orleans

**Presenters:** Sushant Naidu

**Affiliation:** Kennesaw State University

*This paper examines how exhibitions curate and transmit disgust across time and space through a comparative analysis of Die Ausstellung Entartete Kunst (The Degenerate Art Exhibition) in 1937 Germany and its contemporary retelling at The National WWII Museum in New Orleans (2025–26). Drawing on archival research alongside analysis of visitor comment books, I approach the exhibition as an affective technology that configured atmospheres of revulsion, suspicion, and moral judgment around modern art and the bodies associated with it. Rather than treating the exhibition solely as propaganda, I argue that it functioned as a curatorial apparatus designed to shape affective relations between viewers, artworks, and the nation. Through spatial arrangement, textual framing, and exhibitionary juxtaposition, the Nazi state transformed the museum into a contact zone where disgust circulated as a public feeling meant to discipline aesthetic sensibilities and social belonging. The exhibition curated not only objects, but also modes of perception and affective orientation. The paper further explores how these affective residues are re-mediated within the contemporary museum. What happens when artworks once staged as culturally contaminating are recuperated within liberal frameworks of remembrance and preservation? Which histories of disgust remain visible, and which become peripheral or muted in the curatorial process? Ultimately, I argue that exhibitions do not merely display affect; they actively produce and transmit affective atmospheres that shape how audiences encounter, remember, and politically interpret the past.*

**Keywords:** Disgust, Affective Atmospheres, Curatorial Affect, Exhibitionary Politics, Degenerate Art, Cultural Memory, Affective Economy, Museum Studies, Peace and Conflict Studies

# Feeling Access: Disability, Neurodivergence, and the Affective Architectures of Curatorial Practice

**Presenters:** Amanda Cachia

**Affiliation:** Arizona State University

Access is not merely a logistical addendum to curatorial practice – it is an affective condition that shapes how bodies encounter art, how atmospheres are built, and how exhibitions transmit meaning. This paper argues that disability and neurodivergence offer critical lenses through which to re-examine curatorial affect, revealing normative assumptions in dominant exhibition-making and proposing alternative affective architectures that center crip knowledge and sensory multiplicity. Drawing on disability art scholarship and curatorial practice, the paper examines access as affective encounter rather than compliance framework. Where conventional access discourse positions disability as a problem to be accommodated, a crip curatorial approach recognizes that disabled and neurodivergent audiences bring distinct affective orientations – altered temporalities, tactile attunements, relational dependencies, and sensory thresholds – that challenge and enrich the exhibitionary contact zone. The paper draws on Mia Mingus's concept of "access intimacy" to theorize the affective labor of curating for genuine belonging, and on Robert McRuer's crip theory to interrogate how compulsory able-bodiedness structures gallery culture's spatial and sensory norms. Curatorial decisions – sight-lines, acoustics, lighting, pacing, wayfinding – constitute affective architectures that privilege certain bodies while foreclosing others. Eye-level trajectories, white cube silence, and unmarked verticality encode bodily norms that regulate affective participation. Exhibitions incorporating multisensorial immersion, variable pacing, rest infrastructures, and sensory mapping generate different affective climates – ones where disabled and neurodivergent visitors are not accommodated exceptions but constitutive presences who reshape the encounter for all. The paper concludes by proposing disability art and access practice as a generative site for rethinking curatorial affect: not as transmission of pre-formed intensities, but as a co-constituted field in which bodily difference and interdependence are recognized as productive forces.

**Keywords:** Disability Art, Access, Neurodivergence, Curatorial Affect, Crip Aesthetics, Sensory Design, Inclusive Exhibition-Making, Contact Zones, Embodied Spectatorship, Access Intimacy

# Ground Zero: Ordinary Hypervigilance, and the Curation of Productive Fear

**Presenters:** Nael Bhanji

**Affiliation:** Trent University

Ground Zero— a fixed point in space, a zero-dimensional point on a map, a focal point for intense activity— the location of the World Trade Center, its towering twins a testament to the might of the American dollar and the ubiquity of the American dream. Ground Zero is not an abstract space of boundless neutrality; rather, it is the symbolic manifestation of sovereign space and, thus, a well-spring for contemporary administration of regimes of productive fear. In a post-9/11 era when the extraordinary is the new ordinary, how does the curation of experiences of extraordinary fear and trauma feed back into the ordinary landscape? How do bodies circulate differently within these circuits of (extra)ordinary affects? How is hypervigilance sustained through the circulation of fear? Hypervigilance is symptomatic of the legacy of loss and a defense against the possibility of future loss. Yet, as with fear, the murkiness between the event's experience and content provides an affective terrain that is infinitely amenable to political intervention. Through an exploration of the re-virtualization and recirculation of mediated trauma in the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, this paper explores how hypervigilance— which is characterized by fear and traumatic repetition— emerges through the perpetual restaging of a national trauma. A commodified form of speculative governance, this curation of hypervigilance serves as collective reservoir of national identity and a sticky referent to which disparate patriot bodies may attach in tentative, provisional alliances.

**Keywords:** Fear, Hypervigilance, Terrorism, Museums

# In the Werk Room: the Curatorial Affects of Drag Storytime

**Presenters:** Drew White

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

With 18 seasons and numerous international franchises, RuPaul's Drag Race has helped normalize drag and drag performance within the global culture. What was once a phenomenon of queer nightlife, drag has been made visible to families and children through mainstream media. This normalization of drag has led some drag performers, in coordination with libraries and community organizations, to rethink drag aesthetic and drag performance as educational tools that promote child literacy through play. These events are known as drag storytimes. By curating drag as an educational contact zone, this paper explores how drag storytime shapes relations between, and in, participants. Thinking with O'Sullivan (2001) and Brennan (2004), this paper attunes to drag storytime as moments of intensity (Massumi, 1995) where the visual, sonic, and haptic move in and through bodies. By reconceptualizing drag storytime as an immersive installation, this paper explores how the curation of drag storytime produces a bloc of sensations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991) where drag opens up possibilities of new ontological becomings. Using the Werk Room, the space on Drag Race where drag performers curate their aesthetic and performance, as an analytic the paper then draws on the work of Keenan and Hot Mess (2020), *Drag pedagogy: The playful practice of queer imagination in early childhood*, to map the five elements of Drag Pedagogy as curatorial affects of queer worldmaking. By attuning to the curatorial nature of drag storytime, this paper demonstrates how curatorial affects operate across educational settings and extends affect theory into curriculum studies.

**Keywords:** Drag, Drag Storytime, Curation, Affect, Education, Curriculum

# The Daddy Dérive: a Case Study in Psychogeographical Curatorial Process

**Presenters:** Maya Rodrigo-Abdi

**Affiliation:** Independent

This paper presentation will focus on the embodied, psychogeographical curatorial process behind the collections based West Vancouver Art Museum exhibition *Who's Your Daddy?: Inherited Topographies and Other Familiar Accumulations* that ran from January 23 to March 2 of 2024. This exhibition brought together earthly possessions found in the Historical Objects Collection and Fine Art Collection of the Art Museum, with the artwork of two emerging artists raised in North and West Vancouver; Kiana Shahnian and Roselynn Sadaghiani. Topics surrounding archival environments, crossed borders, extracted resources, mother country manifestations, and additional leftovers from home, were dealt with in this exhibition from within the former home of the daughter of the colonial "founding father" West Vancouver, now currently the site of the Art Museum. The exhibition first inquired about the origin point of the exhibition space itself, which led to an ongoing query about the assumed origin points and related lineages that shape our everyday life. Through a curatorial practice that emerged from and then became dependent on the dérive, this exhibition enabled the curator, artists, and external participants to trace questions and concerns over shared spatial orientations throughout the process of the exhibition. By undertaking a commitment to going on unplanned journeys through the built environment during this period of time, the curatorial process functioned as an ongoing series of generative affects that existed within and were mapped out onto the built environment of the local landscape, external to the actual site of the exhibition. This paper will focus on the importance of facilitating a context-specific investigation in order to produce a generative exhibition, especially when engaging with the archive.

**Keywords:** Exhibition, Dérive, Psychogeography, Debord, Museum, Case Study, Lineage, Built Environment, Archive

# Towards a Coalitional Curatorial Practice

**Presenters:** Maddie Bruegger

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

The term curation derives from the Greek 'curatas' which means "to take care of," raising the question: Who or what do we take care of when we curate? In her book *Curatorial Activism: Towards an Ethics of Curating*, Maura Reilly describes curation as a relational activity, "interested not in a monologue of sameness, but in a multitude or cacophony of voices speaking simultaneously" (2018, pp. 30). In this presentation, I will extend Reilly's definition of curation as a relational activity through the method of coalitional curation, a method that decenters the curator as one unified voice and extends the curation of an exhibition to community members. Drawing from the case study of a community exhibition titled *Thermal Witnessing: Organizing Community Power Around Heat*, this presentation will outline how the epistemological process of curation can be a form of community grassroots activism led by residents with lived experience and knowledge of their environments. Bridging community science studies with artistic practice, the exhibit *Thermal Witnessing* represents a coalition of 15 resident leaders in Austin, TX who documented their lived experiences of extreme heat in Austin's hottest neighborhoods using thermal imaging (thermography) and collecting field notes. As resident leaders walked with thermal cameras around their communities (Springgay and Truman, 2017), the aesthetic of the thermal formed new relations between surface temperature, cooling infrastructure, and embodied experiences of heat. Within community climate science, the creation of public exhibitions curated by community members expands possibilities for advocacy through multimodal composition. Co-created exhibitions also create a public archive of feelings (Cvetkovich, 2003) by communicating the everyday experiences of resident leaders (Stewart, 2007). The exhibition will also offer spaces for viewers to offer their own "field notes" (Bruce, 2019). Thus, the exhibition employs a kind of "talking back" (bell hooks, 1989) around environmental experiences within local communities.

**Keywords:** Curatorial Activism, Thermography, Community-Engagement, Coalition

# Vegan Imaginaries: Rehearsing Freedom and Redistributing the Sensible Through (An)archival Bloom Spaces

**Presenters:** Bilge Ece Çizmeci

**Affiliation:** Brock University

How can an exhibition space become a "bloom space"—an affective site of latent intensities built on Seigworth and Gregg that punctures habitualized human exceptionalism? Moving beyond traditional museology's taxonomic tokenism—exemplified by the Royal Ontario Museum's clinical taxidermy displays that foster boredom and disinterest—this paper theorizes how altering modalities of display and encounter enacts a post-anthropocentric redistribution of the sensible. Instead of prescribing how nonhuman animals must be "represented" or "exhibited," I investigate how disrupting traditional archival curation can center domesticated animals. To articulate this curatorial design, I read Marzia Varutti's "affective curatorship" alongside Emilie Sitzia's framework of exhibition narratives in analyzing my case studies: *Animal Gaze* (2023) and its virtual iteration, *Animal Gaze on-XR* (2026). Drawing on Hal Foster's "(an)archival impulse" —where "obscure traces" serve as an institutive starting point for new affective associations— I position these exhibitions as "critical fabulations" (Hartman) that transition the archive from a site of violence to a site of redress. By artifactualizing and storying our normalized present of animal exploitation—the routinized reality of domesticated animals—this anarchival practice activates a participatory "vegan imaginary": a speculative, narrative atmosphere of a post-abolition future. These environments operationalize Patricia MacCormack's argument that art can introduce a "something that wasn't there before," creating the "unthinkable" to transform the "impossible" task of imagining animals in a free state into a felt reality of witnessing. To sustain this environment without "reciting horror," the curation deploys defamiliarizing constraints and invites visitors to look *with* the animals at the archivalized fragments of today, enabling *syn-theōria*—a shared contemplation alongside the more-than-human (Calarco). Within this space, visitors inhabit a parallel narrative to witness our present through a future lens. Ultimately, vegan imaginaries transform the environment into a vital, felt "rehearsal for freedom" (Gilmore), where nonhuman animals are reanimated as historical subjects with agency and a future.

**Keywords:** Affective Curatorship, Vegan Imaginaries, Post-Anthropocentrism, Critical Animal Studies, (An)archival Practice, Critical Fabulation, Syn-Theōria

# You Can Comprehend My Pain, but You Can't Feel It: Curatorial Affect and the Afterlife of Witnessing

**Presenters:** Nilou Yekta

**Affiliation:** Utrecht University

"The impossibility of 'fellow feeling' is itself the confirmation of injury... a demand for collective politics... not on reconciliation, but on learning to live with and beside each other, and yet we are not as one" (Ahmed 2004). This paper draws on Sara Ahmed's formulation of non-reconciled political feeling as a starting point to examine how curatorial affect operates through encounters that cannot be fully shared, yet are nonetheless transmitted, circulated, and reactivated within exhibition space. Ahmed's insight—that pain's unshareability confirms rather than negates its reality—reframes curatorial witnessing not as the transfer of empathy, but as a practice that holds political affect in tension without resolving it into common feeling. I explore this through handwritten visitor messages collected at the end of the exhibition, alongside my own experience as a researcher, curator, and advisory board member for Iranian women working on the Iranian Women's Resistance: Woman, Life, Freedom exhibition at Amsterdam's Resistance Museum (Verzetsmuseum). As an Iranian woman positioned between lived experience and curatorial role, I found myself deeply implicated in the exhibition's affective field, negotiating proximity, distance, and the impossibility of fully transmitting or sharing pain. This positionality becomes legible in relation to visitor messages, which express feelings from rage, grief, solidarity, and care. I approach these messages as affective traces forming what Ann Cvetkovich calls an "archive of feelings" (2003) revealing how exhibitions operate as contact zones for political affect. I take these traces as part of a reflexive curatorial apparatus to show how curatorial affect does not begin or end with the exhibition, but is already in motion before it, continues through it, and persists as an afterlife of witnessing. In this temporally extended field, political feeling is neither shared nor resolved, but held in tension.

**Keywords:** Curatorial Affect, Political Feelings, Witnessing, Autotheory, Woman Life Freedom, Gender, Affective Resistance

## S8. Dirt/Y Affects: Against Clean Living

Everything sucks. And we are all collectively being asked to clean it up. But what does it mean to sit in the mess? With the dirtiness? This isn't just a metaphor. This stream is invested in conversations that center the dirty atmospheres that we all share through performative representations of rubbish. In this stream, we revel in the contaminations between, through, and with each other. In a moment when purity logics dominate affective, material, and political movements across the global (e.g. eugenics, genocide, fascism), this stream invites authors to return to the dirt—both the literal and metaphorical—as a way of illuminating and imagining other worldings. As Leddy (1995) theorizes, some are primed to notice what is not dirty in ways others can not. The dichotomy between what is dirty and what is clean or neat is not simply a matter of aesthetics but rather a structure which reflects and refracts hierarchical forms of power. Those who are afforded the privilege of a clean existence move through the world with privilege many do not. Douglas' (1966) notion of dirt as “matter out of place” signals, “where there is dirt there is a system” (35). This stream asks submitters to engage in this systematic ordering of purity logics by (re)turning to the dirt. Shafiq (2025) offers us, “dirt is open-ended, there is an ambiguity of what can pollute, and what makes things dirty can be many: purity is singular but being dirty is quintessential plural: it is anything that is out of place” (p.3). We ask you to ponder where your work is with/in the dirt? Where does your work get messy? Building off the framework of palliative performance (Rowe 2024) advocates for a “palliative performance style that pushes back against the cult of wellness with a bare messiness that revels in its mistakes” (p.2) we ask to submitters to consider reveling in the mess and approach recent trans/inter/disciplinary work that centers negative affect within a specific frame - the dirtiness of it all. We invite collaborations that don't attempt repair. Rather, we/they push back against the neoliberal daydream of a futurity that is rooted in some type of constructed purity ethic (Steulke 2021). We ask submitters to trouble the boundaries that demand our performance, our scholarship, our lifeworlds engage at the intersections of a white, nationalist ethic. The dirt/y is often disposable. Normative logics compel us to dispose of bodies, communities, excesses, waste, promiscuities, uninhabitable lands, and the shit that does not serve “us”. Thus we seek proposals that dig through the trash to reclaim the disposable, that line their shelves with the treasures of refuse, that moan in pleasure at the sight of scum/SCUM.

Consider:

- What would it mean for us to desire dirt?
- To revel in/with the trash?
- What would it mean to MAKE something new out of dirt? (And really, actually, love it.)
- To contaminate the “public good?”
- To be a problem? (without looking for solutions) Without saying sorry?
- What would it mean to do dirty repair?

Dirt is the pejorative for soil. Though regimes conceptualize soil as a productive site of meaning making and growth, pejorative frames of dirtiness are rooted in our own epistemological frameworks. But we know dirt is also necessary for growth. Performative representations of dirtiness take many forms: methodological turns, death, architecture, aesthetics, religion, ecosystems.

Perhaps you can consider:

- Dust, excrement, rubbish, bacteria, soil
- Social outsiders as dirty
- Feeling dirty and normativities
- Dirty tactics and strategies
- Dirt and climate

- The politics of purity
- Contamination and pollution
- Disposability and compostability

We invite you to the dumpster. To the trash. To get dirty with us.

# A Monstrous Genealogy: Microchimerism as Affective Smear

**Presenters:** Margaret Schwartz

**Affiliation:** Fordham University

Microchimerism is the presence of genetically distinct or foreign cells inside a body. This cellular contamination occurs naturally during pregnancy, when, as researchers put it, there is “trans-directional cell trafficking” across the placental barrier (Shrivastava et al, 2019). As the name ‘microchimerism’ suggests, these cells disrupt the ideal of a body’s singularity, rendering it monstrous, multiple, tainted. Microchimerism can persist for decades and be handed down to subsequent children, making for a kind of fugitive, alien genealogy. Family ideology privileges bio-genetic kinship while microchimerism troubles the very notion of a singular organism or genome (Weeks 2021). This paper examines the affective valences of microchimerism within the contemporary ideology of the family. In this context, microchimerism represents a material contamination that leaves an affective smear, an irreducible excess that, in Agnieszka Wołodźko’s (2023) formulation, implicates the materiality of embodiment as encounter. Embodiment as encounter, in turn, is a way to articulate what I have previously called the ungovernable relationship between gestator and fetus to an alternative affect of kinship (Schwartz 2018). That is: This relationship is neither the ideal of love that is supposed to naturally arise from gestation in its “proper” relation, nor is it the absolute indifference that is ideologically imposed on the “improper” relation of gestational surrogacy. Instead, there is an affective, embodied encounter that itself may be expressed in these lingering biological traces. This affect as contamination thus resists idealization and narrativization and in so doing points to other kinds of kinship, family, mothering.

**Keywords:** Microchimerism, Contamination, Family Ideology, Bio-Genetic Kinship, Surrogacy, Family Abolition

# Disordered Landscapes and Dirty Subjects: Abject Aesthetics in Julia Lederer's *It's Nothing* (2019)

**Presenters:** Quinn Daugherty

**Affiliation:** Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

Why might we *want* to render dirt, decay, and disorder visible in the context of personal and ecological healing? This paper explores the affective and ecological potential of "dirty" aesthetics through analysis of feminist filmmaker Julia Lederer's short film *It's Nothing* (2019), which depicts a young woman's internal experience of an eating disorder through the visual metaphor of digging a hole in the earth. By visualizing a particularly feminized illness through dirt and digging, Lederer externalizes the protagonist's internal affective landscape of shame and anxiety about contamination. Interpreting the film through Julia Kristeva's concept of the abject – defined as anything that interferes with the existence of a bounded sense of self – the essay argues that abject aesthetics challenge individuation narratives and account for "vibrant matter" including food, dirt, and trash (Bennett, 2009). As such, the protagonist's manipulation of the earth creates what I call a "disordered landscape," a site where dirt is rendered visible and destabilizing affects emerge. Drawing on ecocriticism to analyze scenes ranging from communion with dirt to food fights, the essay considers the reparative function of dirt for nature and humans – as an affective signifier and life-sustaining environmental product, dirt activates the inherently messy process of entanglement and exposes the deep enmeshment between all living things. Read through the circularity of natural systems and the durational nature of illness and disability, the film's disordered landscape recalibrates normative expectations of recovery. "Dirty" aesthetics invite us into the wilds of healing.

**Keywords:** Dirt, Mess, Disorder, Abjection, Feminism, Illness, Healing

# Dwelling with Dirt and Drugs: Rethinking Narcan Training and the Ethical Relation

**Presenters:** Carlee Baker-Pustka

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

To sit with the complexities of addiction is to dwell not only with those who have variously been called “Trash, shit, waste, rubbish” but also with the carceral, medical, social, political, and material forces that make them so (Zigon, 2018). Derrida argues that what we hold against the addict is that “he cuts himself off from the world, in exile from reality, far from objective reality and the real life of the city and the community” (Derrida, 1989). But what if we rethink the volition that’s implied in such a charge (Kopelson, 2006)? What if we rethink the agency that is assumed when we classify addiction as a moral failing, or the stripping of agency that follows from classification of addiction as disease (Buchman et al, 2010)? What if we rethink agency, will, volition, biology, genetics, environment, sociality, ethics, and desire as they contribute to the phenomenon of addiction? My desire to dwell in the dirt coalesces around a rejection of purity in the form of the compulsive morality of sobriety, the alignment of capitalist production and ethics, and the expectation of rationality in a world that is crumbling. In Portland, just south of Vancouver, despite widespread state-funded training programs in the use of Narcan and concerted political efforts to decriminalize drugs and address the unmet material needs that often drive substance use, the state continues to report disproportionately high rates of opioid overdose deaths, nearly half of which (46%) are witnessed (CDC, 2024). In looking at Oregon, I wish to understand how the dirt of drugs inhibits the face-to-face relation, how the dirtiness of substance use allows for the abdication of the utmost ethical command: that which “forbids us to kill” (Levinas, 1985).

# Ethnographies of Plastic: Living as/with Contamination, Abjection, and the Affects of Refuse

**Presenters:** Hazim Ismail

**Affiliation:** University of Victoria

What would it mean to desire plastic? To write from within contamination rather than against it? This paper experiments with speculative ethnographic methodologies that follow plastic through everyday life by writing with, and occasionally as, plastic itself. Rather than positioning plastic as an environmental problem awaiting redemption, I disrupt binaries of waste/nonwaste by engaging with plastic as a companion and participant in affective atmospheres of contemporary life, an interrogation of plastic waste not as residue of capitalism and colonialism, but as embedded machinations of them. Drawing on affect theory, discard studies, and posthumanist scholarship, the paper traces encounters with discarded plastics across domestic spaces, urban infrastructures, and waste sites. Through sensory observation, discourse analysis of environmental policies, trade data, embodied reflection, waste walks, and speculative first-person narration, I follow plastic's movements as it clings to bodies, hulls of ships, accumulates in landscapes, circulates through infrastructures, lungs of waste workers, beyond its intended use. These aren't attempts to speak for plastic but methodological provocations that unsettle distinctions between subject/object, attraction/abjection, human/waste. Inspired by Liboiron's argument that pollution is not simply a material condition but sets of colonial relations, I examine how plastic's ubiquity exposes the infrastructures and power relations that render contamination ordinary. Plastic is not "out there" as environmental degradation; it moves through bodies, ecosystems, and everyday intimacies. Its persistence troubles fantasies of purity and containment. Rather than understanding contamination as failure, this paper considers how living amid plastic reveals our constitutive entanglements with waste and the uneven distributions of environmental harm. Rather than searching for solutions, this paper asks what forms of attachment, discomfort, desire, and complicity emerge when we stop imagining waste as external to ourselves. By becoming-with plastic, I propose a dirty methodology that revels in contamination and refuses the promise of purification, repair, or clean futures.

**Keywords:** Ethnography, Plastic Waste, Discard Studies, Abjection, Posthumanist, Waste Trade, Speculative Ethnography, Geography, Anthropology, Colonialism, Environmental Injustice, Dirt, Discourse Analysis

# Fluid Fantasies: Affect, Purity, and the Fertile Politics of (White) Nationalist Futurity

**Presenters:** Nael Bhanji; Kelly McGuire

**Affiliation:** Trent University

Infection. Isolation. Immunity. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, these familiar touchstones still stir the global imaginary, shaping an anatomic-political theatre hyper-fixated on national and individual health in a manner that transcends science-based public health risk-management strategies. Undergirded by historical fantasies of racialized contagion and buttressed by the populist commercialization of uncertainty (Massumi 2010), the navigation of the pandemic's contagious virality is also intimately tied to discourses of racial virility. Around 2022, a viral social media trend urged vaccine sceptics to identify as #unvaxxed or #purebloods. mRNA conspiracy theories quickly found their focal point in selling semen as "the next bitcoin" or "new white gold" as a precious commodity uncontaminated by spike proteins. This paper analyzes the commodification of unvaxxed semen as part of the affective formation of exclusion/inclusion at a microscopic level, a fluid reconceptualization of territorialization that seeps into and redefines relations of belonging and entitlement. Disguised as authoritarian resistance, veneration of "pure" Anglo-Saxon sperm in fact echoes discourses of racial superiority historically used to justify extra-legal political machinations. Nostalgic eugenics here commingles ineluctably with dread of a future "white extinction." How does the affective logic of reproductive immunitarianism (Esposito 2023) tether the imagined national body to the imperiled individual body in the service of a white nationalist futurity? How are racial histories of dirt, transmissibility, and pollution mobilized through the circulation of anxieties and intensities that undergird the white nationalist project? Slippery with signification, unvaxxed sperm circulates within the affective economy of ethnonationalism as a white exceptionalist wet dream. According to this same logic of purity, vaccinated sperm (or antibodies more generally) occupy the abject spaces of disruption, multiplicity, otherness, and trash. It is exactly these 'sticky' (Ahmed 2004) socialities emerging from contagion anxiety that we propose to peel back in this paper.

**Keywords:** Contamination, Health, White Nationalism, Affect

# Maintained by Residue: Feminist Research-Creation Against Domestic Erasure

**Presenters:** Brubey (WanZhi) Hu

**Affiliation:** York University

*Rooms of One's Own Making* is a curatorial project that examines domestic space as a site where care, labour and affect accumulate emotionally and materially. Drawing on research-creation methodologies, feminist and affect theories, this paper introduces three artists' work from this project: Camille Lescarbeau, Joy Li, and myself, who utilize domestic residue to investigate how maintenance labour structures everyday life while often disappearing from view. They position recycle bins and dirty corners as generative sites of creation. The discarded materials are transformed to speak, hold memory, and register the ongoing, unresolved negotiation between care, waste, and the structure that binds them. Camille Lescarbeau transforms discarded paper materials such as grocery bags and egg cartons into handmade paper sculptures. Through the meticulous process of sorting, soaking, pulping, and reforming, her work tackles the afterlives of consumption and the hidden labour embedded within waste management. Joy Li arranges her own fallen hair across bathroom tiles to create delicate drawings and cursive text. Hair, often read as debris within domestic space, becomes a trace of bodily maintenance and gendered cleaning labour. Her work lingers within the ordinary rhythms of the bathroom where cleanliness is continuously performed yet never fully secured. My own textile installation binds laundry pods together with strands of my hair, placed on a chair, blurring the boundary between dirty and clean. Designed to dissolve through cleaning, the pods embody the paradox of domestic labour: maintenance sustains everyday life while erasing evidence of itself. Together, these practices record touch, repetition, and ethical negotiations, and position waste and bodily residue as affective infrastructures. Where purity logics demand that dirt disappear and leave the home legible as cared-for, these works question that legibility. They ask who perceives the mess, who is expected to manage it, and whose labour goes unrecognized in the process.

**Keywords:** Hair, Waste, Debris, Transformation, Ephemerality, Residue, Research-Creation, Ecofeminism, Domestic Labour, Domestic Space.

# Pedagogies of Contamination: Rethinking Dirt, Care and Professionalism in Australian Early Childhood Education

**Presenters:** Nadia Di Martino

**Affiliation:** James Cook University and University of Newcastle

Early childhood education (ECE) is saturated with dirt. Children's bodies leak, spill, ooze and produce substances that educators must manage daily under the guise of care (Di Martino, 2026). Yet dirt is never merely material. As Douglas (1966) argues, dirt is matter out of place, a category through which social order is produced and maintained. Within contemporary ECE, cleanliness functions as an ontological force through which bodies, practices and forms of difference are captured and territorialised. Drawing on interviews and focus group discussions with international student teachers from Nepal and India, this paper examines how dirt and contamination emerge as productive forces within everyday pedagogical encounters. Participants frequently described being positioned as bodies requiring correction or sanitisation. At the same time, their accounts reveal moments in which distinctions between care and education, professionalism and intimacy, and cleanliness and contamination become unsettled. Rather than approaching contamination as a problem to be eliminated, the paper explores what pedagogical possibilities emerge when messiness is allowed to persist. Attending to everyday encounters involving bodily care, cultural difference and relational pedagogies, the paper maps how the research participants enact alternative ways of knowing, caring and relating that exceed normative expectations of the professional educator and "the organic child" (Cairns et al., 2013). Developing a cartography of contamination, the paper follows dirt as both material and metaphorical. Rather than a sign of disorder, contamination emerges as a generative, creative force that challenges dominant understandings of legitimacy, belonging, inclusion and professionalism in Australian ECE. In doing so, the paper shifts attention from the management of difference to the productive capacities of pedagogical mess and alternative pedagogical worldings.

**Keywords:** Care, Dirt, Migration

# Pedagogy of Refusal/Refuse: the Material Politics of Dirt in Yasmin Zaher's *The Coin*

**Presenters:** Sreemoyee Bhattacharyya

**Affiliation:** Brandeis University

In this paper, I argue that Yasmin Zaher's novel *The Coin* offers us a pedagogy of refusal through the material engagement with dirt and waste. Set within contemporary New York, the novel follows an immigrant from Palestine who we learn is a teacher in a New York private school for underprivileged boys. The bathroom (commonly associated with dirt/waste/cleaning) and the classroom (commonly associated within Enlightenment registers of knowledge and reason) collapse onto each other in this novel, and dirt produces a new kind of affective pedagogy that interrogates categories of hierarchy between people and countries. Early on in the novel, the protagonist asks "Do I disgust you? I don't look dirty, do I?" (8) This question thrown at the readers, implicates those reading the novel too within the narrative's mechanism of questioning what is dirty and clean. Through close readings of the protagonist-teacher's close interactions with dirt and her students, I will illuminate how the book invites us to witness not just what a pedagogy of refusal might look like, but also showcases how it might feel through tactile registers of sensation. I contend alongside theorists like Yanira Rodriguez that a pedagogy of refusal is one that resists and re-routes colonial and neocolonial futures through the use of rhetoric, language, and materialist praxis; the pedagogy of refusal I illuminate is woven around bodily refuse, particularly epidermal dirt. Through my close reading of the protagonist's arduous and expansive relationship with her epidermal dirt which she often compares to the beauty of limestone terraces in Palestine, I mobilize dirt as a method for building intellection, creativity, and pedagogy to contend with racial injustice.

**Keywords:** Dirt, Affective Pedagogy, Racial Injustice

# Reveling in Rot: Queer Decomposition Pedagogies and the Promise of Stuff That Stinks.

**Presenters:** Michaela Frischherz; Desirée Rowe

**Affiliation:** Towson University

To join the call to consider what it means to be “against clean living,” this paper offers a rejoinder to the systems that produce pedagogical normativities for polished, clean undergraduate writing. Against the backdrop of the rapid onset of embedded generative AI technologies across systems, this paper stakes a wholesale, polemic claim against the use of generative-AI in university classrooms—especially those facilitating the art of knowledge production (Greer 2025). We stake this claim to intervene in the structures of feeling built between instructors and students under AI conditions. To animate this claim, we offer the metaphor of writing as decomposition to illustrate how a framework of decomposition allows students and faculty to resist white settler-colonial logics of perfection. Those logics, we argue, serve the (re)production of sanitized knowledges which jeopardizes the nutritious rot so vital for creating the conditions of aliveness—breath, liveability, interconnection (Tompkins 2024). Anchoring our analysis in the five stages of decomposition (fresh, bloat, active decay, advanced decay, and skeletonization), we explore how these stages invite students and faculty to resist the primacy of the author, embrace fragmentation and improvisation, and situate ourselves as part of larger, shared worlds. Things can't grow in sterile conditions; and just like dirt is pejorative for soil, so too do our pedagogies too often mark misplaced commas and clumsy verb tenses as the pejorative for undergraduate scholarship. We want the stuff that stinks so we can mine the stink for its organic generative promise—so how do we convince one another the stink is worth it? Our paper explores the metaphor of writing as decomposition not only to amplify the promises of decomposition (futuraity, sustenance, resilience) but also to consider how the five stages of decomposition might be instructive for facilitating writing pedagogies that relieve us of the fantasy of precision.

**Keywords:** Decomposition, AI, Pedagogy, Rot

# ROIs and Island Time: Exploring configurations of waste in neoliberal education

**Presenters:** Allyson Compton

**Affiliation:** Iona University

This proposed paper interrogates the intersection of time and waste within an educational system steeped in neoliberalism and white supremacy. Taking up waste as an analytic, we explore how undergraduate students in a study abroad class about colonialism and education wrestled with configurations and representations of time as spent, dissipated, squandered, consumed, scarce, and misused. Time is produced as waste(ful/ed) when it delinks to tangible outcomes deemed valuable by measures of capital. Neoliberalism renders time as waste(ful) if a temporal unit does not yield a return on investment (ROI). In particular, drawing on notions of neoliberal subjectivities (Gates, 2021) and cruel optimism (Berlant, 2011), thinking with waste surfaces how time was performed as a finite and transactional force – an ever-present specter hovering over class, students’ “better things to do” haunting our collective space. Moreover, putting time into conversation with pastpresentfuture (Varga, 2024) colonialism developed a generative tension between the maintenance of neoliberal and white supremacist infrastructures and decolonial defiance (e.g., Fanon, 1959/1965). In other words, through engaging with narratives of colonial refusal, students confronted their own fraught relationship to time as a mechanism of control. Envisioning time as an agentic more-than-human participant in the learning experience exposed how neoliberal binaries of failure/success, productive/idle, adept/inept, in/efficient, and dis/ordered powerfully mediated student engagement with course content, including travel to the island of Dominica, where time became sticky and slow. In light of these curiosities, we ask: How do neoliberal logics around waste and time intercede in student sense-making about colonialism? How can waste-as-agent act in disruptive ways to undermine how cruel optimism operates to constrain possibility, impose linearity, and demand ROIs on student time?

**Keywords:** Waste, Neoliberalism, Cruel Optimism, Colonialism

# Who Cleans and Who Cares? the Affective Space of Domestic Cleaning

**Presenters:** Liana Psarologaki

**Affiliation:** Buckinghamshire New University

The proposed presentation examines the affective capacity of cleaning the home as a contested site of embodiment. Against the sanitised fantasy of the frictionless home, dirt marks our lived reality of bodies shedding, matter accumulating, relations regimenting. To clean means to get dirty. Cleaning the home is an often-invisible act of connectedness among bodies, spaces, and objects, producing cross-generational narratives, rituals of wellness, and spatial thresholds of belonging. Often depicted as menial and feminised labour, domestic cleaning carries a hidden sensorial landscape: dust gathering on surfaces, cleaning apparatus embedded within domestic architecture, and the repetitive sounds through which mundane chores generate fragmented narratives of familiarity. François Verges opens her book *Decolonial Feminism* with "Who cleans the world?" By response, here, I mobilise this question to "Who Cares?" using Hélène Frisot's "dirty theory" and the figure of the slut, not as moral transgression, but as the woman who has no time to clean. The slut disrupts the patriarchal demand that femininity refuses domestic purity as a virtue. In this refusal emerges what I term the "slyborg": a slut-cyborg subjectivity produced through domestic care labour, dust, and technological intimacy. The slyborg inhabits the contradictions between maintenance and rebellion, cleanliness and contamination, pleasure and exhaustion. She is entangled with the vacuum cleaner, the mop, the washing machine, and the dirty infrastructures of everyday life. This theoretical framework forms the conceptual springboard for the research-by-practice project *Metatum 2.0 – Beggar's Velvet*, a small interactive sculptural object composed of domestic dust collected through hoovering as a performative act. The object whispers the hum of the vacuum cleaner, but only when physically approached, producing an intimate sensory encounter between audience and object. This affective installation transforms the collection of dirt into an immersive architecture of care - a manifesto of slyborg asking "who cares"?

**Keywords:** Domestic, Housework, Care, Slut, Dust

# **“They’re Garbage, What a Waste of Fucking Skin”: (Refuse)ing Settler-Colonial Narratives of Disposability, Disgust, and Danger in Local Houselessness Politics in Kingston, Ontario, Canada**

**Presenters:** Sophie Lachapelle

**Affiliation:** University of Ottawa

For many propertied people, the proliferation of encampments in public spaces across Canada is indicative of an erosion of law and order and a risk to public health and safety, engendering intense feelings of fear, disgust, and anger towards unhoused people. Such emotionally-charged narratives often cite unhoused people’s unclean appearances and the garbage in and around encampments as reasons to criminalize and remove unhoused people – themselves imagined as a kind of dirt or filth – from public spaces. However, propertied people’s narratives of unhoused people as disgusting and/or dangerous are also emblematic of the ways in which settler-colonial authorities have historically weaponized harmful stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as uncivilized, lawless, and savage due to their perceived unpropertied-ness in order to steal their lands. Indeed, in a society built upon maintaining a tenuous legal framework of private property ownership, fear and disgust become powerful affective mechanisms through which pre-emptive actions against all unpropertied others is justified. To effectively refuse such violence, we must first accept that the fetishization of dirt – that is, our societal obsession with defining, ordering, and removing it in its various forms – is part and parcel of the day-to-day institutional maintenance of settler-colonial property regimes. Using my own dissertation research as an example, I propose Institutional Ethnography (IE) as a methodology that invites us – as the organizers of this stream do – to “get dirty.” I argue that IE not only requires us to engage with communities pushed to the margins for their dirtiness, but to refuse an institutional politics of settler-colonial purity that continuously produces the very forms of dirt its proponents claim to abhor.

**Keywords:** Colonial Affect, Disgust, Fear, Houselessness, Encampments, Settler-Colonialism, Property, Institutional Ethnography

## S9. Elemental Affects and Atmospheric Wellbeing

What would it mean to take the elements as organising contexts for affect studies? This stream proceeds from a series of emerging transdisciplinary fields—Critical Air Studies, Critical Forest Studies, Critical Ocean Studies, Critical Energy Studies, Critical Time Studies—assembling around shared elemental milieus: the air we breathe, the forests we walk through, the oceans we cross, the energy we metabolise, the historical time we are thrown into. In each case, it is an elemental milieu (with its particular thickness of bodily relationships and planetary forces) that draws researchers into unexpected collaborations across the humanities, arts, social sciences, and physical sciences.

The questions this stream poses to affect studies include: what role might affect play in drawing scholars into emerging elemental studies? Are there specific affects that circulate within and between elemental milieus? Does each milieu afford particular ways of registering and working with affect—different textures, tonalities, and affordances? What might an elemental approach to affect bring to place-based relationships, and what it means to live in good relations with land?

These questions emerge from the recognition that affect theory's primary conceptual vocabulary—intensity, capacitation, transmission, circulation—often begins with human social relations before moving outward. The convergence of new critical studies around forests, oceans, time, energy, and air invites a different starting point: the elemental milieu as protean condition for affective relationships from which sociality grows.

The concept of *atmospheric wellbeing* offers one worked example of what elemental affect studies looks like in practice (Rousell & Lupton, 2025). Understood as the affective and sensory dimensions of a body's entanglement with the air it breathes—its toxicities and breathabilities, political and climatic conditions, and intersectional angles of impact—*atmospheric wellbeing* names affects that exceed both individual health and planetary governance frameworks. Here the atmosphere is not background to affective life but its very medium of transmission: an elemental milieu that actively precipitates possibilities for sensing, feeling, and acting in the world.

An elemental turn in affect studies provides new critical tools for attuning to place-based histories of elemental milieus and how these are differentially impacted by colonial dispossession and toxification. Indigenous communities have long understood the elements as expressions of kinship, care, and sovereignty—not as passive media through which human social life unfolds, but as juridical, therapeutic, affective, and pedagogic forces (Bawaka Country et al., 2016; Kimmerer, 2013; Tynan, 2021). These perspectives vary significantly across distinct peoples, territories, and geopolitical contexts and cannot be collapsed into a general elemental framework. The stream invites work that critically attunes to affective configurations of the elemental and the situated complexities of atmospheric toxicity and wellbeing.

The stream is co-convended by visiting and local researchers and proceeds in collaboration with Coast Salish (máthxwi and x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyám) artist and facilitator Carman McKay, whose practice grounds our engagement with the specific elemental milieus of the conference's location on unceded lands.

We welcome work engaging with, but not limited to:

- Elemental affects and more-than-human wellbeing
- First Nations, Indigenous, and Global South elemental knowledges
- Critical Air, Forest, Ocean, Energy, and Time Studies
- Decolonial and extractive histories of elemental milieus
- Atmosphere as concept and method
- Affective, sensory, speculative, participatory, and creative methodologies
- Architectural, performative, and technological mediations of elemental milieus



# Affective Counter-Histories: Atmospheres of Ruination, Rupture, and Re-Assembly

**Presenters:** David Rousell; Jacina Leong; Merinda Kelly

**Affiliation:** RMIT University

Focusing on the affective power of the image in unsettling the representational logic of settler colonial history, this paper offers a praxis turn towards the production of counter-histories which rupture imperial philosophies of time. The paper draws on work from our current project Making Histories in the cities of Naarm (Melbourne) and Djilang (Geelong) located on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri, Boon wurrung/Bunorong, and Wadawurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation. The project involves collaborations with young artists as counter-historians of their cities and employed members of the research team. We approach counter-histories not as revisionist corrections of History writ large, but as ways of inhabiting "the endlessly generative space of the counterintuitive" (Camp, 2017). Our project hinges on practices of ruination, rupture, and re-assembly as key techniques for counter-historical inquiry, building on the works of Édouard Glissant (1990, 1997), Achilles Mbembe (2022, 2023) and Ariella Azoulay (2019, 2024). We also turn to Hartman (2017) and Camp (2017) as key thinkers of how the affective frequencies of the image can transfigure history-making into a site of rupture and speculative re-imagining. The critical question, as MacLure (2011) argued, is how affective inquiry not only critiques colonial ruins but actively works to bring about the ruination of imperial sense and representation that structures its regimes of sensibility. Drawing on collaborative research with young artists from diversely situated communities, we offer specific examples of affective counter-histories produced through documentary photography, archival re-assembly, and speculative image-making. By working with young people to create affective images of life in their cities, we create new circuits for affect to travel through time - transforming counter-historical apprehensions of the past into memories of the future.

**Keywords:** Affective Histories, Critical Time Studies, Urban Atmospheres, Photography, Decolonial Studies

# Affective Resonances of Care: Field Recording Without Use

**Presenters:** Max Gibson

**Affiliation:** UC Davis

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I stopped composing notated music and turned instead toward field recording. Carrying a recorder through daily life, I began to explore how sound might allow me to resonate with, feel through, and remain with the world differently. For the first time, I no longer felt compelled to produce creative outcomes, yet I still needed the affective presence of sound. My field recorder became a companion for listening rather than a tool for extraction or compositional use. Recording opened a practice grounded not in consequence or productivity, but in attention, relation, and care. Since then, I have recorded across France, Austria, the UK, and the USA, developing an embodied practice of listening and recording without ever needing to use the recordings themselves. This article reflects on that ongoing practice through an affective politics of care, drawing on Brian Massumi's writing on affect and relationality. I consider listening, sonic events, and the act of recording within the sonosphere (a term I feel is more inclusive to multiple kinds of listening than soundscape) as sites of affective ongoingness. I use "affective ongoingness" to describe a creative and methodological orientation toward emergence, movement, and relational multiplicity. Resisting the demand for resolution or output, affective ongoingness understands listening as a sustained process of co-presence across human, nonhuman, and more-than-human worlds. In this way, field recording becomes less a means of capture than a practice of care: an ongoing attunement to the resonant textures of shared worlds.

**Keywords:** Field Recording, Sound, Ongoingness, Politics of Care

# Campus Climates and the Coloniality of Affect

**Presenters:** Vandhana Ravi

**Affiliation:** UC San Diego

"The empire of the climate is the first, the most powerful, of all empires", wrote Montesquieu in 1748, advancing his supremacist theory of climate determinism, i.e., that a meteorological climate predisposes its inhabitants to a corresponding temperament. In this paper, I detail a genealogy of how the American settler university was designed with investments in climate determinism, and continues to govern campuses today by managing collective affective states, i.e., "campus climates". I begin with the university campus as a uniquely settler-American spatial form, designed to produce settler learning environments. As Frederick Law Olmsted, a prominent colonial-American college architect, describes, "the character of the buildings and grounds, the scenery and atmosphere [...] is a highly important element of a liberal education". In this sense, managing the campus climate or environment becomes a pedagogical imperative of the American settler university. I then trace how increasingly diverse campus populations in the 20th century led to a growing demand for the affective management of campus. Drawing on the history of early college psychology, I demonstrate how early attempts to study and survey collective campus affects, such as Murray's (1938) needs-press model, Pace and Stern's (1958) perceived climate, and Halpin and Croft's (1963) organizational personality instrument are rooted in what Schuller (2018) calls 'sentimental biopolitics', i.e. how institutions manage populations through affective mediations of power. These survey instruments classified, examined, and quantified affective responses in/of the university as a form of disciplinary power. I end by contextualizing how the term "campus climate" came to refer to the affective conditions of the campus body, as an inheritance of a long history of eugenics-based climate determinism. I situate modern campus climate discourse on American university campuses to argue that the settler university continues to leverage affective 'climates' to manage land and population co-constitutively, thereby maintaining settler socialities.

**Keywords:** University, Atmosphere, Settler Colonialism, Biopolitics

# E/Affective Burnout: Atmospheres, Energy and the Politics of Attention in Petro-Modernity

**Presenters:** Jason Young

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

We are burning out. Both in terms of an effective planetary energetic condition rooted in fossil fuel extraction, combustion, and carbon-intensive modernity, and as an affective condition experienced by those subjected to the demands of such an energetic regime. This essay articulates these “atmospheres of exhaustion” as an affect particular to late fossil fuel modernity. It argues that the accelerated temporalities of petrocultures contribute to the fracturing of attention, and that (re)orienting our attention towards relationships of correspondence (Ingold) and resonance (Rosa) with elemental realities becomes necessary for sensing durations, intensities, and agencies that exceed anthropocentric frameworks. For we find ourselves not only in a crisis of “environment” but also a crisis of *relationship* that necessarily involves us bodily, affectively and imaginatively. Drawing from eco-phenomenology and decolonial approaches to perceiving nature, the essay suggest that practices of deep listening, sensory attentiveness, and atmospheric awareness are capable of (re)orienting attention in this way, while fostering deeper relations with(in) elemental forces that exceed and sustain human life. The essay then traces these practices through engagement with the atmosphere as a dissipative system existing far from thermodynamic equilibrium, sustained by the metabolism of life and the sun’s warming of the earth; a dynamic relation increasingly disrupted by the rapid combustion of fossil fuels. The myriad senses of elemental air are here explored in its associations with breath, wind, spirit, and animating force. This gestures towards a vision of subjectivity not as isolated interiority, but as porous, circulating, and metabolically entangled with the elemental conditions of existence itself.

**Keywords:** Energy Studies, Atmospheres, Attention, Subjectivity

# Elemental Living Stories: Dayak Ngaju Narrative Futures for Tropical Peatland Restoration and Climate Adaptation in Central Kalimantan

**Presenters:** Corry Antang

**Affiliation:** RMIT University

Tropical peatland restoration and climate adaptation require strategies that go beyond technical, one-size-fits-all models; it is essential to incorporate localised, place-based, and relational knowledge systems. Within mainstream climate discussions, Indigenous ways of knowing are frequently overlooked, even though they provide valuable insights into ecological conservation, resilience, and coexistence with non-human entities. This paper focuses on the Dayak Ngaju people in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, whose lives are profoundly connected to tropical peatland ecosystems, which are currently imperilled by drainage for agriculture and infrastructure, land conversion, and climate change. Employing an Indigenous-framed (auto)ethnographic methodology, this study investigates how the stories, language, and animist cosmologies of the Dayak Ngaju communities serve as vital narratives for climate adaptation and tropical peatland restoration. Instead of viewing tropical peatland forests, fire, water, and atmosphere as mere environmental backdrops, the narratives of the Dayak Ngaju illustrate these elements as active forces that shape cultural memory, wellbeing, spirituality, and practices aimed at building the future. Through stories of kinship, care, and mutual responsibility, tropical peatland restoration and climate adaptation are framed not just as environmental management but also as the revitalisation of language, the preservation of cultural continuity, and the nurturing of relational worldviews. This research adds to the growing discourse in elemental affect studies by illustrating how Indigenous living stories provide rich, affective, and atmospheric perspectives on future scenarios, firmly rooted in local experiences. By reframing the narratives of the Dayak Ngaju as guiding principles for the future of tropical peatlands, this study asserts that Indigenous perspectives are crucial to developing approaches to climate adaptation, restoration, and well-being that are more relational, culturally informed, and ecologically attentive.

**Keywords:** Dayak Ngaju, Climate Adaptation, Tropical Peatlands, Relational Worldviews, Indigenous Ways of Knowing

# Petrichoric Ontology: Towards an Atmospheric Understanding of Being

**Presenters:** Beth A. Martin

**Affiliation:** Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts

This paper proposes Petrichoric Ontology, a philosophical framework that redefines Being as an atmospheric process of migration and continuous emergence rather than a stable ground or discrete event. In dialogue with elemental approaches to affect, it argues that affect does not originate in human social relations, but emerges from atmospheric conditions that function as elemental milieus for perception, sensation, and relation. Petrichor—the scent produced when rain meets dry earth—serves as a conceptual model for understanding how Being becomes perceptible through environmental relations. Rather than appearing as fixed presence, Being unfolds through fluctuating atmospheric conditions characterized by mosaic composition, felt anticipation, and partial disclosure. Atmosphere is not background to experience but the primary medium through which relational intensities arise and circulate. Within this framework, art is not a representation of Being, but its enactment: artworks function as atmospheric fields in which intensities become sensorially and materially manifest. Through the analysis of works by Anselm Kiefer, William Kentridge, Dorothea Tanning, Jusepe de Ribera, and Mark Rothko, this project demonstrates how artistic practices disclose Being as a precarious, dynamic process grounded in elemental conditions. By shifting ontology from event-based grounding to atmospheric emergence, Petrichoric Ontology challenges dominant metaphysical assumptions of stability and repositions atmosphere as the elemental condition through which both affect and worldhood become possible.

**Keywords:** Petrichor, Atmosphere, Elemental Conditions, Affect, Art as Field

## Reassembling the Self: Land/Sea and Life/Death in *Atlantiques* (2009)

**Presenters:** Emma Gibb

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This presentation argues for a land-based approach to reading Mati Diop's short film *Atlantiques* (2009) through Tiffany Lethabo King's theory of the black shoal. Recent scholarship on Diop's filmography has largely emphasized its relationship to the fluid and oceanic (Hodges 2025; Price 2023; Quinney 2025). Deploying King's shoal theory thus offers an ecotonal perspective to *Atlantiques* that integrates land-based materiality as both a diegetic metaphor and a social commentary on the Senegalese migrant crisis. King allegorizes the shoal, a sand formation found in ocean waters that rapidly shallows the ocean's depth, as a "form of chafing and rubbing up against the normative flows of Western thought" (King 2). Shoal theory complicates dominant tendencies within Black and Indigenous theoretical traditions, in which Blackness is associated with the ocean, water, and liquidity, and conversely, Indigeneity is associated with land and territory. In the juncture of the two, a theoretical ecotone is formed, a "space of transition between distinct ecological systems and states" (King 7-9). Locating the ghost of drowned migrant Serigne (Serigne Sheck) within this juncture, this essay argues that binaries of land/sea and living/dead exist simultaneously in *Atlantiques*. Serigne's ghost forms an ecotone between life and death in the film, and refutes the "phenomenon of the refugee as a phantasmatic, indeterminate figure" by granting the ghost terrestriality (Bennett and Marciniak 458). This chafing of the invisible and the material effectively communicates the social history and lived experience of exile and otherness produced by the migrant crisis in Senegal in Diop's work. As such, the paper comes to see that the ghost in *Atlantiques* is a modulating and binary-breaking figure that, by existing on both land and sea, has tangible socio-political effects in the face of the ongoing Senegalese refugee crisis.

**Keywords:** Senegal, Shoal Theory, Phantasmic, Cinema, Refugee Crisis

# Rivers of Feeling: Mapping the Hydro-Affective Intensities of Climate Disasters with Young Researchers

**Presenters:** David Rousell; Yaw Ofosu-Asare

**Affiliation:** RMIT University

This paper introduces Rivers of Feeling as a theoretical concept and participatory approach for researching the affective intensities of climate disasters with communities. The approach emerges from a multi-sited Australian study involving children and young people as researchers investigating community experiences of extreme flood events. Situated at the intersection of Critical Water Studies and process philosophies of affect and time, the paper proposes that what is experienced through extreme flood events cannot be adequately categorised by personalised emotional states. Instead, the concept of hydro-affective intensity proposes the elemental milieu of water itself as a protean condition from which feeling emerges and propagates across more-than-human bodies, places, and times. Three process philosophers are key to this movement. Bergson's philosophy of time as lived duration shapes the paper's orientation toward affective intensity as qualitatively felt and quantitatively multiplied rather than spatially measured and categorised. Whitehead extends this into a cosmology in which all events come into existence through "vectors of feeling" that connect intensive and extensive affects at cosmological scale. Glissant's archipelagic philosophy of Relation gathers these intensities into planetary waters as both abyss and womb through which submerged histories are carried, diffracted, and felt across generations. Working from this process-oriented framing, the paper follows how children and young people map the hydro-affective intensities of extreme flood events across multiple modalities of expression. Young researchers with lived experience of recent flooding were offered a series of invitations into collective praxis: to sense and move as bodies of water, to map the waterways flowing through their lives, to chart the shifting intensities of floods and story these intensive processes. Our analysis of this work reveals intensities that eddy, spiral, and surge in ways that resist individualised accounts of emotion, opening instead onto collectively felt and dispersed registers of hydro-affective experience.

**Keywords:** Critical Water Studies, Hydro-Affects, Flood Disasters, Climate Justice, Youth Co-Researchers

# Sensing Smog: Counter-Conduct and Self-Care in Climate Pedagogy

**Presenters:** Marcelina Piotrowski

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

The opacity of smog is never only chemical. It sets as an epistemological veil produced by extractive data rationalities, displaying as burnout from the affective demands of climate pedagogy through endless appeals to feel and know in an enduring climate and nature emergency. This talk moves through such smog. It takes up the elemental milieu of air, and smog in particular, as medium, and as the very substance of affective life in climate pedagogy. I share research on community-based climate justice education projects in which residents use wearable sensor technologies to learn to track local air quality as counter-conduct, or refusal against the burnout from smog's opacity and the concurrent excesses and dearth of data about smog injustice. Counter-conduct appears as two entangled gestures: as a practice of wellbeing through refusal of opacity and emotional overwhelm, and a practice of counting, or numeracy which works within the very techniques it opposes. Counter-conduct therefore enables communities to use sensor data to reconstitute how they know, contest, and act on smog without burning out affectively. This form of self-care is associated with pleasures of self-knowledge related to the biopolitics of life, and here, with the racialized conditions of breathing. Bringing together Elizabeth de Freitas's work on worldly sensibility, Michel Foucault's concept of counter-conduct as self-care, and Jenny Odell's practice of refusal produces synergies between biopolitical ideas of self-knowledge and more-than-human speculative distributions of knowledge production using sensors. Here, worldly sensibility registers air as atmospheric burnout of pollution as well as an ambience of incessant hope coupled with rationalities of objectivity. While smog is opaque, data clarity arrives as a 'solution' to demands for 'proof' of climate inequities; themselves a feature of broader racialized inequities of environmental knowledge. Decentering learning in climate pedagogy is presented as one way of using data to breathe.

**Keywords:** Sensor Technologies, Burnout, Air, Smog, Elemental, Refusal, Foucault

# Temporal Multiplicities: A Transnational Academic Inquiry into Time

**Presenters:** Ridita Mizan

**Affiliation:** Illinois State University

Time is often understood as a movement from past to present to future. Yet transnational academic life suggests a more complex experience of time. While I live, work, and study in one country, many of my relationships, responsibilities, memories, and future plans remain connected elsewhere. As a result, I often inhabit multiple temporal horizons at once. Drawing on autoethnographic reflections as a Bangladeshi academic studying and teaching in the United States, this paper explores temporal multiplicities as a way of understanding this experience. To make sense of this condition, I explore a heuristic model organized around two intersecting axes. The horizontal axis represents the movement of time from past to present to future and captures succession, progression, and educational trajectories. The vertical axis represents simultaneity: the coexistence of multiple presents emerging across different places, institutions, relationships, and cultural contexts. While the horizontal axis highlights movement through time, the vertical axis draws attention to inhabiting several presents at once. For transnational subjects, these axes intersect in everyday life. I use the term temporal multiplicities to describe the lived condition that emerges through this intersection of succession and simultaneity. Through an autoethnographic inquiry, the paper examines how transnational academics navigate overlapping presents, inherited histories, and imagined futures across national and institutional borders. Rather than treating time as a neutral backdrop, I approach it as a lived and affective condition that shapes experiences of attachment, mobility, belonging, and wellbeing. I argue that transnational academic life offers a productive site for rethinking temporality beyond linear models and for understanding the affective consequences of inhabiting multiple temporal horizons simultaneously. By bringing mobility, academic life, and lived experience into conversation with Critical Time Studies, this paper develops temporal multiplicities as a framework for understanding how people navigate lives that extend across national, institutional, and cultural borders.

**Keywords:** Temporality, Critical Time Studies, Autoethnography, Transnationality

# Wholistic Forest-Based Learning: an Elemental Approach to Teacher Education

**Presenters:** Cher Hill; Zuzana Vasko

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

Through this embodied inquiry, we explore experiential learning with forests. As teacher educators and members of an international Critical Forest Studies Collaboratory, we moved our work with pre-service teachers out into Coast Salish lands to enliven learning, to situate ourselves within the living world, and to engage in anti-colonial educative practices. We know that our forest-based learning is typically very impactful for our students (as well as ourselves), but the dynamic forces that contribute to these shifts are often elusive and at times mysterious. Through this study we explore the ways in which dynamic and shifting atmospheres and elemental intra-actions may affect learning. The four elements permeate humanness in ways that rarely occur in built classrooms. Sunlight stimulates the production of serotonin and affects mood; breathing/being in forest air can affect both human and multispecies inter/intra-subjectivities; the steady sound of rain on the forest canopy activates the parasympathetic nervous system and invites a meditative state; and walking the land activates “feelings of being and having a body” (Ables & Eisenlohr, 2025, p. 9) influencing environmental relations. Focusing on sensory, emotional, proprioceptive, non-conscious, and incorporeal intensities that arise from elemental encounters, we inquire into what more is uniquely educative about forest atmospheres. Through storytelling and art making with/in forests and thinking with the literature on atmospheric and critical elemental studies (Rousell & Lupton, 2025), we explore how moods of place flow through our formal curriculum to deepen sensitivity to ecological knowing and to critically examine the subtler aspects of forest-based pedagogies.

**Keywords:** Forest-Based Learning, Teacher Education, Wholistic Learning, Elemental Studies, Atmospheres

# “What a Difference a Wing Makes”: How Anne Carson Lets Us See Ourselves as ‘Sky-Subjects’

**Presenters:** Sarah Sharp

**Affiliation:** The New School

This paper investigates Anne Carson's use of sky throughout her body of work but particularly in reference to her latest collection of poetry, *Wrong Norma* (2024). The collection includes, as one of its central pieces, “Lecture on the History of Skywriting,” which is written from the perspective of the sky itself. Carson, within this piece, plays with the dynamic tension between the sky as stand-in for space more broadly, and the god-like perspective this yields, and the sky as a writer of its own story, a subject, an I, which must necessarily, like any living subject, be located itself within time and at a particular place. This tension between ‘edge’ and ‘edgelessness’, the boundless character of the sky and the necessary sort of bounds that come up against any subject embodying a particular place or perspective, evokes Carson's own writings on desire, *eros*, mysticism, the limits (and possibilities) of language, and the oscillating tension between presence and absence in her earlier works. I call this dynamic the *I-to-sky spectrum of subjectivity* and suggest that Carson's works, along with the array of ancient sources she draws on and plays with, gives us tools for thinking of ourselves as ‘sky-subjects’.

**Keywords:** Sky, Anne Carson, Subjectivity, Space, Clouds, Wings, Eclipses, Eros, Absence

## S10. Exercising Corpo-Realities

Why do we exercise, and how do physical practices shape our identity and ideology? Every physical practice creates distinct ways of experiencing the body—different ‘corpo-realities’—which impact how we feel, what we believe, and how we relate to the world. According to Lauren Berlant, affect studies can be regarded as an extension of ideology studies, as it moves further into the realms of lived, embodied life.

We exercise to change. Exercise changes us. We change our exercises—depending. On what? Some approaches may see only ideological capture. We are certainly affected by the structuring forces of pre-personal discursive energies, tendencies and trajectories. But we form agency within structuring structures. We craft our activities on the basis of changes they themselves have produced. Things change, so we have to. We change, so things have to. New vistas open. We can now do different things, or the same things differently.

Across the disciplines, many methodologies are used to try to capture these complex dynamics. Meanwhile, untold numbers of people have agonising or delightful conversations with themselves about their identities, orientations, hopes, dreams, fantasies, and fears; move the pin up or down the stack; tighten their running shoes; ponder a kettlebell; or lightly touch a punchbag and take a barely conscious sniff. Countless reels tell us we must change our life. Some arrest us. Some irritate. Others excite. All are potentially powerful interventions.

This stream explores ways we might grasp the exercise/affect nexus. How can we comprehend and conceptualise affective atmospheres, felt and lived through media and movement? What can the relations hope to be between scholarly knowledges, practitioner knowledges, and dispersed and profuse discursive energies?

We invite contributions that explore:

- Methods to identify and analyse what Lauren Miller has called ‘affective habitus’;
- The retooling of discourse analysis to gauge atmospheres and structures of feeling at the interface of social media and embodied activities;
- The use of textual analysis to identify the ideological imperatives of embodied practices;
- Ways of disambiguating between inherent affective capacities and externally imposed ways of feeling and experiencing them. (Consider: might pranayama or qigong have inherently or immanently ‘self-mystifying’ trajectories, or are such dimensions imposed by an attending discourse that provides interpretive scaffolding? Or: does bodybuilding necessarily produce predictable forms of the simultaneous erosion and intensification of gender, or are the specific features of its ‘capacity to affect’ determined entirely by ‘context’?)

The panel is open to papers that explore the affective dimensions of different corpo-realities from across the landscape of exercise practices. We anticipate papers on affective habitus (Lauren Miller), the interface of social media, ideological fantasy and affective exercise (Paul Bowman), and the use of textual analysis to examine embodied affective ideology (Peter Katz). The stream is open to contributions from any discipline that engage with exercise and corpo-realities in creative and insightful ways.

# A Feminist Posthuman View of Artistic Gestures: Affect, Embodiment, and Ethical Implications

**Presenters:** Jocelyn Holmes

**Affiliation:** Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts

This paper reconceptualizes the term “gesture” to examine the affective potential of artistic gestures to act as material-epistemic interventions that reshape our understandings of ethics, knowledge, power, and the material world. While the sociological and semiotic frameworks of George Herbert Mead and Vilém Flusser provide human-centric theories of linguistic and nonlinguistic gestural communication and affect, I argue that the land and body art practices of Ana Mendieta and Agnes Denes, centered on ecology, sustainability, and belonging, require a posthuman theory of gesture. Building on Mead and Flusser’s scholarship, which establishes a connection between gesture and affect, I propose a posthuman theory of gesture and affect to encourage responsible engagement with all materiality. To recognize the affective potential of artistic gestures, Rosi Braidotti’s contemporary re-reading of affect through Spinozian naturalist philosophy offers a view in which all matter is dynamic and capable of affecting and being affected. This view disrupts the hierarchy embedded in human-nonhuman divides and advocates for responsive and ethical engagements with the material world. This foundation unsettles previous human-centered theories of gestural communication, highlighting the affective potential of artistic gestures to confront contemporary socio-biopolitical issues and ecological violence and leverage imagination for radical, transformative aims.

**Keywords:** Art, Gesture, Affect, Embodiment, Ethics

# Affective Habitus in Capoeira & Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

**Presenters:** Lauren Miller-Crawford

**Affiliation:** Texas Tech University

Bourdieu's well-known idea of habitus—embodied dispositions that allow one to advance within a social field—made its way into martial arts studies via Wacquant's study of a Chicago boxing gym (2006). This theoretical lens had been immensely helpful in understanding how people acquire specific skills in disciplines that oftentimes originate outside of one's own culture (see Johnson 2023), how their proprioception changes as a result of their training (see Conger 2023), how they advance within a particular community of practice (see Miller Griffith 2016), etc. However, in trying to explain why practitioners of the Afro-Brazilian martial art capoeira often become involved in social and political causes such as supporting Black Lives Matter protests, I needed an additional tool to explain the affective changes experienced by members of what could over-simplistically be called an exercise club. In much the same way that an individual's physical dispositions change through training, I have found that their emotional responses to situations also change. In the case of capoeira, they may become more attuned to racial profiling or issues of privilege. In this presentation, I will first explain my concept of affective habitus using capoeira as an illustrative example. I then turn my attention to Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and my nascent project on how intimate partner abuse shapes one's participation in a form of grappling that demands intimate contact with one's partner. That jiu-jitsu can be used to neutralize a bigger, stronger opponent is well accepted, and the idea that the benefits of training can cross over into real-life situations outside of the gym is also commonly accepted. In fact, it is often used as a selling point in marketing. Yet how this happens is poorly understood, particularly in the case of individuals who have survived the often-ambiguous everyday violations of intimate partner abuse.

**Keywords:** Habitus, Capoeira, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Intimacy

# Bonesmashing: Fascist Skin, Bruising, and the Non-Conscious

**Presenters:** Cooper Casale

**Affiliation:** University of Colorado Boulder

As scholars and activists reconsider the various histories and theories of fascism to understand the present regime in the United States, this paper argues that Trumpism lays bare the fact that fascism is neither a coherent set of economic, social, and political assumptions, nor a specific state of twentieth century affairs. Rather, fascism is an affective regime: something that happens (literally) to the fascist body. While Guattari and Deleuze's concept of micro-fascism describes the sedimentary drift of pain, this paper further develops the concept to examine where those flows actually surface on the body as canker, wart, pimple, and polyp. More specifically, I examine the contemporary online trend, rooted in histories of eugenics and white supremacy, called looksmaxxing. The looksmaxxer often hits themselves in the jaw with hammers to achieve a sharper jawline (or bonesmashing). For the bonesmashing looksmaxxer, mastering the world is as crude as chewing on it and Aryanness is not only the blonde hair and blue eyes, but also the well-pronounced jaw on which fascism's resentments, circulating chaotically throughout the body, surface. This paper proposes a method to map fascism onto the bonesmashed body in pain. Fascism names the subdivision and recombination of painful pieces and pieces in pain: a body that becomes singularly Aryan by becoming multiply hurt. In so doing, I challenge the many worthy studies of fascism such as Theweleit's *Male Fantasies*, which often argue for fascism as a set of unconscious psychological repressions and sexual complexes, to argue instead that fascism is not the unconscious symbolic work of the mind, but rather the *non-conscious* becoming of the skin under constant maintenance and revision. Indeed, there is no fascism but in *feeling fascist*, which is to constantly suffer a hammer-beaten bruise as both the torturer and the tortured.

**Keywords:** Fascism, Looksmaxxing, Pain, White Supremacy

# Feel the Burn: Bodybuilding as Method in Affect Studies

**Presenters:** Paul Bowman

**Affiliation:** Cardiff University

People of all ages, genders, ethnicities, classes and cultures train with weights, kettlebells, machines, or their own bodyweight, in an effort to build strength, stamina, mobility and muscle. Some scholars discern emancipatory or progressive trajectories in such activities. But the treatment of muscle-focused exercise within cultural theory has often been scathing – linking it to nihilism, narcissism, neoliberalism, and normative gender ideologies. However, this presentation argues that ‘bodybuilding’ is best understood as an affective terrain of world-making methods, theories and practices. It also proposes that – as bodybuilding is defined by transforming objects into ‘tools’ that are used solely to transform the ‘tool user’ – bodybuilding can be understood as an important field of affective energies and methodologies. Philosopher Alphonso Lingis blames the widespread disparagement of bodybuilding on the solipsism of its primarily affective character. Yet, Lingis argues, bodybuilders are engaged in an affective struggle against a range of limitations. This presentation, which is part of an ongoing project with Gabriela Méndez Cota on the phenomenological and affective dimensions of strength training, draws both from Lingis’s work and from autoethnographic experience. It seeks to persuade that (while often also ideological in the most pejorative senses) bodybuilding practices can usefully be understood as exemplary experimental methods of world-making. Bodybuilding involves experimental-experiential and affective approaches from which affect studies might learn a lot about methods, knowledges and atmospheres per se. Bodybuilding is not merely illustrative of ‘ideology’. It is equally illustrative of obsession, passion, self-creation, research, autodidacticism, applied theory, lived philosophy, indeed even authentic scholarship.

**Keywords:** Corporeality, Exercise, Affect, Methodology, Ideology, Change

# Haunted Repertoires: Empowering Affects in Women's Basketball and Ballet

**Presenters:** Kelsey Blair

**Affiliation:** University of the Fraser Valley

In this paper, I use the critical tools and methods of performance studies to enliven the physical, philosophical, and affective spectres that haunt the embodied repertoires of basketball and ballet for female athletes/performers. To do so, I draw from Diana Taylor's theorization of the archive and the repertoire. For Taylor, the repertoire is a mode of knowledge and memory transmission that works alongside the archive. Indeed, unlike the archive, which "exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains .... all those items supposedly resistant to change," the repertoire "enacts embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge" (19-20). She further argues: performance "provokes emotions it claims only to represent, evokes memories and grief that belong to some other body. It conjures up and makes visible not just the live but the powerful army of the always already living" (143). Drawing from Taylor's conception of the repertoire, I examine the concept of verticality in basketball and ballet. More specifically, I study the evolution of the concept of the vertical plane in basketball and its impacts for female-identified performers and the history of embodying verticality for ballerinas. In both cases, I trace how verticality evolved over time, shifting from a concept that originally constrained women's bodies to a concept that potentially produces a cluster of empowering affects for twenty-first century female performers. In so doing, I enliven women's influence in both repertoires and foreground a methodology for studying the intersection between embodiment, specialized areas of practice (like basketball and ballet), and affect. Works Cited Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003

## Performing Affect Through Masquerade: Eisa Jocson's Performances in 2015

**Presenters:** Ruiqi Wang

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This paper examines how queer affect circulates through gendered racial capitalism in contemporary Asia, through examining two 2015 performances – *Princess Studies: Fantasy, Work and Happiness* and *Host* – by Filipina choreographer Eisa Jocson. Focusing on (trans)Filipina migrant laborers, Jocson mobilizes masquerade not only as a strategy in avant-garde performance but also as a representation of performing labor. In sites such as Disneyland in Hong Kong and host clubs in Japan, laboring bodies are required to produce intimacy, fantasy, and emotional attachment as forms of value. Jocson's performances foreground how queer affect is not merely represented but materially produced, circulated, and negotiated between bodies. Drawing on queer affect theory, Filipino studies, and performance studies, the paper develops the concept of a “masquerade of masquerade” to describe how Jocson stages embodied performances that simultaneously inhabit and estrange commodified affect. Through close visual analysis, I argue that, by foregrounding the performer's ability to initiate and withdraw the masquerade, Jocson reconfigures spectatorship as an affective exchange rather than a unidirectional gaze. By framing performance as a site of embodied exchange where feelings are produced, circulated, and commodified, this paper proposes a broader analytic for understanding how queer affect generates distinct affective economies across different sites of gendered racial capitalism.

# Physical Education and the Affective Choreography of Sexism

**Presenters:** Toni Ingram

**Affiliation:** Auckland University of Technology

In compulsory physical education (PE), all students are expected to participate, yet not all bodies move, feel or belong in the same ways. In this presentation, I bring Calder-Dawe's (2015) concept of the choreography of sexism into conversation with affect theory, particularly the work of Sara Ahmed (2004; 2021) and Lauren Miller Griffith (2022), to explore how sexism is patterned and felt in PE. Drawing on a study with Year 7–10 girls in Aotearoa New Zealand, I consider how everyday moments in PE – teacher instruction, peer dynamics, spatial organisation – produce affective atmospheres through which girls anticipate and experience sexism. As Ahmed (2015) notes, sexism is a well-oiled machine that runs so smoothly because of its constant use. I trace the affective flows of sexism: how it circulates through bodies, spaces and relationships; how it moves, 'sticks' and shapes orientations towards participation. Rather than understanding disengagement from PE as an individual choice or lack of confidence, the presentation foregrounds the affective conditions through which participation is regulated and reconfigured. In tracing these enduring patterns, I also highlight the frustration and anger sexism can generate, and how girls respond collectively through acts of solidarity and care that help them challenge and rework its effects.

**Keywords:** Affective Atmospheres, Affective Habitus, Ahmed, Embodiment, Feminism, Gender

# Will the Orchids Rise? on the Bodybuilder as a Deconstructive Ecofeminist Figure

**Presenters:** Gabriela Mendez Cota

**Affiliation:** Universidad Iberoamericana

This presentation suggests that in the current atmosphere of techno-nihilism and planetary doom, bodybuilding is best understood as an existential question before and beyond the ideological analysis of its cultural representations or enactments. But what does that mean, and why would it be important for a conference committed to world-making through affect and its study? Part of an ongoing project with Paul Bowman on the affective phenomenology of strength training, this presentation offers a reading of Alphonso Lingis's writing on bodybuilding that highlights its resonances with some ecologically minded Continental feminist philosophy. Read through the lens of Irigaray's 'vegetal being' and 'ethics of sexual difference', for instance, Lingis's writing on bodybuilding appears as an affective methodology for the study of exercising corpo-realities, one that focuses on their psychic materiality qua excess of organic/inorganic embodiment. What I suggest is that Lingis's poetic and psychoanalytic elaboration of the existential-phenomenological register –which sustains his unique approach to the bodybuilder as a figure of femininity –clears paths for thinking-with exercise as self-overcoming in a non-evolutionary sense. Among those paths could be a deconstructive ecofeminist focus on the erotic dimensions of bodybuilding, in connection to what Jean-Luc Nancy calls 'popular thinking'. In that approach, bodybuilding would be pregnant with difference and singularity, that is, with potential for escape from capture by masculinist, capitalist, and ecofascist ideologies.

**Keywords:** Alphonso Lingis, Bodybuilder, Ecofeminism, Deconstruction, Phenomenology

## S11. Feeling Beside Affect: (Un)Translatable & Ineffable

In this stream, we invite attempts to refigure “affect” through unaccounted-for names, garments, or narrative formations, especially across cultural and linguistic contexts. With these attempts, a question begins to insist: To what extent is “affect” universal? What lies outside the frame of affect theory (or studies) in North American and European academies, yet might still disturb, inspire, or help us reimagine affect—or affect-like experiences?

This line of inquiry foregrounds the issue of translatability. Within the Chinese context, for instance, studies in the history of emotions often converge with “affect” in seeking to articulate, against the odds, modes of feeling and motility that resist habitual or institutional capture. Yet the term *qíng* (情)—with its wide range of connotations, from emotion in general to intense attachment, from private intention to the situation that invites response—eludes precise placement within the conceptual genealogy of English theory. Translatability, or rather the difficulty of translation, is not merely a linguistic problem. It inheres in cultural specificity and historically embodied structures of feeling shaped by social and political conditions.

By attending to (un)translatability, we make no claim to produce a coherent mapping or an autonomous genealogy that systematically stretches existing “affect” lexicons to other parts of the world, or to the fields and disciplines still at the periphery of our attention. Instead, we would like to lean towards the relationality of being Beside, following Eve Sedgwick’s proposal in *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2002). To be beside connotes a non-dualistic, if at times conflictual, spatial positionality that allows divergent or supplementary conceptualizations and worldings to remain in juxtaposition without coercing resonance—in mutual solicitation, in allusive query and dance.

Our stream aims to recall an ethical appeal to respect the integrity of those ineffable, irreducible, and untranslatable “affect(s)” (De Chavez, 2025). What ineffable Methods, Atmospheres, Knowledges, and Energies animate our endeavors? For non-Western individuals and their affective experiences, how do we preserve, search for, and invent new vocabularies to articulate those affects that English cannot address? And finally, how might we cultivate ways of moving together without moving in unison, resonating obliquely between our distinct tonalities?

Possible topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Non-Western & indigenous affective experiences
- Uneven forms and problems of subjectivity
- Unnamed affects and affective experiences/energies/methods
- Ineffable knowledge and ways of knowing
- Alternative vocabularies of affect
- Multilingual and monolingual approaches to feeling
- Affect in medical, healing, and ritual traditions
- Literary, cinematic, musical exemplifications of the (un)translatability of feeling
- Visual art and the ineffable
- Body, vibrations, and sensational experiences
- Emotions and feelings in diverse cosmologies
- Distinct socio-political needs that call for affect
- Non-Western affective pedagogies
- Cultural specificities in the body’s capacity to affect and be affected
- The question of mobilization in postcolonial and decolonial practices
- Politics and social activism in different geopolitical contexts

# "That Little White Pill": Knotted Identities and Ineffable Affect

**Presenters:** Kelvin Ronghan Qin

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

My body is the field of this project, and it is a *knotted* one. This paper explores my affective experience of taking PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) medication, using my own body as the field of inquiry. As a Chinese gay immigrant, I examine how the pursuit of "health", institutionalized as both societal expectation and individual obligation, carries inestimable affective weight that biomedical rationality consistently fails to accommodate. Chinese/Immigrant/Gay. The relationship between my identities and my affective experiences of medication is not linear but knotted – each identity pulling on the others, each affective charge difficult to locate within a single category. This knotted relationality also resists easy translation. The cultural taboos around sexuality I inherited, the bodily ethics embedded in how I was taught to inhabit a Chinese body (身体发肤, 受之父母), the historical stigma surrounding HIV that seeps across both Chinese and gay contexts—these feelings do not have a settled vocabulary, and I struggle to textualize them in a language and a theoretical framework that affords no place for them. The paper moves through three scenes: the clinical interrogation, the pharmaceutical leaflet, and the medicalization of desire. Together, these scenes illuminate how the medical gaze flattens my affective irrationality into numbers and equations, demanding the disassociation of affect from corporeality. To be a "good gay" in the pharmacopornographic era is to render my body legible through continuous self-surveillance, submitting to a moral economy of health that forecloses the unpredictable, chaotic, and entangled movements of my affective life. PrEP, in this sense, does not simply protect my body from a virus. Every time I swallow that little white pill, I swallow too the ineffable affective weight of my knotted identities—the moral regulation, the cultural silence, the desires I have never found words for.

**Keywords:** Affect, Autotheory, Queer, Biomedical (Ir)rationality, Medicalization, Untranslatability, Desire, HIV/AIDS, Corporeality

# Affective Hindutva: Emotion Work and the Politics of Feeling Hindu in the U.S. Diaspora

**Presenters:** Chaoyu Mao

**Affiliation:** Cornell University

Scholarship on Hindu nationalism ("Hindutva") has scrutinized its transnational reach through organizational, ideological, and funding networks. Yet insufficient attention has been paid to its affective dimensions: why certain Hindutva narratives feel compelling to Hindus in diaspora who may not embrace its politics, and how Hindutva affective economies circulate across both explicitly Hindutva and broader Hindu spaces. Attending to what I call "affective Hindutva" not only deepens understanding of Hindutva's diasporic appeal, but also sharpens affect theory's engagement with power by foregrounding affect's *political work* in constituting subjectivities and animating attachment beyond ideological identification. This paper examines the gap between affect – inchoate yet social intensity – and emotion, its (always partial) symbolic capture, as a key site of political maneuvering through "emotion work." At stake is what happens when the not-yet-articulate becomes *purposefully mis-translated*: seized and re-coded before it can become otherwise. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork with Hindu organizations and communities in the New York metropolitan area, I analyze how Hindutva actors re-route diasporic affects emerging from majority-minority disjuncture; anxieties around racialization, class mobility, and cultural citizenship; and the simultaneous inheritance of caste privilege and disavowal of casteism within multicultural regimes. I trace how these heterogeneous intensities are channeled toward majoritarian Hindutva politics through multiple affective technologies: the recoding of experiences of minoritization as "Hinduphobia" within an "economy of offense"; pre-emptive parental "inoculation" against alleged shame produced by textbook representations of Hinduism; appeals to civilizational pride casting Hinduism as timeless, indigenous truth beyond social justice critique; and an explicit organizational turn toward affective packaging in the attention economy. The paper concludes by asking what an affective analytic makes possible politically. Counter-emotion work by progressive Hindu, Dalit, and anti-caste actors, who reckon with complicity and accountability and refuse the terms of majoritarian injury, suggests that Hindutva's affective regimes are never totalizing.

**Keywords:** Political Affect, Emotion Work, Hindu Nationalism, Diaspora, Multiculturalism, Ethnography

# Affective Mediation in the Figure of Ophelia in William Shakespeare

**Presenters:** Maria Filocha

**Affiliation:** University of Gdańsk

I am particularly interested in the moment when affect not only modifies the content of communication but transforms its very ontology: from direct exchange toward forms of mediation that destabilize the boundaries between subject, world, and others. In the figure of Ophelia from "Hamlet", we observe a shift from verbal to symbolic, "botanical" communication: under the pressure of trauma, the character speaks through flowers, and her relation to nature blurs the boundaries of reality and meaning. The relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia reveals how affect destabilizes communication and transforms its ontological status. Their interactions increasingly move away from transparent dialogue toward fragmented, symbolic, and embodied forms of expression. Hamlet's speech oscillates between intimacy, irony, and cruelty, producing communicative instability that mirrors his affective disintegration. Ophelia, subjected to grief, patriarchal control, and emotional abandonment, gradually shifts from verbal discourse to a mode of expression grounded in gesture, and botanical symbolism. Her distribution of flowers becomes a form of "affective mediation," in which meaning is conveyed indirectly through symbolic associations rather than through coherent language. The theoretical framework draws on affect theory (Brian Massumi, Silvan Tomkins, Sara Ahmed), phenomenology of embodiment (Maurice Merleau-Ponty), psychoanalysis (Jacques Lacan), and the philosophy of the Other (Emmanuel Levinas). Bringing these perspectives together allows us to grasp the tension between affect as a pre-linguistic intensity and communication as a practice of symbolic ordering. I propose the concept of "affective mediation" to describe situations in which affect transforms both the channel and the code of communication, producing messages that are at once meaningful and resistant to translation. Affective mediation thus designates a mode of organizing communication in which emotional or bodily intensity precedes and shapes the articulation of meaning, shifting expression away from direct language toward symbolic, fragmentary, or other indirect forms.

**Keywords:** Affective Mediation, Ophelia, Symbols, Pre-Linguistic, Non-Verbal Communication

# As the Locality Stirs: Emotion, Affect, and the Fragile Bonds of Post-Development Guanxi

**Presenters:** Li-Yuan Shen

**Affiliation:** National Taiwan University

Drawing on fieldwork conducted in a peri-urban community currently undergoing land development in Hsinchu City, Taiwan, this paper explores the dimensions of *guanxi* (relations) and *qínggǎn* (emotion/affect) among the local Han population. On one hand, it pays close attention to the unutterable, latent, fragmented, and atmospheric dimensions of affect; on the other, it carefully dissects emotion—that which has been captured and represented through language, embedded in specific cultural contexts, and centered around the individual. Methodologically, I adopt a narrative approach from the recent anthropology of emotion (Beatty 2019), combined with an affective geography approach that contextualizes the historical layers of the field (Navaro 2012). This dual framework emphasizes that ethnography must capture the complexities and power of emotion/affect—and the possibilities or impossibilities of their subsequent translation—by delineating concrete events, actors, and unfolding relations, rather than hastily retreating into social structures, cultural constructivism, abstract theories, or the verbatim accounts of informants. I begin by outlining the network of *guanxi* within my fieldsite. These relations—comprising kinship, friendship, and political alliances—have emerged in the wake of land development, driven by a shared hope to "revitalize the old community and its locality." Following this introduction, I analyze several key events to narrate how emotion and affect operate within these post-development relations. Crucially, I examine how we might understand the specific emotion and affect of *weiqu* (委屈 feeling wronged/bearing grievances), and explore its significance for local relations. I argue that *weiqu* functions paradoxically: on one hand, it enables mutual forbearance and containment, making the continuation of relations possible; on the other hand, it always harbors the latent potential for a total rupture. Ultimately, through ethnographic research and writing, this paper demonstrates how fieldwork narratives can serve as a vital window for understanding non-Western yet profoundly concrete human experiences.

**Keywords:** Emotion, Affect, Weiqu, Narrative Ethnography, Han Chinese

# Cì Jī (刺激): Sensation, Romanticized Violence, and the Affective Economy of a 1932 Murder Case

**Presenters:** Yuhan Zhang

**Affiliation:** University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

On February 11, 1932, amid the Japanese bombardment of Shanghai, a fatal conflict between two female students at the National Hangzhou Art College drew thousands of spectators and soon eclipsed the geopolitical crisis in public. Contemporary journalists named this attraction cì jī (刺激; sensation/stimulation). Here, cì jī does not merely describe the case but marks the conceptual problem this paper addresses, situating Republican-era sensationalism within broader debates on wartime affect, media circulation, and the reconfiguration of public feeling. I argue that cì jī names a historically specific affective technology through which violence is not only represented but reorganized as romance, loyalty, and pleasure. Rather than denoting passive stimulation, cì jī collapses the distinction between bodily sensation and mediatic circulation, designating an economy in which sensation is produced, circulated, and consumed, thereby exposing a limit in prevailing affect vocabularies. Drawing on press coverage, court records, and the murderer's prison writings, I trace three linked transformations: the aestheticization of the victims's disfigured body into a "Chinese Salomé" whose death appears consecratory rather than violated; the murderer's reframing of homicide as an excess of loyalty that displaces criminality; and the public's absorption of wartime trauma into a manageable, even pleasurable, form of criminal sensation. Read together, these transformations show how cì jī converts violence into a desirable object of feeling. By foregrounding this conversion, the paper uses a Republican-era archive to provincialize universalizing accounts of affect, arguing that spectacle does not merely mediate violence but reorganizes its sensory and ethical intelligibility.

**Keywords:** Cì Jī, Sensationalism, Wartime Affect, Republican-Era China, Structure of Feeling

# Feeling Shuang 爽: Neoliberal Sensibility with Chinese Characterization and the Affective Politics of Chinese Women's Popular Drama

**Presenters:** Jiayi Wang; Jing Lu

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

This research focuses on shuang 爽 as a specific structure of feeling that has been widely articulated in contemporary Chinese women's popular culture over the past decade. Although shuang may be loosely translated as pleasure, satisfaction, release, or catharsis, none of these terms fully captures its culturally specific force. In Chinese media discourse, shuang often names a feeling of venting, achievement, and self-transformation after overcoming disadvantage and social constraint. Yet its meaning becomes more complex and nuanced when situated within China's gendered, political, and cultural conditions, where it is deeply entangled with shifting social mentalities, gender roles, and value systems under the neoliberal turn. More than a simple experience of pleasure, the discursive construction of shuang reflects an affective realignment from inferiority and victimization toward agency, competitiveness, and success. To unpack the discursive formation of shuang, this research analyzes three highly popular Chinese drama series as case studies: *Empresses in the Palace* (2012), *The Story of Minglan* (2018), and *Love's Ambition* (2025). All three dramas achieved significant popularity upon release and continue to exert cultural influence in contemporary Chinese media discourse. Often discussed as shuangju 爽剧, or "shuang dramas," these series center on heroines who struggle against class inferiority, patriarchal marriage, and gendered social constraints, while highlighting their strategies for upward mobility and self-empowerment. Taken together, these three dramas allow this research to trace how shuang as an affective formation has evolved across different political-economic conditions, from historical imaginaries of palace and household governance to contemporary fantasies of urban mobility and self-making. Through an affective-discursive framework, this research investigates how shuang is narratively constructed in each drama, how these dramas collectively delineate the affective yearnings of young Chinese women, and what they legitimize as desirable paths toward a good life.

**Keywords:** Shuang, neoliberal Sensibility, Chinese Women's Popular Drama, Affective Discursive Framework, Neoliberal Affect

# Flooded Lives, Cluttered Worlds: Making Sense Beyond Narrativity in Kim Ae-Ran and Lee Chang-Dong

**Presenters:** Chufeng Meng

**Affiliation:** Western University

As expressive technologies accrue social purchase, “narrative identity” has become much more than a theoretical penchant. It is now an everyday practice: the performative composition of life in terms of coherence, legibility, and heroic agency—disposed toward a politics of recognition where narration is paranoically exacted by the fragile need to be affirmed only in one’s own terms. Yet this excess of first-person narrativity also explodes the tensions in the neoliberal subject, as an overabundance of feeling struggles to absolve itself of its dearth in social efficacy. // The interest in “affect” is an acute will to power, a purposive rebellion against this erosion of efficacious publics. Against the overdetermination of abstract, symbolic regimes we seek refuge in the minute dynamisms of the body in its concrete relationalities—hoping to recover a breath of agency in our material capacity to register and inspire movement. The study of affect attempts to communicate, to operationalize, the ineffable, untranslatable “lexicon” of embodied experience, so that our momentary (dis)affections can be mobilized toward more enduring ends beyond bourgeois affective privatism. What is the role of narrativity in this political activation of affect? What kinds of stories are being told, from what positionality, and for what stakes? And what does the act of telling make of the affective residue from “dirt and pain” realities? // Drawing on Korean literature (Kim Ae-ran) and film (Lee Chang-dong), this presentation pits the tasteful performance of legibility against those ineffable, untranslatable fragments of lives in the making. Where the luxury of narrativity often proves unaffordable, resistance to expression is not subjective mystique but a testament to the ongoingness of struggle. In the final instance, the act of making sense communicates a pressed will to life that, hedged between competing narrativities, must find its own means of survival.

# From Sympathy to Yifen: Abyssinia and the Untranslatable Politics of Feeling in Republican China

**Presenters:** Qianwen Zhou

**Affiliation:** Independent

The 1937 controversy over the exhibition and censorship of the Soviet documentary *Abyssinia* in Shanghai offers a way to reconsider how political feeling was transformed in transnational circulation. Rather than viewing the film merely as Soviet anti-fascist propaganda, this presentation explores how its cinematic sympathy for the Ethiopian people was reinterpreted within semi-colonial Republican China. Chinese discussions of the Italo-Ethiopian War had already relied on ethical idioms of sympathy for the weak and oppressed. The Soviet film, however, recast that sympathy within an anti-fascist and anti-imperial frame. Once the film entered Chinese exhibition spaces and became the object of Italian diplomatic pressure, official censorship, and eventually violence against the Isis Cinema, the affective focus shifted. The Ethiopian people ceased to be merely distant sufferers on screen and became a mirror through which Chinese spectators recognized their own precarious position within an imperial world order. Tracing this shift from distant sympathy to public outrage highlights *yifen*(义愤) as a historically situated and only partially translatable concept of political feeling. Neither reducible to anger nor fully captured by righteous indignation, *yifen* names a morally charged response through which sympathy for another distant nation's suffering became entangled with Chinese memories of humiliation and vulnerability under imperial power. Placed beside affect rather than translated into it, *yifen* helps clarify how modern Chinese political feeling took shape through historically specific vocabularies and unequal imperial relations.

**Keywords:** Soviet Cinema, Abyssinia, Republican China, Yifen, History of Emotions, Anti-Imperialism

# More than Affect: Emotions, Ethics, and Hierarchy in the Letters of Ḥakīm Abū Al-Faṭḥ Gīlānī

**Presenters:** Nazak Birjandifar

**Affiliation:** Mount Royal University

How might we rethink “affect” when the language of feeling does not separate emotion from ethics, or intimacy from hierarchy? This paper turns to the letters of Ḥakīm Abū al-Faṭḥ Gīlānī, a Gilani émigré physician and intellectual at the Mughal court, to explore forms of affective life in the early modern Persianate world that resist easy translation into the conceptual vocabulary of contemporary affect theory. Drawing on a corpus of Persian correspondence of the late sixteenth century, the paper shows that key terms such as maḥabbat (love), wafā (loyalty), and uns (intimacy) function not simply as emotional expressions but as ethical and relational practices. These terms encode expectations of sincerity, obligation, and refinement, shaping how elite men articulated friendship, brotherhood, and service within and beyond the Mughal court. In this context, affect is not prior to language or social form; rather, it is produced through epistolary conventions such as metaphor, address, and the careful calibration of tone. Attending to the problem of translation, the paper argues that rendering these terms into English as “emotion” or “affect” flattens their conceptual richness and obscures their ethical dimensions. Instead, it treats (un)translatability as analytically productive, revealing the limits of dominant theoretical frameworks and opening space for alternative vocabularies of feeling. In dialogue with scholarship on emotional communities and Persianate epistolarity, the paper positions Gīlānī’s letters alongside—rather than within— affect theory, following Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s call for non-dualistic modes of comparison. Ultimately, this study argues that Persianate epistolary practices offer a model of affect as ethical performance: a mode of feeling in which emotional expression is inseparable from moral evaluation, social hierarchy, and political life. By foregrounding this alternative configuration, the paper contributes to broader efforts to rethink the universality of affect and to attend more carefully to culturally and historically specific forms of feeling.

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, Persianate Ethics, Epistolarity, Self-Fashioning, Masculinity

# Moving Beyond Linguistic Colonization in Research: Experimentations in Method-Making as Relation

**Presenters:** Lauren Mark; Marina Basu

**Affiliation:** SUNY New Paltz

In this paper, we unsettle formulaic relationships between researcher identities and language by addressing different relational potentials within communication itself. It is also an invitation – for readers to read differently, to become listeners and co-creators of meaning. We lead with affect and relationality, stepping outside conventional formats that demand we render our identities illegitimate. Our work is grounded in cultural and relational norms that include a pragmatics of feeling 情理 (Chen, 2010) and an approach to deep listening that eliminates individual boundaries (Krishnamurti, 1987). These norms allow us to understand existence through nascent feeling rather than claims to objectivity, and to prioritize relationality over transactional value, considering research participants in terms of felt connection, rather than their usefulness. As coauthors from different cultural backgrounds, we begin with recognition and respect for one another's ways of knowing, striving to create spaces where diverse cultural identities allow for mutual transformation, beginning with relational leaning that refuses translation into a predetermined lingua franca. We explore this unsettling through poetic inquiry, for its capacity to create fissures and fusions between language, meaning, and relationality. Poetic inquiry allows meaning to emerge as affect – welcoming silences and gaps rather than resolving them. Its refusal to legitimize, translate, or settle upon meaning enables us to center relationality in communication. This refusal resists a colonial epistemology that renders everything transparent and intelligible, erasing preferred cultural modalities of knowing and being. It is resistance against hegemonic power and a chosen orientation that leaves room for mutual navigation. We propose a modality of research that resembles the live interaction of communication itself – beyond language codes, embodied in relationship. We offer a collaborative, poetic conversation as inquiry undertaken in relational immediacy: an enfolding of the other, an unfolding of the self, making relationship its home.

**Keywords:** Method-Making, Research-Creation, Poetic Inquiry, Relationally, Linguistic Decolonization

# Not Like Affect Theory: Rey Chow' Cultural Translation and Affective Translatability

**Presenters:** Yuge Emily Li

**Affiliation:** Cardiff University

Rey Chow is recognized for her contributions to postcolonial feminism and film studies, yet rarely situated within the genealogy of Euro-American Affect theory. However, her writings on primitive passions, postcolonial languaging, and cultural translation repeatedly engage questions of affect: attachment, sentimentality, and the historical force of feeling. In *Sentimental Fabulations*, Chow theorizes *wenqing* (温情主义) – a mild, tolerant, forbearing structure of feeling – as a mode of endurance under oppressive conditions. In *Not Like a Native Speaker*, her conception of the Xenophone treats the non-native tongue as a visceral archive: what crosses languages is not merely meaning, but noise, memory, shame, and historical dispossession. These concerns link inextricably to Chow's broader theory of cultural translation. Not the faithful transfer of meaning, cultural translation is an intermedial transmutation of cultural materials across unequal global regimes of visibility. It functions as a highly ambivalent space of affective subjection, yet also serves as the condition for a culture's afterlife and sentimental endurance. Placing Chow 'beside' and in dialogue with contemporary affect theory, this paper argues that her work offers a method to reimagine affect and refigure the problem of affective translatability. If Lauren Berlant's *Cruel Optimism* captures compromised attachments, and Sara Ahmed illuminates how shame sticks to marginalized bodies, Chow's cultural translation shows how it might make legible those affective formations that English cannot fully grasp. Ultimately, I argue, Chow offers not a theory of affect's universal mobility, but a method for thinking its partial, residual, and historically uneven translatability.

**Keywords:** Rey Chow, Cultrual Translation, Sentimentality, Affective Translatability, Postcolonial Languaging

## **Qi, Fascianatura and the Cultural Specificities of Affect**

**Presenters:** Jacina Leong

**Affiliation:** RMIT University

This paper thinks with the body's capacity to affect and be affected by two corporeal traditions and cultural specificities learned in part through matrilineal inheritance. It does so by proceeding from the position of a Chinese Italian Australian artist-researcher, for whom the corporeal traditions and cultural specificities of qi meridian deficiency and fascianatura understand the body as a fluid system whose flows can be disrupted, drained, made stagnant or dry. Qi meridian deficiency, and specifically spleen meridian deficiency, produces dampness in the body, a heaviness or sluggishness of energy that can no longer circulate. Qi (meaning life force) is drained not only by overwork but by grief that finds no release, worry without resolution, stress that accumulates without being metabolised. It is restored not through rest alone but through movement of emotion, breath and energy itself. Fascianatura, a word from Sammarinese dialect in Southern Italy that has no direct translation in English, names a condition of dryness concentrated in the body and is understood as a drawing out of vital energy through external affects. It is restored through the very act of its diagnosis, a ritual passed between women across generations, through oil, water and fire. In bringing qi meridian deficiency and fascianatura together, this paper considers how they translate, or otherwise, beside Sara Ahmed's notion of affective stickiness and Astrida Neimanis' figuration of the body as watery, leaky, porous, always in exchange, asking: what is it to hold, as a body, two cultural specificities of depletion and repair, and what might that holding offer to how we think and move with affect together?

**Keywords:** Qi, Fascianatura, Cultural Specificities, Affect, Feminist Phenomenology, Stickiness, Ahmed, Neimanis

# Relational Articulation of Pain in the Chinese Translation of *Pathemata*

**Presenters:** Chenxi Ma

**Affiliation:** University of Washington

This study examines the textual and paratextual re-shaping of pain in the Chinese translation of Maggie Nelson's *Pathemata, Or, The Story of My Mouth* (2025). In this compact prose work, Nelson records her years-long struggle with undiagnosable chronic jaw and mouth pain, alongside memories of childhood orthodontic treatment and fragments of life during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the strain of childcare, marital rupture, and the death of her close friend. Dreams with uncanny realism are also woven in as an externalization of mental disturbance. The title derives from the Greek phrase "pathemata mathemata," or learning through suffering, suggesting Nelson's attempt to learn from pain during a period of both intimate and collective distress. This textual matrix of unspeakable pain, however, is reconfigured in the Chinese translation through three linked forms of reframing. First, suspended pain is partly anchored through a lack of tense marking in grammar, the modulation of affective language between stable and vivid registers, and selective cues that differentiate dream and reality. Second, pain is rendered more perceptible as illness through clinical terms and the addition of footnotes on medical jargon. Third, cover illustrations and the publisher's blurb offer a multimodal view of pain that intensifies reader engagement with the text. Rather than reading these translational and publishing strategies as making Nelson's pain transparent and thus understandable, this paper argues for a relational articulation of pain, one that holds onto the untranslatability echoing Elaine Scarry's claim that physical pain resists and destroys language, while also building a scaffold of trust through which target readers can form an attachment to the suffering of the Other without violating the author's "right to opacity" (Glissant 190). Bibliography Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. Translated by Betsy Wing, University of Michigan Press, 1997.

**Keywords:** Pain, Opacity, Relational Articulation, *Pathemata*, Chinese Translation

# Sensing the Current: Water, Femininity and the Feeling of Fate

**Presenters:** Weifan Mo

**Affiliation:** Independent

"Confucius said, 'The wise love the water, the benevolent the mountains.' I am not benevolent. I like the sea." In Park Chan-wook's *Decision to Leave* (2022), the female protagonist Seo-rae had this almost prophetic conversation in the interrogation room that echoes her finale, which is also the ending of the film: she "disappears" by the sea and becomes a lingering mystery. This paper begins with this enigmatic ending, where "disappearance" cannot be simply reduced to a romantic sacrifice or any such prototypical death. The seductive force in Seo-rae calls up more than just "love" from the male protagonist, but an instinctive obsession with a feeling of fate. Her disappearance into the water is a rebellious sealing of her experiential complexity, which elevates the film from film noir or romance to a witness of "fate." The concurrent fluidity and frailty of water coalesce into a suffusive femininity in the film, as condensed in the fragile, esoteric, and erratic temperament of Seo-rae. As a female character who arrives at her fatal end by the water, Seo-rae naturally resonates with the imagery of Ophelia. The "watery" quality of femininity thus extends beyond the formality of female identities as an embodied sensual register of fate. Unlike the overwhelming enclosure of necessity in Christianity or orthodox readings of tragedies, the sensibility of "fate" here is a profound awareness of the transience of situations. Watery fluidity actuates the grasping of sensible nuances in the environment at the tragic price of drowning in the loss of expressiveness and intelligibility. This paper thus argues that such watery femininity sustains an alternative understanding of fate that obliquely manifests a radical gesture of untranslatability; this affective reshaping of fate bypasses the reductionism of verbal signs, establishing a water-borne trans-textual resonance that tidally resists the phallogocentric violence of articulation.

# The Capture of Affect: Articulations of Spatiality in Malayalam from Twentieth Century Kerala

**Presenters:** Aparna Ros P

**Affiliation:** Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

Distinguishable from the dominant vocabulary that often declares an intense longing for the past, is a singular articulation in Malayalam where affect becomes a legible mode of spatial comprehension for male subjects. The paper introduces the term, *thanteda dukham*, a neologism that elicits translations to the tune of 'woes of one's own space/'woes due to one's own space/'woes arising from one's own space' from the words, "*thantedam*" (where *thante* means "of self" and *idam* means "space") and *dukham* (sadness). Coined by historian M. Gangadharan in a lesser-known article published in 1987, the unique cadence and historical relevance of '*thanteda dukham*' bears on notions of space and affect thereby encapsulating more/other topological knowledge(s) of dwelling than what a term like 'nostalgia' might offer. Loss and the experience of loss modulates the structure of nostalgic signification. Historically, '*thanteda dukham*' pertains to the topography of houses in the context of the housing boom during the eighties in Kerala. However, its cultural resonance could be situated only if we validate how the figure of male householder acts as the locus of all socio-political and emotional endeavours pertaining to the building of houses in Kerala. Drawing from periodicals, manuals and literature, the paper argues that *thanteda dukham* could be viewed as an affect anchoring the spatial to the materiality of human-house relations in Kerala, producing a distinct male corporeality as the one living in the in-between. The irreducibility of such unique articulations indicates that the perceived givenness and homogeneity of the dominant writings and the unity of their textualities is rather a suspension of dispersed/ ever-dispersing continuities, figures and thematic possibilities, "pulled into a plane of expressivity" as Kathleen Stewart writes (Stewart 2013), in a certain point in time and can in no measure be attributed the grandness of continuity or permanence.

**Keywords:** Spatiality, Sadness, Nostalgia, Houses, Decolonial, Region, Dwelling

# The Cruel Optimisation of Language in Post-Handover Hong Kong

**Presenters:** Alexis Lai

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

My paper explores the affective logics of aphasia caused by the standardization of English and Chinese in post-Handover Hong Kong. It offers a close study of Lau Yee-wa's 2019 novel *Satjyu* (Tongueless per the 2024 English translation), which features the intertwined demises of a pair of schoolteachers who are disenfranchised by a mandatory change to their subject's medium of instruction. I argue that the affects of aphasia circulating within this text illustrate a structure of feeling in Hong Kong that I term "cruel optimisation." My framework employs Lauren Berlant's cruel optimism and Sianne Ngai's ugly feelings as points of departure in order to trace the affective resonances between schoolteachers treading water in the stretched-out present of the neoliberal, nation-building project of "Hong Kong." Cruel optimisation reconfigures these concepts to account for the critical role of the standardized languages of English and Chinese in shaping the sense of deficiency and disempowerment underlying the affective atmosphere and social time of post-Handover Hong Kong. Ultimately, cruel optimisation structures and perpetuates an attachment to a language-based fantasy of upward mobility that neither state nor self can fulfil.

**Keywords:** Cruel Optimism, Multilingualism, Hong Kong Literature, British Empire, China

# The Symphony of Hen: Affect, Lyricism, and the Modern Chinese Condition in *Yi Yi: a One and a Two*

**Presenters:** Tang Zixin

**Affiliation:** University of Hong Kong

This paper seeks to redefine the emotion of *hen* (hate or regret) as embodied in Edward Yang's *Yi Yi: A One and a Two* (2002), situating it within the framework of the lyrical tradition and analyzing how this symphonic affect constitutes a response to the condition of Chinese modernity. In contemporary Mandarin, *hen* denotes *hèn* 恨 (hatred), while in classical Chinese, *hen* signifies *hàn* 憾—a lingering regret over what remains undone. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's theory of hate and love and the Chinese concept of Emotion Noumenon, this paper aims to reflect on the definitions of hate and love within the framework of Western affect theory by attending to the specific cultural and linguistic registers of *hen* in the Chinese context. It argues that *hen* in *Yi Yi: A One and a Two* is not a singular emotion but a synthesis of hate, regret, and unfulfilled love—what I term a symphonic affect. The film's lyricism lies precisely in how it organizes and conveys this composite affect through its visual strategies and metaphorical symbols. The lyricism of *Yi Yi: A One and a Two*, together with *hen* as a symphonic emotion, enables this film to resist the flattening and commodification of emotion in the process of Chinese modernity. In doing so, it presents an affective experience that cannot be fully absorbed by the existing vocabularies of Western affect theory. This paper thereby proposes that *hen* offers a new perspective for understanding the affective turn in Chinese modernity and provides an alternative conceptual resource for rethinking affect outside the Euro-American framework.

**Keywords:** *Hèn* 恨, Affect, Lyricism, Chinese Modernity

# Untranslatable Waters: Geopoetics, Language, and the Boundaries of Transboundary Governance

**Presenters:** Manuela Rosso - Brugnach

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia Okanagan

Hydrohumanities scholars have long argued that water crises are also crises of relation and environmental imagination (Ballestero 2019). Yet transboundary water governance continues to conceive language as an object of transferable communication rather than a creative practice through which water becomes actionable, feelable, and thought-with (Macura-Nnamdi and Sikora 2023). Water and language are mediums through which we meet the world, carry in our bodies, and figure how we enter and sustain relation (Neimanis 2017); and when institutions name and sort them, that apparent stability constitutes how both become objects of perceived international negotiation and governability. This paper argues that untranslatability names not a failure of method but a multiply situated and embodied condition of feeling and collective practice. Languages encode kinship, genealogy, guardianship, sensory attunement, and futurity (Buenafe et al. 2024), holding emplaced, more-than-human relations whose plural ontological differences are fundamental to the sustenance and survivance of all life (Yates, Harris, and Wilson 2017). Five geopoetic case studies are read through three eclipsing concepts: *transboundary waters* (expanded beyond jurisdictional borders to bodies, communities, and decisions; cf. Boelens et al. 2016), *material-semiotic hydro-relations* (water matters and meanings are inextricable; cf. Barad 2007) and *language as watershed* (shared, moving language that catches influences and drains others; cf. Magrane 2020), understood through Translingualism as porous, fluid resources that gather meanings no single body can hold (Canagarajah 2013). Read alongside Sedgwick's *beside* (2003), geopoetics emerges as a method for staying with water's ineffable crossings beside rather than against, governance lexicons that assume a single translatable body as the primary site of feeling, practice, and relation.

**Keywords:** Geopoetics, Untranslatability, Transboundary Water Governance, Translingualism, Language as Watershed, Emplaced Relational Translation, Multiple Ontologies of Water, Material-Semiotic Hydro-Relations, Hydrohumanities

## Zomia Garden

**Presenters:** Yutong Lin

**Affiliation:** Independent

In the Dongba scriptures—written in our Nakhi’s Dongba script—there is a road along which the spirits of the dead are escorted and mourned. This same path traces the ancient migration routes of the Nakhi people. And it is the path that Joseph Rock, a plant hunter and translator, walked with his Nakhi guides in the 1920s and 40s, in search of alpine specimens for Western herbaria. In *Zomia Garden*, a photography-based writing and research project, I trace the legacy of botanical exploration in this area of the Himalaya-Hengduan Mountain chain known as “Zomia”—the largest region of inhabitants historically not governed by a nation-state. I approach the history of plant hunting as a journey of translation: the development of modern botany was inseparable from the translation of indigenous plant knowledge, encompassing encounters violent and nonviolent, legible and opaque. Guided by Rock’s journeys, I follow his travels alongside those of my own ancestors—his Nakhi guides—along a road that was, at once, a route of botanical extraction and of grief. In the latter half of his career, Rock turned toward translation, dedicating himself to compiling a Nakhi-English dictionary; his writing and photography gradually bear witness to a transformation—he was slowly changed by the geography, affect, and sensibility of Zomia. By juxtaposing my own photographs and itinerary alongside Rock’s, I ask what forms of indigenous affective knowledge—embedded in plant names, mourning routes, and Dongba cosmology—resist translation into Western botanical and theoretical lexicons, yet remain present yet under-acknowledged. The counter-nationalist geography of “Zomia” has been extensively discussed in anthropology and political science, yet rarely engaged through affect, botanical humanity, or linguistic and translation studies. This project thus proposes such an engagement. For more information on this project: See an excerpt from the photobook:

<https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/articles/99475/zomia-garden.>; Listen to a podcast with Errant Journal on this project: [https://soundcloud.com/errant-podcast/zomia-garden?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/errant-podcast/zomia-garden?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

**Keywords:** Plant Knowledge, Translation, Botanical History, Indigenous Cosmology, Spatial History and Affects, Specimen and Botanical Archival.

# 痴情司 (Chiqing Si): Transgression, Excess, and Punishment of Qing (情) as a Supernatural Force in Ming-Qing Romance and Ghost Literature

**Presenters:** Yilin Zhang

**Affiliation:** University of Georgia

The term 痴情司 (*the Office of Infatuation*) appears in *The Story of the Stone*: in Chapter Five, Jia Baoyu wanders into the Land of Illusion and pauses before a row of palace halls—each archiving the fates of women undone by *qing* (情). The name surfaces briefly, yet condenses an entire cosmological logic: *Qing* is not merely emotion or love, but a supernatural and ungovernable force, powerful enough to require its own bureaucracy, archives, and the adjudicating deity in Jinghuan Xianzi (警幻仙姑), who presides over “the love-and-debt of the human world” (人间风月情债). Taking *Chiqing Si* as an emblematic figure, this paper reads the transgressions, excesses, and punishments of *qing* (情) in the enchanted cosmology of Ming-Qing romance and ghost literature. In *The Peony Pavilion*, Du Liniang dies of *qing* and is restored through it. In *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio*, the peony spirit Xiangyu, uprooted and killed, is brought back by her lover’s grief, their bond outliving species, death, and botanical form. *Qing* operates as a force that transgresses the boundaries of life and death, reality and dreams, human and nonhuman, body and spirit—a force that “arises one knows not how, and deepens without end; the living may die of it, and the dead may live again” (情不知所起，一往而深；生者可以死，死者可以生). Yet *qing*, as a supernatural and transgressive force, does not come without cost. As revealed by the institution of the Office of Infatuation, such force may incur punishment, like the karmic tears of Baoyu and Daiyu, or the death of Liniang. Moreover, *qing* does not simply transcend or oppose the sacred order; it may also be registered, adjudicated, measured, and even released within it. In this sense, *qing* is both a rebel against cosmic law and a collaborator or negotiator within it—a force that is entangled, generative, and deeply ambivalent.

**Keywords:** Qing (情), Affect and (Un)translatability, Ming-Qing Literature, Enchanted Cosmology, Transgression, The Peony Pavilion, Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio

## S12. Feeling Sick and Sickly Feelings

This stream will explore the overlaps between affect and disability studies, teasing out possibilities for mutual influence and intoxication. Experiences of disability, illness, and affect alike call attention to the bodymind's porousness. They foreground our ontological entanglements with the systems in which we're embedded (Marya & Patel 2021); how the body and world modulate, energize, and dis/able one another in turn. It's no surprise, then, that affect and disability are mutually constitutive on several levels: socially disruptive affects are often pathologized as mental illness (e.g. depression, anxiety, prolonged numbness), and disabled experiences entail a host of "bad crip feelings" (e.g. loneliness, abandonment, grief) (Smilges 2023). Panelists in this stream will enter extended conversation around how affect and disability studies intersect and challenge each other, as well as the potential risks and opportunities of blurring the distinctions in-between.

Panelists might draw from disability studies to write with debilitating affects: chronic depression, melancholia, or numbness (Cvetkovich 2012; Chen 2000; Winters 2016; Bruce 2021; Langstaff 2016), for instance, all of which have been pathologized and medicalized in various ways (Khúc 2024). What resources does disability studies offer to reframe these states through a political/relational lens (Kafer 2013), or to realize the full political potential of embodiment? Conversely, submissions might uplift affective states specific to experiences of disability, such as the grief of k/crip time (Samuels 2017), the loneliness of ableist exile (Clare 1999), and the betrayal of care abuse (Kim 2025) – but also to the unique forms of pleasure that arise from access intimacy (Mingus 2011), disability intimacy (Wong 2024), cross-animate eroticism (Chen 2012; Chen & Luciano 2015), and disability-inflected kink (Hedva 2024; rhodes 2025).

Papers in this stream are invited to take up these provocations and the questions below:

- How are our atmospheric attunements changed, disrupted, or short-circuited by the entrance of neuroqueer and divergent receptivity? How might theorists of affect account for this invisible diversity in modes-of-being?
- How can we (re)design affect studies methods for disabled, mad, and neuroqueer bodyminds? How might their lived experiences open into new ways of knowing, feeling, and theorizing the world?
- What are the risks of pathologizing undesirable affects as disability? Conversely, what possibilities are opened up?
- How should affect studies be informed by the Psychiatric Survivors Movement, along with its k/crip and mad studies offshoots (e.g. Campbell 2022; Penney 2022; Shimrat 2022)?
- What are the affective implications of reclaiming terms like "crip" (McRuer, 2006; Kafer, 2013), "krip" (Moore Jr 2000) and "madness" (Bruce 2021; Lewis et. al 2025), both in and out of academia (or K/Crip Studies)? What charge do these terms carry? What is the affective force of our etymology more broadly?
- Similar to the "queer" in queer studies, "k/crip" also functions as a verb. To k/crip a system of knowledge means to disturb its relation (or lack thereof) to illness, to reimagine the presumed binary of dis/ability, and to trouble the boundedness of what such labels even mean (Cedillo & Yergeau 2019; Smilges 2023). What would it look like to k/crip affect studies, so as to refract, scatter, and complicate the knowledges produced?

# Beyond Visibility: Affect, Queer Crip and Queer Interdependency in Juab Jon Sin Saeng Dao

**Presenters:** Saran Mahasupap

**Affiliation:** Chulalongkorn University

While contemporary Southeast Asian queer literature frequently centers on able-bodied romances, this paper examines the Thai queer novel *Juab Jon Sin Saeng Dao* (Until the Stars Fade) by Kitisak Kongka to illustrate how the intersections of disability, affect, and embodiment forge subversive socio-cultural perspectives. The narrative chronicles the profound bond between a protagonist grappling with severe visual impairment and his dedicated caregiver, depicting their intimacy and struggles set against the backdrop of the rise of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Applying Alison Kafer's (2013) concept of "crip time" alongside affect theory, this study investigates the dismantlement of dominant Thai norms regarding masculinity, linear progress, and sight. The research findings reveal the transformative dimensions within the narrative. The text embraces "crip time," disrupting capitalist chrononormativity by replacing rigid developmental pacing with a queer temporality structured around physical endurance and longing. In addition, the narrative subverts hegemonic Thai masculinity through a radical politics of care. By framing caregiving around mutual tactile vulnerability rather than patriarchal self-reliance, it constructs an alternative model of "queer interdependency" between male bodies. The novel chooses to reject ocularcentrism; in the darkness of impairment, characters cultivate a somatic "archive of feelings" driven by non-visual affects like sound and touch. In summary, this study concludes that synthesizing crip and queer frameworks reclaims the disabled body from traditional narratives of tragedy, transforming it into a sanctuary of political resistance and profound relationality in the contemporary Thai literary landscape.

**Keywords:** Crip Time, Affect Theory, Queer Crip, Thai Queer Literature

# Crafting Visible Mending with Neurodivergent Girls and Young Women: Making the Present Moment of the Research-Creation Encounter a Fractal to the Future

**Presenters:** Mindy Ptolomey; Lisa Bradley; Anna Bochorishvili

**Affiliation:** University of Leeds

This neurodivergent-led research developed visible mending as a mode of inquiry with neurodivergent girls and young women in Scotland. The aim of this British Academy funded research-creation (Loveless 2019) project was to explore neurodivergent girls and young women's priorities for the knowledge generation process itself. Despite increasing cultural awareness of neurodiversity, academic research that centres neurodivergence is still in its early stages, and the majority of research continues to pathologise neurodivergent people. Added to this, very little research has centred disabled girls and young women as knowledge makers. Our project, *Repairing the Narrative*, involved working in partnership with neurodivergent-led organisations and the making of research-creation workshops with neurodivergent girls and young women to wayfind neuro-affirming approaches to knowledge making. This paper will focus on the development and affordances of visible mending workshops. Through visible mending, damage and harm are not hidden, as exemplified in artist Celia Pym's practice (2018), instead textiles are repaired in ways that do not erase their use histories. As an approach to inquiry, visible mending crafts new relationships with the past and manifests the making of new presents and futures, for the textiles we are working with, for ourselves, and for our worlds. Conceptually, we engage with crip temporalities (Samuels and Freeman 2021), matters of care (de La Bellacasa 2017), and theories of emergence (Brown 2017) to explore the ways that that present moment of these research-creation encounters served as fractals to the future: affective spaces that fabricate alternative relations.

**Keywords:** Disability Studies, Neurodivergence, Futures-Making, Sensory Methods

# Crip/p/l/ing Fear: A Reparative Framework for Dis/abled Coalition

**Presenters:** Zoe Fuad

**Affiliation:** Independent

Faced by a deeply ableist world, disabled people are conditioned to be always on-guard against potential threats: from airborne contaminants, to housing and job discrimination, to interpersonal cruelty. Inundated by systemic hostility on a regular basis, many of us become stuck in a constant state of fight-or-flight. This hypervigilance makes it difficult to discern between real and exaggerated danger; leaving us susceptible to fearmongering by the ruling class, who prey on extant anxieties to pit us against one another. I theorize this feeling as one of crip/p/l/ing fear, in that it both stems from and reproduces crip isolation. Drawing from Ahmed (2004)'s analysis of fear, I trace out how and why this feeling emerges, as well as its political effects. Following J. Logan Smilges' (2023) imperative to "crip[] crip feelings," moreover, I interrogate how crip/p/l/ing fear deepens distrust along lines of race, class, queerness, and gender. Using the No More 24 movement ([nomore24.org](http://nomore24.org)) as my case study, I illustrate how insurance companies have leveraged crip/p/l/ing fear to justify the exploitation of immigrant home care workers by turning patients against their aides. Finally, I suggest that "crip/p/l/ing fear" can offer a framework for reparative discourse: one that empathizes with the roots of lateral harm, while refusing to justify its occurrence. Returning to the No More 24 movement, I show how paying attention to this emotion has allowed for mutual understanding; how a recognition of its existence, and the extent of its validity, enabled caretakers and patients to engage in restorative dialogue and build coalition.

**Keywords:** Crip, Cripple, Organizing

# Crip/Trans Fugitive Affects: Freeing from Cartesian Dysphoria

**Presenters:** heidi andrea restrepo rhodes

**Affiliation:** Pomona College

In this article, Hannah Baer's *Trans Girl Suicide Museum* (2019) is the point of departure for considering what she calls Cartesian dysphoria—which I elaborate on by way of both transness and disability. Alongside gender dysphoria, I consider the psychological imperatives and affective intensities of what I call “crip dysphoria” and the trappings of the “Crip Suicide Museum” to explore what the concept of crip dysphoria might do for potential solidarities between trans and crip/disabled thought and for our flight from Cartesian frameworks that attempt to keep us in their hold. Dysphoria as a defining concept ultimately delimits the conditions by which we can understand crip and trans affects, confining them to the binaries of negative/positive, mind/body, sick/cured, man/woman, etc., and situates those affects within a moral economy. This limits our sense of how fluidly expansive and relational our bodily and psychological states can be, despite a kind of perpetual mutability being a crucial component of crip and trans phenomenologies. Later in the essay, I elaborate a theory of crip/trans affects and affective ecologies, reading trans femme artist Tourmaline's film *Pollinator* (2022) for the liberatory, anti-Cartesian “bloom spaces” (Gregory and Seigworth 2010, 11) it opens us toward. In turning to what I call “crip/trans fugitive affects,” I ask, what are ways we can refuse Cartesian dysphoria altogether as the basis through which we relate to ourselves and each other?

**Keywords:** Affect, Crip, Disability, Dysphoria, Trans

# Disability and Feeling Ugly: the Hunchback's Struggle Against Desire/Ability

**Presenters:** Jestina Ricci

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

The hunchback holds a prominent place in imagery of monstrosity, queerness, and ugliness. This paper engages with the figure of the hunchback through methods of literary analysis and autotheory to contend that ugliness, monstrosity, and aberrant desire are navigated through direct confrontations with beauty and desirability. This work primarily engages with characters and authors with spinal disabilities who desire romantic and sexual connections with nondisabled people. First, I establish a cultural history of posture science and the figure of the hunchback. Then, I critically analyze *Animal's People* by Indra Sinha (2007), *Hunchback* by Saou Ichikawa (2025), and my personal diary entries from 2023 and 2024 for the use of language that could be interpreted as indicative of internalized ableism or negative self-esteem. Through these analyses, I challenge how sexual ableism manifests in negative affect surrounding embodiment and libidinal desire. My analysis engages with theoretical frameworks including Da'Shaun Harrison's (2021) concept of desire/ability, J. Logan Smilges's (2024) *Crip Negativity*, and Jose Muñoz's (1999) writing on melancholy as connected to disidentification to contend that through language such as "monstrous," "hunchback," and "ugly," the hunchback relies on the provocative to articulate their place within humanity. By embracing insecurity as political, the hunchback actively attempts to write themselves into humanity by continuously asserting their refused place in the world for love and sex.

**Keywords:** Disability, Desirability Politics, Ugliness, Affect, Hunchback, Scoliosis

# Haunting Ableism and Whiteness: Windowless Classrooms and the Slow Death of Teaching

**Presenters:** Maddie Neufeld

**Affiliation:** Barnard College

I consider the hauntings of ableism and whiteness, materializing in windowless classrooms for minoritized disabled students. The spectral presence of windowless classrooms repeatedly returned to teachers in this study. These classrooms dripped with the residue of carceral and ableist containment and inter(n)ment in the “dungeon” of the school, as one teacher participant named it. At both school sites, there were classrooms for minoritized disabled students that used to be storage closets. This echoes in the lineage of institutionalization (both medical and carceral) as it reverberates in present day practices of special education (Bogdan & Taylor 1987; Skrtic, 2004). The palimpsest of a more “restrictive” classroom stamped onto closet meant that in ways it still felt like a closet or held the hauntings of a holding space for things, now holding the special education students apart from the mainstream. As scholars (Beratan, 2006; Blanchett, 2010) have noted, a stratified system of special education perpetuates racial segregation by another name. Teachers worked the spatialized threshold of the windowless classrooms in different ways at different times; sometimes with care and attunement (e.g. placing stained glass stickers on top of fluorescent lights to create a sense of homeplace for autistic students in a holding space), sometimes with whitewashed and sentimentalized skin formed around racialized feelings of pleasure (e.g. terms of endearment for the windowless school space as “our basement”), and sometimes with disidentification with whiteness and ableism (e.g. naming the architecture of punishment in the carceral and ableist school space). Inter(n)ment in the windowless classrooms mired teachers in the slow death (Berlant, 2011) of the work, as one marked to wear out through these underground violences. Dwelling with the ghosts of the windowless classrooms invites another way, like “termites...eating the walls [of schools] and reshaping them to their needs” (Manning, 2018, p. 115).

**Keywords:** Disability Studies in Education, Hauntings, Whiteness, Ableism, Arts-Based Inquiry, Affect Studies

# The Depressed Transsexuality of a Detransitioned Butch: Keira Bell's Blogs

**Presenters:** Calandra Marie Cavallaro

**Affiliation:** University of Chicago

"There was nothing wrong with my body," detransitioner star Keira Bell explained in a 2020 interview. Bell is doing what she is known for—decrying the hormonal and surgical transition she received at Tavistock Clinic and, more broadly, youth access to medical transition more broadly. In response to this crisis, Bell proposes better mental healthcare for distressed youth and young adults, not access to transition care. For Bell, dysphoria and desires to transition are symptomatic of mental illness, and ought to be treated as such. This paper reads the digital archive of blog posts featuring or authored by Keira Bell, with publications spanning from 2020 to the present. Though Bell resolutely denounces youth transition, this paper argues that she maintains a *productively ambivalent* position in relation to race, radical feminism, depression, and detransition itself, which may make continued living possible. I follow the critique that Cameron Awkward-Rich (2017; 2022) makes of trans studies' foundational dismissal of any possible relationship between trans and disability and his formulation of a *depressed transsexual subjectivity and epistemology*. Like Awkward-Rich, I am trying to think in the space where trans-, feminism, disability, and race come together, not as allies, but as limits for each other, and potential antagonists. I consider the experience of exile that Bell alongside fellow detransitioned butch Aaron Kimberly experience in relation to the lesbian communities they were previously members of, and Bell's own anxieties and ambivalence about the ways in which radical feminists have taken up and mobilized her story. Both Awkward-Rich (2017; 2022) and Hil Malatino (2022) argue that those feelings routinely categorized as pathologically bad may contribute to or make possible certain forms of trans *knowledge* (Awkward-Rich) and *flourishing* (Malatino). In response, this paper ambivalently asks after the forms of knowledge and flourishing proposed by Bell as a detransitioned butch.

**Keywords:** Butch, Keira Bell, Detransition, Depression, Transsexuality, Trans Studies

## Towards Emo Scholarship. Who Cares?

**Presenters:** Marcelina Obarska

**Affiliation:** Warsaw University

In this paper, I would like to elaborate on the methodology I have been developing and working with, which I tentatively call *emo scholarship*. As a person with a diagnosed and pharmacologically treated mental disorder, while pursuing my PhD, I simultaneously wrote a microblog on Tumblr that I treated as a form of autoethnographic practice. There, I combined short textual pieces, pictures of myself crying in the university library, screenshots of quotations, diary entries about failure, and other materials. It emerged from my need to document all the affective “side products” of academic work in order to overcome the sense of alienation, but also to maintain my integrity as both a researcher and a writer. This form of intellectual confession can be considered more than merely autotherapeutic: it is a compatible part of scientific work. As Ann Cvetkovich claimed, “the memoir also functions as a research method because it reveals the places where feeling and lived experience collide with academic training and critique” (Cvetkovich, 2012). By the methodology of *emo scholarship*, I mean a readiness to expose affective and corporeal experiences that may easily be considered excessive or academically inadequate and therefore carry profound subversive potential. My proposal is deeply inspired by the work of female researchers who dared to reveal the material and raw realities usually suppressed by patriarchal discourse. Exposing experiences of depression (Cvetkovich), as well as lifelong personality disorders (as Djuna Hallsworth boldly stated in her contribution to *Women, Failure and Academia*), is essential not only for creating a more inclusive academic environment; it is also emancipatory and empowering. By embracing emotional outbursts, deep crises, troubling disorders, affective failures, and similar experiences, *emo scholarship* highlights the fact that academic writing is a practice of searching for language not only for theory, but also for the self.

**Keywords:** Autotheory, Autoethnography, Blogging, Theory-Making, Crying

# Vocabularies of Trans Negativity

**Presenters:** Hil Malatino

**Affiliation:** Penn State

What might we mean when we talk about negativity, negation, and the negative? What happens when these terms are preceded by the polysemic modifier 'trans'? This paper explores the wily vocabularies that comprise thinking on trans negativity, comprised of a range of concepts: detachment, disassociation, withdrawal, repression, unsaying, unthinking, and their companionate association with experiences of the ineffable. Thinking with the work of Cecilio Cooper, Eric Stanley, Tyrone Palmer, C. Libby, Cam Awkward-Rich, Sam Tenorio, and Marquis Bey, the essay urges resistance to the collapse of varying, nuanced engagements with a suite of terms that touch on negativity and sometimes pit it against a political and theoretical embrace of optimism or joy. Instead, it works towards theorizing the vocabularies of negativity that texture trans phenomenological experience, especially as it interarticulates with race, madness, disability, and debility. Arguing that trans phenomenology is in continuous contact with that which lies beyond regimes of sensibility and sense-making, it proposes a dissociative poetics of trans embodiment that moves in critical tension with ongoing institutional demands for legibility and clarity ranging from the etiological to the pronomial. What does trans solidarity and resistance look like when attuned to the forms of negativity that suffuse the trans mundane? What does a trans politics look like if and when it centers questions of exhaustion, opacity, and impasse? What does such a politics risk, and what might it gain?

**Keywords:** Dissociation, The Mundane, Negative Affect, Trans Studies, Gender

# Young, Healthy, and Malignant: an Ont(c)ology of Affective (Un)intelligibility in University Accommodations Processes

**Presenters:** Adrienne Pinsoneault

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

Subjectivities, such as young and healthy or old and sick, are affectively charged norms that organize what bodies become intelligible in university accommodations processes. These norms are produced and enforced through material-discursive-affective entanglements that shape how bodies are sensed, read, and regulated. Drawing on concepts of docile bodies and discipline (Foucault, 1977), I consider how institutional power recruits affect to discipline bodies into legible forms, normalizing particular embodiments while rendering others incoherent. Specifically, I argue that adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer patients resist normative subjectivities resulting in misfits (Garland-Thomson, 2011) in which material-discursive-affective environments are incongruous with bodyminds (Price, 2015). This misfit produces bodies as problems that require regulation. AYA cancer patients often inhabit liminal identities of both youth and sickness (Wendell, 2001), resulting in shifting regulatory practices regarding how these bodies should feel, appear, and behave. Through a “performative account” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2023) of my accommodation process as both graduate student and cancer patient, I argue that institutions’ promises of “reasonable accommodations” discipline through forms of cruel optimism (Berlant, 2002). Though offering reassurance and hope, the process was itself disabling, forcing me to repeatedly prove that I was “sick enough” to warrant support. However, misfitting also generated agentic capacity through refusing and contesting expectations of what constitutes need and reasonableness. Framing “bad crip feelings” (Smilges, 2023), such as suspicion or anger, as sites of insight, I reflect on more radical forms of collective care that exceed dominant conceptions of accommodations and contest normalized definitions of need.

**Keywords:** Accommodations, Misfit, Cruel Optimism, Crip Negativity

## S13. Finding Form/Less/Ness

In the foreword to his essay collection *Every Force Evolves a Form*, Guy Davenport attributes its titular axiom to Shakers founder Mother Ann Lee's belief that *every force finds a form*. He illustrates it with a modest Shaker innovation, the broom. Earlier brooms were little more than bundles of twigs that forced the body to stoop, but Shaker designers flattened and angled the brush and lengthened the handle so that sweeping could be done upright. The change was small and also decisive. The broom's form answered the forces at work in sweeping, that is, the motion of the arm, the resistance of the floor, swatch of surface area, and the posture of the body. Form did not decorate the task; it found a configuration adequate to its motion.

This stream might begin with a broom, but it hopes to engage a much broader sweep of forms and forces. If forces find forms, then forms are not simply given. They emerge through pressure, constraint, and experiment. They also falter and fail. Long before contemporary debates about aesthetics or politics, biologist D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson proposed that form could be understood as the visible trace of forces acting upon living matter. More recently, form offers studies of the infrastructure of collectivity we find in a city or a state (Kornbluh), and arrangements like networks or hierarchies are understood as forms organizing patterns that structure both aesthetic works and social life (Levine). Yet affective experience often becomes most visible precisely where such patterns falter, such as "genre flailing" (Berlant). In each of these examples, it is not the form that is of interest but instead how force finds a shape that holds or fails to.

This stream invites work that attends to how affect moves through these conditions. How does form emerge from under pressure? What happens when it cannot? How do we sense, describe, or compose experiences that meet or exceed the forms available to them? What kinds of forms emerge when inherited genres thin or fray? What happens when affect encounters only insufficient forms? How are new forms constituted?

This stream welcomes proposals for finding form/less/ness through which affect becomes perceptible. We are especially interested in work that attends (implicitly or explicitly) to the relation between force and form in the presentation itself.

Possible directions include (but are not limited to):

- Processes of form-finding: emergence, adjustment, iteration, recomposition
- Situations where affect settles into or reshapes existing forms
- Moments when forms become strained without collapsing
- Histories/theories that trace form finding or losing
- Occasions when affect finds only insufficient forms such as breakdown, exhaustion, impasse, attenuation, or failure
- Constraint, compression, subtraction, and sparseness as aesthetic or rhetorical strategies
- Diagrams of force as/in bodies, environments, materials, or infrastructures

# A Pedagogy of Affective Coherence

**Presenters:** Nicole Lee

**Affiliation:** NSCAD University

As I continue to work with art education graduate students, I am beginning to find form for a pedagogy of affective coherence for teaching, mentorship, and supervision. In my *Art Education: Studio Practice* course, students are invited to take up living inquiries into matters that grip their being and forces that summon their attention (Chambers, 2004). Alongside the philosophical study of a concept (or a close cluster of them), each inquirer engages in a process of artistic and textual form-finding to chisel out a conceptual container that can hold their complex histories and realities, conflicted internal landscapes, and charged (dis)inheritances. The question that guides this work is: What does it mean for one's life to feel internally coherent while remaining in relation with the world? Such a search for affective coherence is one that I have undertaken myself in my dissertation research on cultivating a relationship with the unknown (Lee, 2021), which is grounded in the autobiographical method of *currere* (Pinar, 1975/1994) and arts-based educational research methodology of *a/r/tography* (Irwin et al., 2024). Affective coherence prioritizes meaningful connections among fragments of lived experience that come together through a gravitational force (Han, 2017, 2024) rather than through externally imposed logics that align solely with dominant discourses. A pedagogy of affective coherence encourages students to live their questions and live their way into the answers (Rilke, 1929) as the inquiry process unfolds. This presentation concludes with a series of prompts for feeling one's way into and through the terrain of conceptual exploration.

**Keywords:** Pedagogy, Concept, Container, Philosophy, Writing, Artmaking, Autobiography

# Atmospheric Attention; in-Determination (After Cybernetics)

**Presenters:** Mitch Renaud

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

The turn in mid-twentieth century art away from the artist as a determinant site of subjectivity, through contingency and indeterminacy, engenders new forms of subjectivity that are indeterminant in position(s) and organization. These departures from enlightenment subjectivity are concurrent with the rise of the age (or aegis) of cybernetics, whose logic can be seen, after Tiqqun, as common root for problematics across contemporary theory through changes to observation and regulation at societal and individual levels. Cybernetics' logic of piloting and prediction accounts for the plurification of positions, instantiating parallel changes to artworks. Under each, subjectivity becomes dispersed and not subordinate to fixed or focal relations between subjects and objects. A particular attention permeates these adjacent strains, whether circumnavigating uncertainty to predict enemy aircraft or paintings as airports for lights, shadows, and particles. Diffuse attention informs (or forms) information, surrounding the indetermination of subjectivity, marking shifting relations between foreground and background. The emergent information of attention, whether cybernetics' determination of sense from signal in communication or Gilbert Simondon's sense of information as catalyst for taking form in individuation, helps to understand the affect and effect of the background as a generative force. What is cast by ambience, in the sense of information from/of attention, as figurative force for/of forms-of-life? Atmospheric attention subtends current refrains of vibe or what Anna Kornbluh calls immediacy, privileging flow and circulation rather than mediation, that I will read to theorize from/of the in-determinations of ambience. The added hyphen is a visible reminder of what is already at play but also turns back on and extends the suspension of the point of decision, amplifying differences through sustained slowness. I will focus on attention's role in in-determination (& vice-versa) to identify and creat tactics of (noticing) information, from/of vibe, to add texture to discussions of attention.

**Keywords:** Ambience, Information, Attention, Indeterminacy, Vibe

# Beginning and the Failure of Form

**Presenters:** Kurtis Lesick

**Affiliation:** Alberta University of the Arts

A beginning presents itself as a structuring gesture: it gathers and negotiates a stabilization of what follows. For a moment, its orientation seems to hold, but this perception belies its collapse. To begin is to select, frame, and position within relations co-constituted in the act itself. What emerges is neither concrete presence nor essential absence, but instability—a wavering in which recognition glosses over actuality and orientation concedes to flux. This condition marks the failure of beginning: not an inability to start, but the impossibility of closure in stable form. This instability is not only conceptual; it is encountered. Relations are dynamic; they do not hold still long enough to cohere. If form is generated through such relations, it can only register movement, never settle as a constant. What registers here is not yet meaning, but something prior: hesitation, suspension, a pull that does not resolve. Affect emerges at this threshold—not as interior feeling, but as the sensation of form as it morphs without holding. To remain with this condition is not to resolve it, but to stay with it in its movement. Attunement is one with relation; it does not force it into form. Heraclitean listening shifts attention beyond the speaker toward a gathering that cannot be secured. Hegelian *lassen* lets determination emerge without imposing it. Dylan Robinson's critique of "hungry listening" exposes a form of listening in which relation becomes content, insisting instead on a listening that does not resolve or possess what it encounters.

**Keywords:** Failure of Beginning, Instability, Form and Relation, Affect, Attunement, Heraclitean Listening, Hegelian Lassen, Hungry Listening, Ontology, Speculation

# Exaptation: Form Making Form

**Presenters:** Nathaniel A Rivers

**Affiliation:** Saint Louis University

Venerable Aristotle defines rhetoric as the ability to theorize in any given case the available means of persuasion. In concert with the perhaps more venial Sophistic articulation of *kairos* (a contested term to be sure) as an opportune moment for deciding or acting, one might rightly assume that rhetoric is primarily adaptive. That is, rhetoric functions in response to and fitted for particular circumstances. Rhetoric, or at least successful rhetoric, evolves: the strongest forms are the ones best suited to the given case, the opportune moment. But should we settle for simple adaptation? Adaptation, surely a virtuous and versatile capacity, works as a mechanism for rhetoric's formal evolution only in so far as the given situation is knowable, the moment discernible and describable. But how might we imagine rhetoric's forms for that which cannot be know, which seems particularly to be the case with respect to the climate and its uncertain futures? To this end, I work to develop the term, borrowed from evolutionary biology, *exaptation*, which describes features of an organism that come to serve some purpose wholly unrelated to the original adaptation's function. As the term's coiners write, "Simply put: all exaptations originate randomly with respect to their effects" (Gould and Vrba 12). For instance, feathers are an exaptation—an adaptation for thermal regulation—that later became available as an adaptation for flight. Taking the evolution of flight from theropod dinosaurs to birds and the exaptation of feathers to that end, I think through rhetoric wherein its forms (tropes, figures, modes) fit not an extant function but instead become circulating effects that might one day fit, click into place, and serve some unforeseen yet vital purpose. How do we not only adapt rhetoric's forms but use rhetoric to generate "enormous pools of [formal] variability" for still more, other rhetoric?

**Keywords:** Form, Rhetoric, Use, Adaptation, Exaptation

## Lists and Montage in Post-2019 Lebanon

**Presenters:** Zeina Tarraf

**Affiliation:** American University of Beirut

In late 2019, Lebanon was swept by mass mobilizations that violently ushered the country into what Lauren Berlant would call a new historical present—a disturbed and agitated time where we are compelled to apprehend the present moment as emergently historic, and where previous systems and genres of understanding falter as we must invent new forms to tackle what is happening. Such moments are always sensed and felt before they are retrospectively constructed as distinct historical moments. In the months and years that followed these initial uprisings, as the country seemed to spiral into seemingly endless collapse, listing and montage became common ways of communicating the extent and contours of the period we were living through. Whether in news articles, reflective pieces, or ahead of a talk or conference presentation, the tendency to list the series of misfortunes that had befallen the country since 2019 became endemic to any discourse on Lebanon and its contextualization. Similarly, montage—as a kind of visual list—became an especially prevalent mode of communication, used by both mainstream and independent news outlets as well as across social media. In this presentation I examine different montages and lists from this period to show how an emerging historical moment “finds its form.” Montage, I argue, not only brought images in relation to one another, but sutured together fragments of life, linking subjects, bodies, and objects together thus giving form to the relational practices that subjects became caught up in at different stages of this period. Lists, similarly, unfolded partly as a symptom of the distinct temporality and boundlessness of the post-2019 Lebanese crisis, and also as a way of making whole the different fragments and parts that the shattering of the new historical present produced.

# Marshmallow Nationalism and the Formation of a Stay-Puft Present

**Presenters:** Casey Boyle; Jenny Rice

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

"There's a particular kind of cursed vibe that's everywhere," writes art critic Ben Davis, describing a cultural atmosphere animated by what he calls "delightmares," or situations where absurdity, humor, and dread become increasingly indistinguishable. This presentation will examine how such affective pressures increasingly find form through what we call marshmallow nationalism, which is a rhetorical and aesthetic formation composed through AI slop, schizoposting, meme churn, brainrot aesthetics, and deliberately cartoonish political performance. Many far right figures, such as Elon Musk, churn out meme-driven political communication and proliferate AI-generated content that point toward forms appearing unserious yet prove durable within today's digital platform culture. Drawing on Natasha Schüll, Mark Fisher, Nick Land, and others, we argue that these formations emerge within conditions of exhaustion wherein inherited political genres no longer adequately organize collective affect. Perhaps in conversation with what Lauren Berlant describes as "genre flailing," marshmallow nationalism operates through something we might call genre spraying: the compulsive dispersal of sticky, low-resolution forms across platform publics. Like territorial markings, these forms pollute communication environments through repetition, contamination, and circulation rather than the coherence of reasonable debate. Endless meme reiteration, AI slop, and schizoposting function less as stable ideological programs than as ambient, affective residue that lingers and reshapes the atmosphere of (digital) public life. Following Davis, we find this moment to be an overinflated present whose cartoonish softness both absorbs and accelerates political and futural exhaustion that we call a Stay-Puft Present. Instead of treating these aesthetics as mere degradation or noise, we approach them as adaptive forms through which contemporary political affect holds together under the pressures of diminished futures.

**Keywords:** Slop, Delightmare, Aesthetics, Affect, Genre

# Motricity and Desire: on Running Between Form and Formlessness

**Presenters:** Lindsey Freeman

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

Today it is easy to think that our bodies could hide in plain sight as images of themselves or dissolve into data without nuance. This paper will try to counter these horrible thoughts and to show that running doesn't need to be about numb productivity, it can be a counter-rhythm to these forces, if you let it. We can replace the stark experience of accelerationism (following the sociologist Harmut Rosa) with a more expansive feeling of being in time. This doesn't mean we don't still want to go fast. It means constant tracking and data dumps don't keep us going. Even a time, our best time, isn't enough for us for long. We are in hot pursuit to not simply be measured. We want new forms—new ways of being in our bodies and in the world, and/or we want to return to some of the old ways of embodiment and ways of taking things in. Mostly we want to feel the dynamism of the world and get a sense of what we might do within it, given the particular bodies we are in and the energy we have in any moment. To do so we train, balance desire and restraint, pour our bodies into kits that flash color, dash across a space. We try to do everything with heart and style. Running is at its core a sensual practice, not a spectacular one. To run is to let your body find form, to breathe it out, and to eat up space with the repetitive motion of legs. What began as a search for a method to use running to develop a new mode of discernment resulted in a desire for forms and states of formlessness that gracefully escape all the concessions to the genre of triumphant running stories.

**Keywords:** Desire, Flow, Form, Motricity, Running

# On Dense Formations

**Presenters:** Hannah Hopkins

**Affiliation:** Georgia State University

We read density in a sentence thick with reference. Density infrastructures ordinary affects: the “stuff that seemingly intimate lives are made of” works “in the way [it picks] up density and texture” (Stewart, 2007). Density torques stability, rendering some forms intelligible (Gass, 2008) and twisting temporality through simultaneity (Kitchin, 2023). We sense density as an atmospheric thickness, an accretion, a knotted core at the center of something or somewhere (Casey, 2010; Latour & Hermant, 2006; McFarlane, 2009; Schuetze, 2021). Density is a gravitational center but also an opening, a grammar for composing and colliding forms. Often coupled with texture, density has salience for affective urban infrastructures (McFarlane, 2020; Rao, 2014; Stallone, 2026; Toldo & Genova, 2025) and architectures. As spatial coordination of pattern, density makes an architectural space “profound,” a “compression [that] illuminates each of the patterns, sheds light on its meaning; and also illuminates our lives” (Alexander 1977). Such patterns emerge in the space of a sentence but also in the lived thickness of a space (Bergson 1965). This presentation engages density as less of an internal consistency and more as a way of organizing affects that—perhaps strategically loosened from texture—can show us how to move through “richness and thickness without being crushed” (Moten & Gladman 2020). What compressions does density sustain, and to what frictions might it respond? Alongside theories of density in built environments, this presentation takes up Renee Gladman’s *Plans for Sentences* and *Prose Architectures* as diagrams of infrastructural density, offering that density forces us inside of an observation (Moten & Gladman 2020), even one that is on its face abstracted or pencil-thin. By way of density in hybrid writing-drawing forms, this presentation speculates on how density might bend attention and energies towards “illuminating” contingencies.

**Keywords:** Infrastructure, Environment, Composition

# The Form/Force of Bodies in “Falling Together”

**Presenters:** Steve Liu

**Affiliation:** UNC Chapel Hill

What kinds of forms are created through the forces of restraint and coercion, and how might forms emerge otherwise? In a reading of Franz Kafka's short story "The Problem of Our Laws," Judith Butler suggests that for the characters, without the coercive "chokehold" of the "law," the world would become absent of structure and meaning (Butler, 2025). The characters yearn for the "breathing space" that accompanies the obliteration of the state and its attendant chokehold – but at the same time, they don't want all form and governance to leave: they only want their lives to be structured differently. Following Lauren Berlant, we might say that the law's chokehold is both a form and a force that "resists being abandoned because it appears to hold together the world" (Berlant, 2019). Keeping in mind Butler's wariness of abandoning all structures, this paper attempts to envision how the form/force of the *embrace* might be reconstructed and renegotiated. This analysis requires grappling with how forms produce sites through which the aspirations of different forces can be made visible. To ground this discussion, I turn to a music video titled "Falling Together," produced by Jamie xx. In the video's visual scene, both "form" and "force" become re-articulated through the dancers negotiation of affect and structure on the dance floor. As their bodies literally fall together, the dancers spontaneously enact a "form" that places the other at the location of one's support. This sensation of being "structured" within the other's arms emerges from the force of desire and a mutual yearning for attachment. This scene highlights the generativity of being bound positively together in a tight, crowded space. I argue that the desirability of the embrace points to the existence of constraining forms/forces that actually deepen, rather than foreclose, possibilities of transformative movement.

**Keywords:** Articulation, Constraint, Legibility, Resonance, Dance Music

# The Inconvenience of Other Genres: Filmfarsi, the Iranian New Wave, and Inter-Generic Intimacy

**Presenters:** Negar Banisafar

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

Iranian New Wave films produced in the late 1960s were often framed by their creators and critics as original works deeply rooted in Iranian history. These films were positioned as counterpoints to the popular melodramas of the period, known as Filmfarsi, which New Wave filmmakers frequently cast as signs of aesthetic vulgarity and cultural decline. This opposition narrowed Filmfarsi's place within Iranian film history and pushed its affective forms further out of view. Drawing on Lauren Berlant's account of intimacy as a relational analytic, and on her language of "inconvenience," this paper proposes the concept of inter-generic intimacy: a way of understanding how Filmfarsi and the Iranian New Wave remain uncomfortably bound to one another, mutually dependent yet antagonistic, like inconvenient others who cannot be expelled from the same cinematic household. I argue that the interaction between these two filmic worlds shaped, and continues to shape, collective conceptions of Iranian identity. I read Filmfarsi as "the inconvenience of other genres": a form whose romances, eroticized star bodies, and family melodramas do not simply offer escapism, but organize an affective imagination of what a good modern life could feel like. In doing so, Filmfarsi generates an intimate public whose desires, excesses, and identifications trouble prescriptive ideals of both "proper" Iranian intimacy and "proper" cinematic form. Through archival accounts, directors' interviews, and selected filmic examples, this paper argues that New Wave cinema's critique of Filmfarsi did not simply reject popular cinema's vulgarity; it also displaced the erotic presence of women and helped authorize a narrower vision of modern Iranian subjecthood.

# Useful Delight of Harvest: Feeling in the Suihua Rural Cooperative, 1937–1941

**Presenters:** Kevin Dong

**Affiliation:** Cornell University

This paper explores how the recognition of the colonized's minor feelings was made useful to the Japanese colonial empire through an experimental rural cooperative in Manchukuo — the Suihua model. State-launched cooperatives across Manchuria were hardened into apparatuses of racial domination and economic extraction. The Suihua experiment, led by Satō Daishirō, a former Japanese leftist organizer turned cooperative cadre, attempted something different: devolving economic autonomy to small peasant units while improving their living conditions. My approach to Satō's experiment is not through Marxist political-economic critique but through what I read as a project of form-finding — highlighting Sato's effort in locating a missing link between the imperial demand for increased production and the delight of harvest among Chinese peasants. Satō's stated aim, in a 1940 essay, was "to make the appearance of the Japanese welcomed in rural Manchuria." I argue that the Suihua model is where affect became form-able: where not-yet-formed intensities were engineered into recognizable, mobilizable feelings, and through that conversion entered the reorganization of social relations at ground level. The cooperative can be read as a rich symbolic-material assemblage in which, following Levine (2015), forms collide—an encounter among feelings, agrarianism discourse, economic instruments, and techniques of governance—and through their collision that a new shape briefly held. This form held just long enough to be destroyed: in November 1941 the organizers were arrested, and the cooperative dissolved. Working through agricultural reports, fieldwork notes, and writings in the cooperative's affiliated journal, the paper traces the Suihua model from emergence through institutionalization to dissolution. Reading it this way offers a way to think about affect not as the residue or excess of colonial extraction but as one of its materials that was shaped, housed, made workable, and about the institutional forms through which empire learns to feel its subjects feeling.

**Keywords:** Affect, Form, Manchukuo, Rural Cooperatives, Colonial Governance

# When the Outline Dissolves: Fire, Blur, and Environmental Affect in *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*

**Presenters:** Jie Zhou

**Affiliation:** UC Los Angeles

This paper examines how affect emerges through environmental interference within the cinematic image, focusing on the bonfire sequence in *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (Céline Sciamma, 2019), where Héloïse is seen through flames and heat distortion. Rather than approaching affect through narrative emotion or spectatorial identification, I argue that the scene produces affect through the material instability of the image itself. Fire, heat, and air actively distort the image, destabilizing the figure's outline and interrupting the logic of visual capture established earlier in the film. In this sense, I shift attention from blur as a visual phenomenon toward blur as a material event produced through interactions among body, environment, and image. Beginning with the film's opening drawing lesson, I trace how the film initially constructs looking as a controlled practice tied to observation, clarity, and possession. This logic begins to falter in the bonfire sequence, where flames move between Marianne and Héloïse, interrupting direct vision and transforming the figure into an unstable visual surface. In relation to the stream's concern with how forces find or fail to find form, I read the bonfire scene as a moment where form becomes strained without fully collapsing. Drawing on Martine Beugnet's theorization of blur, Roland Barthes's *The Neutral*, Eugenie Brinkema's radical formalism, and Kriss Ravetto-Biagoli's work on cinematic distortion, I argue that the instability in the bonfire scene is materially produced through interactions among fire, heat, air, and the recording apparatus. The paper concludes with the moment when Héloïse's dress catches fire, tracing how environmental disturbance moves from visual instability onto the screen body itself. Through this progression, affect is understood as a material process produced within the cinematic image.

**Keywords:** Affect, Blur, Environmental Interference, More-than-Human Affect, Heat Distortion, Cinematic Image, Instability, Gaze, Fire, Céline Sciamma, *Portrait of a Lady on Fire*

## S14. Futures/Critical/Sense-Making

This stream invites contributions that approach futures-making as critical sensemaking: a situated, ongoing, and affective practice through which people engage uncertainty and actively shape emerging possibilities through acts of making. We frame futures-making not as prediction, extrapolation, or risk management (futuring), nor as a purely cognitive or linguistic exercise (futures literacy [Miller 2018]), but as a material, embodied, and participatory process. It is a form of critical sensemaking, understood here as a creative, action-oriented practice through which people collectively render ambiguous, unfolding situations meaningful, attending to complexity, friction, and the margins where dominant narratives begin to unravel (Superflux; Weick 1995; Fuller & Weizman 2021). Used in this way, futures-making unsettles what is taken for granted, making visible the forces and assumptions that sustain the status quo, while opening space to perceive how the boundaries between the probable and the possible are flexible and negotiable.

By situating futures-making within critical sensemaking, we foreground the ways that making—whether through crafting artifacts, staging interventions, enacting situations, or designing materials—is not only a method for imagining futures, but also a means of sensing, negotiating, and reconfiguring meaning in the present. This approach emphasizes engagement with indeterminacy and multiplicity, highlighting the subtle disturbances, ambiguities, and edge conditions where established structures, assumptions, and narratives can be interrogated. Futures-making as critical sensemaking thus combines imagination with material practice, participation, and reflection, creating openings for collective exploration and intervention in the social, political, and material worlds we inhabit. We are interested in contributions that explore how futures-making enables broader civic participation, redistributes agency in shaping the future, and cultivates capacities to question and unsettle what has been conditioned as immutable or inevitable. We welcome work that attends to the embodied, affective, and material dimensions of these practices, as well as their experimental, playful, or provocative potentials. Submissions might explore how futures-making generates tangible, evocative artifacts that function as sites for reflection, discussion, and negotiation; how different theoretical traditions of sensemaking explore futurity; or how critical approaches to method shift futures-making from attempts to maximise predictive reliability through the execution of research scripts, towards explorations of method's inventiveness (Lury & Wakeford 2012).

We also encourage critical reflection on the conditions of making itself: how futures-making is socially and technologically assembled, whose voices it amplifies or silences, and how it may reproduce or challenge existing relations of power. Contributions may draw from research, design, experimental, or hybrid methods, but should focus on the ways futures-making enacts critical sensemaking through material, embodied, and collective engagement.

# Edge-Riding Futures: Atmosphere, Embodiment and the Practice of Holding Uncertainty

**Presenters:** Alannah Lewis

**Affiliation:** Independent

Futures spaces are often framed as sites of imagination, strategy and anticipation. Increasingly, however, they are also spaces of affective intensity: charged by grief, exhaustion, anticipation, fragmentation, hope and the embodied pressures of living through overlapping crises. In conditions where uncertainty itself becomes atmospheric, what capacities are required not simply to analyse the future, but to stay present within it? Drawing from Human Systems Dynamics (HSD), facilitation practice and experiences of holding futures-oriented spaces across systems transformation work, this paper explores the role of the practitioner as an active participant within the atmospheres they are attempting to navigate. Rather than positioning uncertainty as a problem to resolve, I approach it as a lived, relational and energetic condition that reshapes how bodies sense, respond and make meaning collectively. Positioned through the figure of the “edge-rider,” I examine how futures practitioners hold coherence amidst intensifying conditions of emotional overwhelm, foresight fatigue and systemic instability. Here, sense-making is not only cognitive or methodological. It is visceral. Atmospheric. Embodied. Bringing affect theory into conversation with futures and systems practice, I ask what becomes possible when practitioners themselves become part of the sensing apparatus of the room. What energies circulate through spaces attempting to imagine life otherwise? And what forms of leadership emerge when coherence, rather than certainty, becomes the organising logic of authority? The future is not simply analysed. It is felt, held, moved through and made together.

# Forecasting & Future Literacies: Tarot as Tool for Strategic Foresight & Critical Sense-Making

**Presenters:** Elizabeth Nijdam

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

Humans have the remarkable capacity to imagine the future. And, perhaps in the face of the inexplicability of our own imaginations, we've historically turned to tools that we – as imaginative humans – have endowed with prophetic qualities. Even today, these ancient traditions continue, either performatively or in earnest, and contemporary diviners still read tea leaves, crystal balls, and cards to glimpse into our futures. Among these, Tarot is likely the most recognizable category of contemporary prophecy. And while Tarot began as a trick-taking card game, today it's widely used as a tool for gaining insights into our past, present, and future. Setting aside the occult associations of Tarot, the kind of prophecy and future orientation this form of divination purportedly scaffolds is not so unlike contemporary methods for future planning. In the context of policy development, for example, the innately human skill of envisioning the future based on our past and present is structured through a process called strategic foresight, which itself has become an essential approach in climate planning. Strategic foresight is a structured method for exploring plausible futures to identify potential challenges and opportunities through a framework of structured activities such as assumption testing, systems mapping, weak signal scanning, and scenario development. Like Tarot, it aims not to predict the future. Instead, it seeks to identify a variety of plausible futures to prepare for a range of possible outcomes across current personal, political, socio-economic, and ecological contexts. Organizations use strategic foresight to broaden their views of what the future might hold so that designers, policymakers, and industry and public stakeholders can be better prepared for possible outcomes. This presentation outlines my approach to prototyping a Tarot deck designed to activate participants' imagination, develop climate literacy skills, and foster future-oriented critical sensemaking using strategic foresight methods.

# How Do Bodies Future? Somatic Intelligence and Encounters of the Not/Yet

**Presenters:** MacKayla Kelsey

**Affiliation:** University of Nebraska Lincoln

Drawing on an ethnographic and arts-based study conducted within an undergraduate course on education, culture, and technology, the paper examines how students engaged futures through sonic inquiry, sensory walking, speculative mapping, analog-digital prototyping, and reflective composition. Across these practices, futures emerged not simply as ideas to be articulated but as atmospheres to be inhabited, tensions to be navigated, and sensations to be attuned toward. Students encountered futurity through movement, rhythm, texture, and relation, sensing possibilities before fully rendering them into language. Bringing affect theory into conversation with speculative pedagogy, posthuman theories of learning, and critical futures studies, the paper argues that futurity is not solely a temporal orientation but a somatic practice. Bodies do not merely imagine futures; they orient toward them, linger within them, and become affected by their presence. Futures, in this sense, are felt before they are known. The paper develops the concept of corporeal futuring to describe the affective and embodied processes through which possibilities become perceptible. Rather than positioning futures-making as a practice of prediction or foresight, corporeal futuring reframes it as an act of critical sensemaking grounded in bodily attunement. In doing so, the paper asks: what becomes possible when futures are approached not as destinations to be reached, but as sensations already moving through the present?

# Making up Space: Quilting as Affective Infrastructure for the University Otherwise

**Presenters:** Lisa Bradley; Mindy Ptolomey

**Affiliation:** University of Glasgow

Universities increasingly build spaces for interdisciplinarity before they know how interdisciplinary life will be lived (Bradley et al., 2026). New buildings, centres, and strategic initiatives promise connection, but the everyday work of collaboration depends on quieter conditions of care, translation, felt recognition, and the chance to meet outside the roles through which institutions tend to organise relations. This paper begins in the gap between designed space and lived relation. It draws on “Crafting the ARC”, a participatory quilt-making intervention developed in the Advanced Research Centre, a purpose-built research building at the University of Glasgow designed to co-locate researchers from across the disciplinary spectrum. The intervention took the form of a week-long residency that invited researchers, professional services staff, technicians, and students to contribute to the making of a shared quilt. Working with personal fabrics, thread, and conversation, participants were invited to encounter the ARC not simply as a building for interdisciplinary research, but as a temporary opening onto the university otherwise: a space in which other ways of relating, knowing, and belonging could be felt into being through making. In doing so, the quilt-making softened some of the usual hierarchies of expertise, made space for personhood as well as role, and surfaced tensions around belonging, ownership, access, and disciplinary difference. In this paper, we draw on this work to think to futures-making as a material practice of rehearsal. Through “Crafting the ARC” we show how quilt-making became a form of affective infrastructure: a temporary but consequential arrangement through which people could sense the institution differently. *Making up space*, we argue, names this fragile work of creating room inside existing structures for relations that our institutions call for, but do not yet know how to sustain.

**Keywords:** Affective Infrastructure, Material Futures-Making, Quilt-Making, Interdisciplinarity, Collaboration Across Difference, University Otherwise

# Relational Encounters, Mutual Affections, and Futures of Survival in Nomadland

**Presenters:** Kristin Swenson

**Affiliation:** Butler University

Pushed to the margins by capitalism and left to fend for themselves, the nomads in the film *Nomadland* forge community and mutual care while living in their cars, vans, and trailers, searching for safe sleeping areas, their next seasonal employment opportunity, and all that is necessary for their survival. In this analysis of *Nomadland*, I map Spinoza's three types of knowledges onto a psychoanalytic understanding of transformation. This cartography is then employed to illustrate the process of individual transformation and community "futures-making" in the film *Nomadland*. *Ethics*, for Spinoza, is premised on a relational model, as is much of psychoanalytic thought, in which our relationships are mutually constructed as we are affected by and affect one another. Spinoza's first type of knowledge is affect (I feel something, prelinguistic); the second type is rational knowledge (I know something and make sense of affects, linguistic); and the third type of knowledge, which Spinoza refers to as the intellectual love of God, is when the first two knowledges coalesce to engender a deeper comprehension, an aha moment, an intuitive and holistic sense of interconnectedness, a transformation, what psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion refers to as O. Vulnerability is a given in this process of transformation. Vulnerability derives from the Latin and refers to "wound" or "wounding." Pamela Anderson (2016) articulates vulnerability with bodily sensations when she writes, "The openness of corporeal vulnerability, which is like "a throbbing pulse" and "a trembling thing," is deeply relational; and for this reason, it can involve a becoming in the sense of enhancing life relationally," what Anderson refers to as "mutual affection." In this reading of *Nomadland*, I argue that vulnerability, mutual affection, and the intuitive third are vital to the relational encounters that foster transformative sensemaking allowing for the engendering of new futures of survival.

**Keywords:** Spinoza's Ethics, Transformation, Vulnerability, Mutual Affection, Intuitive Third

# Sentimental Studies: Queer-Feminist Politics, Epistemologies of the Palimpsest, and Radical Passivity

**Presenters:** Jelisaveta Blagojević; Irena Cvetković

**Affiliation:** FMK Belgrade

This paper introduces Sentimental Studies as a conceptual and methodological framework for thinking about political life under conditions of exhaustion, suspended futurity, and affective fragmentation. Emerging at the intersection of queer-feminist politics, affect theory, post-socialist thought, and critical philosophies of temporality, Sentimental Studies explores how collective life persists through fragile forms of attachment, endurance, and atmospheric co-existence when dominant political horizons begin to disintegrate. The concept partly emerges through engagement with Joachim Trier's *Sentimental Value* and its meditation on memory, inheritance, intimacy, and emotional residue. We approach sentimental value not as nostalgic excess or private emotional investment, but as that which remains once the measurable, reciprocal, productive, and calculable dimensions of social life have been exhausted. Sentimental value points toward forms of relationality that exceed dominant political and economic grammars. It names fragile but persistent attachments – to gestures, atmospheres, rituals, memories, and forms of co-presence – through which life continues beyond logics of exchange, utility, optimization, and visibility. Across contemporary landscapes marked by democratic exhaustion, authoritarian intensification, economic precarity, and proliferating fascistic atmospheres, subjects increasingly inhabit temporalities structured by suspension, interruption, repetition, and fatigue. Drawing on queer-feminist affect theory and philosophies of temporality, the paper develops the concepts of sentimental values and radical passivity in order to rethink political attachment beyond liberal grammars of agency, productivity, and action. Rather than understanding passivity as political failure, radical passivity is approached as an affective and temporal condition specific to exhausted historical worlds. The paper approaches the post-socialist condition as a palimpsestic temporal formation shaped by overlapping traces, unresolved histories, ideological residues, and suspended futures. Conceptually, it places queer-feminist affect theory in conversation with Maurice Blanchot, Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Lauren Berlant, Ann Cvetkovich, and José Esteban Muñoz.

**Keywords:** Queer-Feminist Politics, Affect Theory, Sentimental Studies, Radical Passivity, Palimpsest, Post-Socialism Temporality, Intimacy, Political Affect

# Transcorporeal Mourning: Practices of Re-Existence Despite and Beyond Extractivism

**Presenters:** Andrea Vela-Alarcón

**Affiliation:** Western University

Loreto, a region in the Peruvian Amazon, can be understood as a grieving geography: a space marked by overlapping forms of extractive, colonial, capitalist, and patriarchal violence that generate ongoing conditions of collective loss while foreclosing spaces for public mourning (Rodríguez Aguilera, 2022). As mourning becomes socially disavowed, extractivism benefits from an “emotional void” (Sandilands, 2010) where the human and more-than-human deaths produced by extractive economies remain ungrieved, normalizing destruction while constraining possibilities for imagining and practicing otherwise futures. In response to this context, this presentation explores transcorporeal mourning, a creative practice developed through La Escuela de las Chullachaquis, a community-engaged research-creation project in the Peruvian Amazon that sought to re-story narratives of extractivism in the region. Drawing on Alaimo’s concept of transcorporeality (2010), which understands bodies as continually constituted through their material entanglements, the presentation introduces transcorporeal mourning as a sense-fullness practice (Machado de Oliveira, 2021) for re-existence (Albán Achinte, 2016) and future-making. Through collective papermaking and speculative writing exercises, participants worked with water from the mercury-contaminated Nanay River, sawdust from illegally logged trees, and bark from a relationally harvested tree. These materials were transformed into handmade paper used to write letters speculating on what the participants’ remains might fertilize in 100 to 1,000 years. The letters were later returned to the Nanay River during a public mourning ceremony as a gesture toward re-existence beyond extractivism’s world-making. The presentation traces how mourning became a transcorporeal encounter with extractive residues and damaged territories, where matters, movements, and histories mutually transformed one another through interruptions in the rhythms of extractive productivity, inviting participants into slower relations of care, reciprocity, and attention in the present as the future. Through these embodied encounters, participants rehearsed re-existence, as the collective creation of ways of being that sustain life beyond extractive linear futurities.

**Keywords:** Transcorporeality, Mourning, Re-Existence, Research-Creation, Extractivism, Amazonia

# Weedy Energies: Invasive Plants and Ecological Futures-Making Beyond Management

**Presenters:** Estraven Lupino-Smith

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

My broader research examines how the white spatial imaginary operates through practices of prediction, management, and ecological purification that seek to stabilize settler relations to land. Restoration discourse surrounding invasive species frequently reproduces these logics, framing ecological futures as problems of control and containment. Invasive plants become signs of disorder to be managed in service of an imagined ecological stability. This paper asks what other forms of ecological futures-making emerge through material practices of making with invasive plants themselves. Drawing from practice-based research involving the harvesting, processing into fibre or dye, and weaving of English Ivy, Himalayan Blackberry, and Yellow Flag Iris, I examine how artistic engagements with so-called invasive species generate alternative forms of critical ecological sensemaking grounded in uncertainty, entanglement, and ongoing negotiation rather than mastery or resolution. This paper highlights the collaboration, experimentation, and processes of transformation through which invasive plants become participants in situated practices of futures-making. Rather than approaching futures as predicted outcomes or spatially controlled, I frame futures-making as an embodied and affective practice through which ecological relations are continuously recalibrated. In this context, weaving and dyeing function not simply as representational acts, but as material methods for sensing and inhabiting damaged landscapes otherwise. Attending to the “weedy energies” of invasive ecologies, their spread, vitality, interruption, and refusal of containment, this paper suggests that artistic making practices can unsettle the managerial logics of the white spatial imaginary while opening speculative forms of ecological relation rooted in generative tension and situated encounter.

**Keywords:** Ecological Affect, Feminist Methodologies, Embodied Methods, Research-Creation, Invasive Ecologies, More-than-Human Relations, Practice-Based Research, Material Practices

## S15. Hexegesis, Of's and On's

As questions of truth and correctness are increasingly cast aside in favor of the brute forces of action, it might behoove us to delve differently into how language and action relate by attending to casting itself. Theories of performativity still hold, but still: what changes when we treat words as a kind of summons rather than a declaration—a way of affecting knowing to effect a doing? How, that is, might we focus less on textual exegesis and its attendant questions of interpretation, and more on hexegesis: how a text glamours its circumstances to happenstance an emergence of what is idiosyncratically a materialization of affect as effect?

In this, hexegesis describes a mood swing in full swing, one textually enabled by the ways in which a text casts a spell rather than spelling things out. However, if a spell defies understanding in favor of simply enacting its point as the point, hexegesis works instead by listening for echoes, daydreams, nightmares, hallucinations, and the myriad other things that aren't there but effectively and affectively are. This stream welcomes papers that explore and experiment with writing as a matter not of explanation but of incantation. This is not a call for a panel on the occult and affect theory, so much as an encouragement for papers that emphasize their method(s) as a way to conjure effects and atmospheres that can't help but affect us in their casting. In this respect, we seek papers that take knowledge and understanding as things to be, like art, worked out—or, as Étienne Souriau put it, *instaured*.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Sound, scent, touch, and the ambiances of living;
- Daydreams, naps, nightmares and other un-lived experiences;
- Other artificials and intelligences than AI;
- Injunctions, conjunctions, and alibis of reason;
- Citation as a conjuring act and the footnote as a summoning circle;
- Viral media as contagion;
- Infrastructure as incantation;
- The technology of the self as a hexegesis;
- The weather as injunction;
- Spatial hexegesese;
- Text as sigil
- Vibration, resonance, and the infra-sonic;
- Phantom limbs, ghost signs, and urban hauntings.

## 14 Yawns: the Capacities of Boredom

**Presenters:** James Belflower

**Affiliation:** Siena University

*14 Yawns* is a research-creation project that thinks with the relational field opened by the yawn in order to recover a socially transmittable pragmatics of boredom. The project employs poetry, sound, and theory to reanimate fourteen black-and-white film stills of Nam June Paik yawning repeatedly, images that originally appeared in Michael Snow's structuralist film, *Rameau's Nephew* (1974) and later circulated in the liner notes for Aki Onda's sonic seances on his album, *Nam June Paik's Spirit Was Speaking to Me*. In this context, the yawn becomes more than a sign of fatigue, disinterest, or involuntary contagion. It becomes a minor affective technique: a bodily threshold into what Lucy Alford calls "end-stopped attention," a state of uselessness that both emerges from and resists the extractive demands of contemporary attention economies. My project approaches this pragmatics of boredom through three interrelated practices. First, I develop electromagnetically directed writing/listening séances that echo Onda's FM radio "channeling" while expanding listening into a wider field of magnetic phenomena using an electromagnetic receiver to listen to this spectrum. Second, I compose ekphrastic experimental prose and lyric poems that treat boredom as a mode of meditative endurance, objectless awareness, and affective transmission. Third, I draw on theories of inattention, film, affect, sound studies, Nam June Paik scholarship, and Korean shamanism to ask how the yawn might become a practice for summoning, sensing, and making otherwise: a low-intensity energy that interrupts extraction by transmitting a shared capacity not to attend.

**Keywords:** Yawning, Boredom, Attention Economy, Shamanism, Electromagnetic, Ekphrastic, Poetry, Sound

## Before Bias

**Presenters:** David Cecchetto; Katherine Behar

**Affiliation:** York University

This paper argues that institutions and algorithms alike are constitutively defined by their biases—fixed sets of a priori commitments that cannot be neutrally weighed or eliminated. Recognizing bias as an ineliminable feature of sociotechnical systems casts aside prevailing “debiasing” frameworks that assume bias can be surfaced and corrected, embracing instead its hexegetical orientation: bias is not a removable quality but a formative structure symbiotic with the situations in which it appears, and one that casts itself forward. Through three material figurations—bias as a signal (e.g., in electronics), bias as a cut (e.g., in textiles), a shape (e.g., in lawn bowling)—the paper demonstrates how each mode scripts specific outcomes in advance while remaining formally incompatible with the others. These incompatibilities mean that attempts to correct bias inevitably substitute one figuration for another. This slippery shape-shifting that occupies institutions’ innards catachrestically incants the incoherence of their visible forms.

**Keywords:** Bias, Algorithms, Institutions, Media Theory

# I Kneel into a Dream; Recollection, Hallucination, and Sound Memory.

**Presenters:** Edith Skeard

**Affiliation:** Independent

I am kneeling in a meadow, the low sun casts golden light which starkly contrasts the shadowed space of the surrounding woods. In the meadow, I am overwhelmed by the immersive environmental sound; I am dreaming. A bee ambles close to my ear; I am dreaming. Is this a sound? Is it a phantom or a memory? How many years have I held the sound of a particular bee made manifest in this ephemeral meadow? Is it one sound memory or the weaving of multiple bees through time? How many bees have I listened to? Is the sound heard while dreaming a memory or a hallucination? *I kneel into a dream - a devotional woven of sonic memory.* This meditation builds on the work of Francois J Bonnet in *The Order of Sounds; A Sonorous Archipelago*. It begins and ends with an open-ended question, that is, what is ontological status of sound unmade but still heard? The unmade, but yet heard could perhaps be understood as an echo or a resurfacing. Twining like a knot in the mind with no one thread to locate understanding. The knot, the convocation of sound memory gathered over time, only awaits the listening of the dreamers ear.

**Keywords:** Hypnagogic/Hypnopompic Hallucinations, The Dreamers Ear, Sound, Listening, Sonic Memory, Schizology

# In Lieu of Hospitality: Finding Chorosity in the Blue Note

**Presenters:** Zoma Wallace

**Affiliation:** Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts

It is often assumed that 'hospitality' offers the promise of unconditional welcome to the outsider, inviting the foreigner-stranger into one's home/land with benevolence. However, this connotation is tenuous at best, as the act of invitation and the regulatory nature of hosting impose hierarchical orders and borders that thrive on debt, obligation, and law. By extending Derrida's critique of the word 'hospitality,' this paper proposes a radical mode of Being(-together), in excess of hospitality, which I have termed chorosity. Chorosity updates the archaic Greek choros, meaning "a danced enclosure." These ancient circular, danced intensities expanded and contracted into porous, improvisational communitas, much like the blue note does in jazz and blues traditions. Jazz's blue note is considered an outsider (foreigner) because it proliferates outside of the traditional scalar pitches on which classical music theory is based. Blue notes are purposely morphed for expressive effect and affect, produced by sliding and bending pitches of the voice or instrument. Through transhistorical readings of a constellation of events, artworks, artifacts, and etymological traces, this paper reinterprets the intergenerational blue note as an ancient traveler, dancer, outsider, outlaw, and artist, generating an infinite chorus of possibility – an interior field of generativity informed by 'the outside' – that cannot be accounted for by 'Western' means of measure, calculation, category, or inscription. As such, the blue note, in its resonance with chorosity, remains unfettered and inclusive, even when subjected to grids of capture or enclosure; instead, thriving in transgression and difference, by occupying the liminal space(s) of multiplicity, atemporality, polyphony, and polysemy. Chorosity amplifies these collective qualities of the blue note, releasing "metamorphic force." This transformative, yet infinitesimal force carries the potential to open a restorative dimension to the violence that plagues hospitality by shifting human consciousness imperceptibly towards an ethos of unconditional, creative communion.

**Keywords:** Blue Note, Hospitality, Jazz, Metamorphosis, Chorus

# Of Cannibals and Clowns: a Reverie on Reverie

**Presenters:** Eldritch Priest

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

Jokes and stories about clowns and cannibals, yarns on coffee's history, and a feeling that runs down your spine when you think of fire and therapy. There's a rhythm to thinking, a pulse that moves these and other ideations away from being true or false to their being effective and affective. It's not poetry, but it's not *not* poetry. Really, it's like a daydream whose flights and perching are expressive of the way thinking feels when it's off the leash. At its paratactical best, writing, too, says Woolf, is like this, a rhythmical event of syntactical saltations, a dance, even, whose leaps and beats make a glimmer of sense less by referring to things than by inferring them, by the throbs of allusion and insinuation. But how to write the rhythm of a hint without, like explaining a joke, spoiling its conceit? A reverie, then, on thought's toing and froing seems the answer, for like Gaston Bachelard noted, a daydream can't be studied without doing it. As such, this paper will lead with a logic that dreams its own (non)sense in a way that gives woolgathering and its ilk their expressive due.

**Keywords:** Reverie, Rhythm, Bachelard

# Postcolonial Possessions: the Cambridge Analytica Scandal as Collective Summoning Ritual

**Presenters:** Abygail Gutierrez; Jack Grace

**Affiliation:** University of Washington

In 2016, two dictators were elected. Through hysterical digital media campaigns and mass-scale paranoia, Rodrigo Duterte was elected in the Philippines; months later, Donald J. Trump in the U.S.. In this paper, we consider these coherences through the lens of postcolonial subjectivity, arguing that the (post)colony functions as a ritual site at which something can be born: a neocolonial possession, enforced elsewhere, finds its way back. By reading texts enfolding the Cambridge Analytica (CA) scandal, we will reveal a conjuring which capitalized on the residue of coloniality (Quijano), perverting communal affects into a destructive force. We ask: What is this thing taking hold of our neighbors? Public awareness of the CA scandal centers on CA's psychographic and microtargeting tactics: the techniques they used to affect individuals. But, whistleblower Christopher Wylie reveals that CA used insight into individual psyches to produce affective collectives (Ahmed): by targeting those prone to obsessive resentment with personalized messaging, CA turned individuals into vectors for their narratives' viral spread, assembling them into "self-organizing" groups which fed "off one another's paranoia." In other words: it's less that CA sought to change individuals' ideas, more that they used individuals' capacity to affect and be affected as a substrate for summoning (something like) an egregore. Wylie caricatures the Philippines as the "ideal petri dish" for developing these techniques. Instead, this paper posits the Philippines as a sacrificial site made to produce subjects with affective affinities and relational capacities with the U.S (Padios). In a nation once "possessed" by another, an affective residue remains—a possession, ongoing. We tease out these unfolding conditions, whereby previous colony sites are rendered into grounds suitable for settler manifestations: collective practices profaned by colonizing logics and life-sustaining structures of relationality (kapwa) reanimated in service of a dying civilization (Cesaire).

**Keywords:** Resonance, Contagion, Possession, Coloniality, Ritual, Propaganda, Algorithms, Collectives, Relationality

# Riding Red Horses: from Hexegesis to Hexposure

**Presenters:** Ted Hiebert

**Affiliation:** Toronto Metropolitan University

Riding red horses: from hexegesis to hexposure In a hexegesis, explanation enchants a context, manifesting a preconceived intentionality whether firmly articulated or not. In the way some pictures can't be unseen—burned into memory and imagination. In the way one can't unbreath a breath—once taken, one can only exhale and breathe again. This is mind over matter, but not in that hokey self-disciplined way. To embrace hexegesis is instead to trick the matter of fact into manifesting differently, undermining the facts of a matter through a mannered form of mattering. My father's favourite example was the provocation: "don't think of a red horse." He relished following it with the question: "what was the first thing you imagined?" I understood the trick even if I found it boring. Still, it made me wonder whether I could block the red horse the next time I heard the suggestion. Pre-emptive not-doing: forget the substance of what not to think and simply refuse the injunction altogether. Except the boring version matters too. To suggest a negative is to plant the image of its opposite in the mind. If I truly didn't want you to think of a red horse, I would be better served by mentioning marshmallows, space dust, or the smell of grass after rain—and nobody would be the wiser. The point of the experiment, then, is not really the red horse but the dynamic of power and self-reflexivity it establishes—and the possibility for imaginary invocation. Language does not simply communicate; it enchants the imagination. This paper explores how such provocations might be understood through the concept of "hexposure," using as an example a current project I am developing that uses Kirlian photography to imprint textual incantations onto film: red horses waiting to be imagined.

**Keywords:** Incantation, Photography, Visualization, Imagination

## S16. Insurgent Residues of Extraction

Under extractive conditions, matter is recalcitrant. It volatilizes, leaches, sediments, goes recombinatorial, persists even once discarded. Extraction tries to sort resource from waste, use from remainder. But the residual is charged with movements and timescales of geological life, like how dust murmurs and settles, rust spreads, the way a chemical plume follows water through rocky fissures for decades. These insurgent residues coalesce and thicken around distributions of livability, along infrastructures of settler-colonialism and slow violence, even as they seep, waft, and breach the enclosures through which life and nonlife are organized and theorized—or, worse, sacrificed. They accumulate as tailings, breakdown products, suspended particulate, plastic gyres, but also in concepts: toxic animacies, speculative geologies, and forms of alterlife.

Residues register before they are known, encountered as an off-feeling, a stickiness or fouling, maybe some other diffuse (usually toxic) apprehension. Contact zone before concept, they often stay invisible or unmapped, refusing coherent transit from local to global, micro to macro, oozing through itineraries of indeterminacy. We read grey literature packed with technoscientific jargon, parse massive energy regulator datasets, review cumulative effects studies. There is a feeling-residue to this work, yes. But what would it mean to know the way poisoned soil does? Through a microseismic event caused by fracking or the outflow of acid rock drainage from mining or other earthworks; as fluorescent orange flagging tape or oil and gas flocculants? Residues are naturecultures and medianatures that demand a muckpile of attention. Not tidy extraction. Murky absorption. These are energetic conditions—currents, accretions, reactions, frictions, leakages—that saturate webs of relation, altering capacities to affect and be affected. To follow residues is to enter a ruptured timescape that moves fast and very slow: the reeling volatility of capitalist growth-fantasies held in aquifers and rocky bodies as a long, long monotony of damage and unrest.

This stream invites work that thinks with unruly matters of extraction: volatile, atmospheric, geological, chemical, and compositional forces that move through bio- and geontological registers and orders while fighting back, recomposing, upending damage-centered narratives, and creating new forms of non/life. We ask what attunements and ethics become possible when matter resists extractive capture—materially, compositionally, and in habits of thought:

- Extractive and toxic animacies, racialized or deviant matter, and queer inhumanisms (Chen 2012 Luciano & Chen 2019, Tompkins 2024)
- Economies of abandonment, sacrifice zones, and chemical colonialisms (Povinelli 2011, Nixon 2011, Gómez-Barris 2017, Liboiron 2021)
- The geontological, speculative geology, and geological feelings as forms of insurgence (Povinelli 2016, Luciano 2024, Raffles 2020, Yusoff 2024)
- Alterlife, speculative chemistry, and residues of affect in STS (Murphy 2017)
- Plastic matter, rusting matter, or compost as non-extractive, residual modes of theory-making (Davis 2022, Varga 2026, Arthur & Jentink 2018)
- Life at extremes, deep biospheres, subterranean non/life (eg. Kallmeyer & Wagner 2014)
- Confusions of non/life (eg. plastic-eating fungi or microbes)
- Compositional, speculative, and critical data studies methods for residues (eg. Dumit “Substance as Method” 2021)
- Cumulative regional effects studies and/as temporalities of insurgence
- Indigenous law and jurisdiction, “animisms,” situated knowledges of contamination and more-than-human relation (TallBear 2017, Todd 2017)

# Affective Infrastructure and Ideology Critique: a Psychoanalytic Political Ecology of the Trans Mountain Expansion Project

**Presenters:** Isaac Thornley

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto Scarborough

This paper develops a psychoanalytic account of "affective infrastructure" to analyze the ideological dimensions of fossil fuel pipeline politics in Canada. Building on and extending Kai Bosworth's theorization of affective infrastructure – which elaborates the dialectical relationship between the affects generated by concrete infrastructure systems and the affective dimensions of political organization – this paper argues that a libidinal-economic account of infrastructure politics is necessary to explain the passionate intensity with which pipeline conflicts are charged. Drawing on Lacanian concepts of enjoyment, drive, and the Real, I introduce the concept of the "extractivist rift" to name the non-relation between human communities and their ecological contexts that retroactively haunts the entire history of the socio-ecological metabolism, endowing contemporary infrastructure conflicts with their specific affective character. In the context of an unfolding climate crisis demanding massive infrastructural transformation, pipelines stand at the internal limit of articulating alternative socio-ecological metabolisms: they embody "frustrated possibilities," foreclosing the otherwise while energizing the politics that surround them. Drawing on the case of the Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) in Canada – including its entanglement with Indigenous jurisdiction, cumulative ecological effects, and the non-human relations enrolled in environmental assessment processes – I argue that psychoanalytic ideology critique illuminates how extractivist fantasies secure social license while concealing socio-ecological antagonism. The paper concludes by sketching a political horizon consonant with this framework: not a promise of deliverance from ecological alienation, but a politics of moving through the conflictual space of extractivism toward alternative metabolisms.

**Keywords:** Affective Infrastructure, Extractivism, Psychoanalytic Political Ecology, Ideology Critique, Pipeline Politics, Indigenous Jurisdiction, Socio-Ecological Metabolism

# By-Places: Improvising (In)organic Sociality Amidst Urban Industry

**Presenters:** Morgan Legal; Sybil Willoughby

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

Amidst the high-rises and beautified public spaces of Metro Vancouver lies the Fraser River, the city's industrial backbone. On its banks sit sawmills, concrete foundries and container yards, all manner of extractive industry. Its turbulent, muddy waters intermixing with sewage effluent and shadowed by towering mounds of bright yellow sulfur, carrying away stray logs, loosed from mile long lumber rafts. Facing away from the new housing developments, to the back, out of sight. Here it is often assumed that many work but few things, if any, live. In these marginal spaces, rust, fuel, cast off machinery, garbage, invasive species, and displaced humans and animals improvise life together. We call the sites of this improvisation by-places, termed for their constitutive adjacencies, what lies beneath, beside, behind, by. By-places allow us to think insurgent residues through their material conviviality, their undercommon practice (Moten & Harney, 2013) – the strange alliances and chance meetings where they gather with other fugitives and something new begins to grow. Encountering insurgent residues in, as, and beside by-places attunes the passerby to the affective pull of possible worlds in the making. We approach this attention to the in-the-making through writing practices, scenic and compositional (Stewart, 2007), which resist representation. Opting instead to nurture and carry forward these otherworldly affects, such that they may be felt again elsewhere, otherwise. In thinking with by-places, we turn from tendencies to regulate, purify and single out, toward speculative ways of knowing that begin in the experimentation and play with this anarchic sociality, this otherworldly potential – learning to assemble together, feeling, haptically, with and beside insurgent residues.

**Keywords:** Materiality, Worlding, Process Philosophy, Place, Undercommons

# Creation in Excess of the Neoliberal Knowledge Machine

**Presenters:** Claire Fitch

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

The neoliberal university extracts. It mines its knowledge-producing subjects, taking what coheres into argument, citation, publication, and discarding the rest. After years of doctoral research, I'm left with a bulk of waste: finger-worn notebooks, articles half-drafted and abandoned, unsorted interview transcripts, stray facts, inconvenient data, weak theories, and half-formed hunches that got crowded out as the project hardened into its most solid arguments—all the sticky devalued precipitates of knowledge production. These are the dregs left over from years of living and thinking inside a structure that obliges its subjects to make harsh choices about what matters in services of CV-lines, prestige, and tenure portfolios. Drawing on residual materialism's (Boudia et al. 2021) insistence that we attend to what remains, I discuss an artistic experiment in which the matter left behind from ethnographic fieldwork is treated not as future publication but as hazardous precipitate. Appropriating industrial and chemical processes for removing, neutralizing, and decontaminating environmental residues (using heat, pressure, bleach, burial, sanding, UV exposure, the right soap), I document methods of dealing with the by-products of a finished process. I write alongside this experiment, interrogating what occurs in attempts to purify the composite residuum of the neoliberal university's practices, narratives and ideological toxicities, of the analytic and imaginative purchase of its persistent structurations of self, labor, and creation. What attunements and relations become possible when we take the sociomaterial properties of our research leftovers seriously—not as potentia for more production, but as residues with their own unruly energies? What does it mean to sit with the weight of things not done, to refuse the pressurized temporality of completion, and to make something that is compelled by neither the project nor the career—but by the stuck, stale, accumulating matter of a concluded process still pressing on a self?

## Dust Doesn't Think of Us—A Moving Essay

**Presenters:** María Fernandez Pello

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

"It is the duty of a spine to destroy the universe; or, a spine is the universe's method of acknowledging this duty to self-destruct" writes Thomas Moynihan in *Spinal Catastrophism* (2021). This presentation takes Moynihan's radical understanding of the human spine as a form of geotrauma to reflect on the fluidity of categories between life and non-life, the biological and the geological, the animated and the inert. Using what I'm calling a "moving essay", i.e., an essay that moves and uses movement to articulate a never-stable argument, the presentation will show footage collected by two researchers while conducting their fieldwork in seemingly opposite field sites – a cemetery in the Gobi Desert, and a series of specialized collections at The University of Texas at Austin. Bringing together the two sites through juxtapositions of words, sounds, and images, the presentation takes Moynihan's proposition that the spine is a traumatic mineral formation as an opportunity to reflect on the fluidity and proximity between thought and the elemental world. Ultimately, by exploring different forms of human fascination with the inert – from geomancy to mineral collections, burial sites, and archeological artifacts – the presentation proposes to understand Moynihan's catastrophism as a consequence not of the spine but of the "biontologies" that dominate Western thought (Povinelli, 2016) and that assume the superiority of biological thinking life over the thoughtless existence of the elemental world.

**Keywords:** Spine, Geological, Biontology, Desert, Elemental

# Gasping: the Intersectionality of Air Pollution

**Presenters:** Anna Hickey-Moody

**Affiliation:** RMIT University

Air is a site of entanglement between the body, environment and economies. In a world structured by environmental crisis, atmosphere is overlooked, unless rendered visible through catastrophe: wildfires, air quality alerts, global pandemics. The idea that clean air is a universal right ignores the profound inequities that shape atmospheric quality across the globe. Uneven geographies of air pollution illustrate the fact that climate change is the product of particular forms of fiction about carbon upon which capitalism relies. These fictions are enmeshed with specific pleasures, sutured to ideas of class, gender, ability and race. An intersectional analysis of the pleasures that create climate change shows us that affects are key to why global warming is occurring, but so too are certain ways of seeing the world: enlightenment methods for understanding carbon, “a royal science” of uncritical engagements with what carbon is made to do in popular culture. Outside official discourses, we exhale carbon, we are partly composed of carbon, multiple economies of carbon cultures connect people, places. Understanding carbon is a question of affect: of feelings and social movements. This paper explores intersectional experiences of atmosphere in sites of climate crises created through extractivist economies. I will examine the stories of ex power station workers in Australia, who are kept alive by oxygen paid for by the power plant, women whose fertility has been impacted by bushfires (Roberts, Rasmussen et al 2023), street vendors, construction workers and waste pickers in Delhi who struggle to breathe every day. Across these very different lives and places the sad affects (Cvetkovich 2012) of air pollution are an insurgent residue of extraction that seeps into the pores, the lungs, and limits our capacity. Works cited Cvetkovich, A. 2012 *Depression: A Public Feeling*. Duke. Roberts, C. et al. (2023) *Reproduction, Kin & Climate Crisis*, Policy.

**Keywords:** Intersectionality, Petromasculinity, Carbon Cultures

# Imperial Feelings and the Affective Economies of Chemical Division

**Presenters:** Sajdeep Soomal

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

Residues only exist in the aftermath of division. Substances must be broken down and split apart along their molecular fault lines before extractive residues can materially and ontologically come into being. But what feelings encourage us to fracture matter with chemical technologies in the first place? This paper investigates the affective economies of analytical chemistry, the discipline which underwrote the acceleration of extractive industrial capitalism in the 19th century. By doing so, it takes the question of residues and extraction in a new direction, interrogating the imperial feelings of surveillance and manipulation that Victorian chemists promulgated as they harnessed fire and acid to divide matter into elemental form—proliferating residues in the process. I focus on the writings of the leading Victorian chemist George Wilson, who served Regius Professor of Chemical Technology at Edinburgh University and Curator of the Industrial Museum of Scotland during the 1850s. Wilson not only framed chemical division as a Baconian conquest over nature, but articulated the foundational operations of analytical chemistry in the language and affective register of imperial surveillance and warfare. Building on the efforts of Carolyn Merchant (1980) and Mel Chen (2012), I show how Wilson imagined the chemist as an Inquisitor for the British empire, one whose surveilling gaze and manipulating hand was meant to marshal Orientalized "chemical forces" which he boldly described, for example, as "supple Eastern jugglers, with swarthy brows, and lustrous, unfathomable eyes." By governing chemical forces as though they were subject races, Wilson rationalized his analytical approach to substance through appeals to the Victorian common sense feelings of imperial surveillance and control. Reading Wilson's chemistry through the lens of affect theory and empire studies, this paper illuminates how imperial feelings structured the techno-epistemic apparatus of Victorian analytical chemistry, accelerating waste production.

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, Histories of Science and Empire, Analytical Chemistry, Chemical Studies, Racialized Matter, Orientalism

# Insurgent Residues: Situating an Encyclopedia of Extractivist Petrochemical Material Afterlives

**Presenters:** Sophia Jaworski

**Affiliation:** Capilano University

This paper introduces *Insurgent Residues*, an experimental encyclopedia project co-led with Mathew Arthur that follows late-capitalist mining, fracking and forestry industries in concert, tracing the emergent complexity of settler colonial extractivist petrochemical material afterlives. Instead of treating cumulative regional impacts as a problem of insufficient data, we ask how insurgent residues exceed the epistemic affordances of “permission to pollute” systems, and thus require other creative, interdisciplinary, and multimodal forms of figural and relational articulation. Settler colonial Canadian corporate interests in Indigenous dispossession and industrial profit have influenced pollution limits, to the extent that they are now categorically insufficient to address the transformation of matter that occurs through the infrastructural seepage of extractivist industrial emissions. Drawing on feminist STS, process philosophy, and speculative chemistry, this paper explores several examples of insurgent residues as “bio-geo-chemo-technosphere,” an affective compositional field where industrial residues move, react, persist, and recombine. What might it mean to register infrastructural seepages not as waste or damage, but as forms of multivalent toxicant materialities in motion: reactive, relationally entangled, and processural? In part inspired by postdoctoral work with the Infrastructure Beyond Extractivism project, *Insurgent Residues* attends to how infrastructural seepages from multiple extractivist industries' concomitantly converge and accumulate across lands, waters, airs, and biospheres, extending an argument I make in *The Mining Industry Is a Chemical Industry*, that mining must be understood not only as mineral extraction, but as “chemical infrastructure” (Murphy 2013) composed through tailings, flotation reagents, paste backfill, acid rock drainage, and atmospheric emissions. Taking seriously what Vincanne Adams might call a “swirl” of long-term insurgencies, some of which, like acid rock drainage, may last thousands of years, *Insurgent Residues* pursues data justice by reimagining the politics of evidence of extractivist afterlives as myriad collective: reactive and residual biochemical proximities that remain unthought within settler-colonial knowledge production.

**Keywords:** Extractivism, Settler Colonialism, Feminist STS, Infrastructure, Materiality, Petrochemicals, Experimental Methods

# Model Life and the Entangled Residues of Disparate Extractive Projects in Far West Texas.

**Presenters:** Craig Campbell

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

Silver begets arsenic. Arsenic begets preservation. Preservation begets death. Death is remade into lifetimes. This paper follows four residues through the Chihuahuan desert of Far West Texas: silver mining, arsenic, Desert Bighorn Sheep, and taxidermy. It traces the entangled material and ideological afterlives of extraction across a landscape where geography narrows like a forcing pen toward the El Paso-Juárez border — at the end of Texas, between New Mexico and old Mexico. At the center of this story is Burch Carson, taxidermist and sheep inspector, who was hired by the state of Texas on two occasions when it quietly lifted its own moratorium on hunting endangered bighorn sheep — once to supply museum specimens, and once to furnish a "family group" for the Texas Centennial Celebrations of 1936. Drawing on Mel Chen's toxic animacies and Michelle Murphy's concept of insurgent residues, this paper attends to the slow violence sedimented in arsenic-treated skins, in the speculative necromancy of taxidermy, and in the heteronormative grammar of natural history display. The ram, the ewe, the lamb — mounted together as an ideal family unit. I imagine a project where taxidermists mount a bachelor group of rams tapping each other's testicles and penetrating each other in homosexual ovine passion as they do for a good part of the year. Matter is indeed recalcitrant. Carson's sheep were eventually discarded by museum curators worried about arsenic exposure. The animals entered the institution one way and left another. Following Giovanni Aloi, this paper proposes a speculative museum of queer taxidermy as a method for thinking otherwise about what gets preserved, and for whom.

# Molecular Dream Figures

**Presenters:** James Reath

**Affiliation:** University of Exeter

"Water is H<sub>2</sub>O, hydrogen two parts, oxygen one," DH Lawrence writes in 1929, before adding promiscuously, "but there is also a third thing, that makes it water/and nobody knows what it is." Like when Alfred North Whitehead confronts the "all-embracing relations" that bind "the perceived redness and warmth of the fire" with "the agitated molecules of carbon and oxygen", Lawrence helps us to experience "water" anew as "a third thing" that molecules help make. As science and technology excavate the molecular-world's bouquet of agency, however, life on earth is recast within an increasingly absurd *theatre of molecular deliria*. After the near-simultaneous post-1945 maturation of industrial chemistry, molecular biology, pharmacology, and biotechnology, "water" stops being "hydrogen two parts, oxygen one". It becomes, as Lucy Ellmann suggests, an intoxicated and indeterminate residual confusion of magnesium, arsenic, PCBs, and plutonium isotopes too. Within this multiplicity, Lawrence's "third thing" is overwhelmed by informatic residues bubbling up from said thing's chthonic molecular depths. "Molecular Dream Figures" zooms in on the different ways artists respond to the "molecular invasion" (Kurtz) animating our "chemical regimes of living" (Murphy). Moving from the mid-century molecular dream-forms of Disney-Monsanto's rollercoaster *Adventure Thru Inner Space* (1967-1985) through to the molecular deliria of Dodie Bellamy's "When the Sick Rule the World" (2015), I foreground the increasingly aberrant movements of "residual materialism" (Boudia) disfiguring techno-scientific "molecular aesthetics" (Wiebel). Reconfiguring the post-modern *molecularwelt* as a non-sovereign "particle zoo" (Bök) of "anexact creatures" (Bennett)—of fuzzy, grey, and viscous form-things that swerve, shimmer, doodle, and err—I attend to an epochal shift in post45 narratives wherein an increasingly delirious *molecular-system* displaces the classical realist novel's "character-system" (Woloch). To conclude, I argue this residual disfigurement engineers the possibility of "molecular revolution" that "bring[s] into being other worlds beyond those of purely abstract information" (Guattari) able to rejuvenate humanity.

**Keywords:** Molecular Aesthetics, Residual Materialism, Toxicity, Process-Oriented Philosophy, Molecular Revolution

## Super Residues

**Presenters:** Mathew Arthur

**Affiliation:** Capilano University

Described as volumetric, textural, sheer, skin-like, minimalist, an aura—Iso E Super hangs at the edge of perception working like MSG or a team player that alchemizes other notes in a fragrance. This near-scentless lab-synthesized molecule saturates the smell industry, from designer perfumes and car air fresheners to dryer sheets and scented garbage bags. As an object of regulatory toxicology, Iso E isn't so bad. The thousands of metric tonnes that end up in watersheds annually aren't bioaccumulative. At worst a green algae or shellfish gets a rash. At the same time, Iso E relies on a deadly cast of supporting characters: petrochemical feedstocks like acetaldehyde and butanone, forestry-derived terpenes, metals and acids—endless residual materialisms (Boudia et al. 2021) that chain chemicals and processes like drilling, fracking, mining, and smelting. This paper writes with Iso E as a “super residue,” extractive matters that aren't directly toxic or lasting but rely on other more backgrounded chemical afterlives and a sprawling material-affective apparatus. I'm interested in how these intensifying residues occlude their intermediaries, lend to perceptual habits, and work through feeling. Iso E is bipolar. Some people get bleach or xerox toner, others airy florals and cedarwood. Either way, it consolidates an entire world of good-life affect—think status, luxury, hygiene—and makes extraction wearable. Its isomeric composition short-circuits perception: nine scentless molecules overload olfactory receptors and one gives off a minor smell that bursts in and out on repeat. Unlike deviant matters (Tomkins 2024) that surface the microbiopolitics of misbehaving matter, super residues are more diffuse and vibey atmospherics of extraction.

**Keywords:** Extraction, Residual Materialism, Deviant Matter, Perfumery, Olfactory Perception

# The Holes We (Must) Fill

**Presenters:** Bretton Varga

**Affiliation:** California State University Chico

Life is an accumulation of extractions. A gathering of undulating swerves and corrugated slippages that become produced through the encounter by way of removal. Extractions are never not messy, unruly, or feral and invariably leave something behind—residues that matterphorically (Gandorfer 2021) mark bodies as being-of relation (Manning 2025). Despite common uses of the term extraction to thinkfeel across land-based contexts, a conceptual return to its entomology reminds us that extractions also emplot and narrativize how “removal of blood, foreign matter from the body” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary n.d., para. 5) contains (embodied) traces of potential for worlding otherwise. And just as these removals and rippages occur, absences are formed and (must) become filled—what is gone is oftentimes supplanted with variant forces and relational energies. Drawing from a larger project that pursues the imbricated tendencies and alliances of embodied extraction (grief) and material modes of loss (decay), this paper attempts to give texture to how entanglements of rust form catalysts and conduits for thinkingfeeling otherwise about the methods, atmospheres, knowledges, and energies that become unleashed in the wake of extraction. By tending to the colors, lines, and textures of hemorrhaging bodies, (re)new(ed) pathways and crawlspaces take shape, unlocking avenues for contemplating the animacies of matter in relation to deeper, more intimate, and embodied understandings of more-than-human worlds, our relationships to them, and each other. Specifically, this venture reports on a journey through the various worlds (de)constructed around the trajectories and proliferations of rust—outcomes that respond to the question: What can a grieving body do?

**Keywords:** Rust, Grief, Photography, Genre

# Unforgetting the Rubber Genocide: Re-Storying Absence in the Peruvian Amazon

**Presenters:** Andrea Vela-Alarcón

**Affiliation:** Western University

Extractivism secures itself through practices of forgetting that render its violences absent, exceptional, or disconnected from the present. This is an active practice of colonial dispossession and extractive violence that shapes the socialities of what can be known, felt, and spoken in Iquitos, a city in the Peruvian Amazon with long histories of extraction. Events like the rubber genocide or ongoing oil contamination are absent from public memory through institutional and affective forms of disavowal. These absences continue to organize extractive settler futures by obscuring ongoing relations of displacement and responsibility. In response to the active forgetting initiatives of extractivism, this presentation explores a creative practice titled Unforgetting Colonial Legacies of the Rubber Genocide, developed through La Escuela de las Chullachaquis, a community-engaged research-creation project that sought to re-story narratives of extraction in Iquitos. Drawing on Christina Sharpe's (2016) redaction practice, the exercise invited the school's participants to re-story historical testimonies and colonial archives using achiote (a medicinal plant) through annotation, redaction, and drawing. This was an act of unforgetting (Shotwell, 2016), a form of cultivating ways of attending and questioning that lingered with the illegibility and affect of the manufactured absence of the rubber genocide. In the unforgetting, participants unsettled traces produced by extractive histories, confronted the relations and complicities that sustain them, and absence became a site of speculative knowledge production for stories of re-existence despite extractivism's violence. The presentation concludes by arguing that creative interventions cultivate attentiveness to absence and its unfinished relations. All while fostering capacities of response-abilities and opening possibilities for imagining and nurturing ways of living otherwise within damaged extractive worlds.

**Keywords:** Unforgetting, Extractivism, Research-Creation, Amazonia, Discomfort

## S17. Made in/Visible: Threading Technologies and Affective Meaning MAKEing

For this stream, we use the word “technology” as an all-encompassing term for supply chains, computational methods, artificial intelligence, wearables, surveillance infrastructure, digital methods, and more. How do we define “technologies” today, and how does it shape our interrogation of affect? We invite discussions of technological infrastructure—the black-box invisibilities of its production, the procedural behaviors of its material units, and the ongoing aftermaths of socio-technical actualizations. We encourage playful and fateful reckonings with the embodied nature of tangible technologies through a human/post-human lens. How/when/where do we grow capacious (or turn obstinate) when enmeshed with the forces of affective production, movement, and connection in the depths of the digital, technological, and computational?

What happens to, say, matters of method and academic methodologies, when a machine, created and credentialed by humans with the authority, audacity, and quasi-autonomy to contribute to disciplinary knowledge structures (see: the earliest anxieties of cybernetics in the mid-20th century), also starts contributing beyond the flows of human accessibility? We are thinking here, for example, of AI prompts that do not require language coherence, academic sophistication, or a well-curated reading list, yet have the power to disrupt, disorganize, and reorient the methods that help to determine the form and content of various systems of knowledge. How do we devise methods amidst the folding and unfolding in the ocean of AI prompts, constantly directing and redirecting the flows of the knowing and unknowing? In this atmosphere of the constant meaning-making process, territorializing and deterritorializing the intellectual legacy of knowledge making, prompts are the methods reshaping distinct disciplinary orientations. Even beyond prompts, what other elements of intellectual decay have come into being, and how do we imagine these atmospheres?

- What does *poesis*—the making of technology and what we do about it—look like in the present moment? What ethical, ontological, and epistemological approaches might guide how we interact and intra-act with technologies?
- How can we imagine otherwise through decolonial and indigenous knowledge systems?
- How do we feel affect in concepts such as hallucination, consciousness, and embodiment in relation to Artificial Intelligence (AI)?
- What would an affective interpretation of a technological knowledge system look like?
- What philosophical implications emerge as we reflect on thought in relation to these technological affective processes?

# Absolute Knowledge, Sloppy Affect

**Presenters:** Rowan Melling

**Affiliation:** Concordia University

Affective relations to AI stick to extremes. On one side, fantasies of epistemological transcendence and human obsolescence; on the other, brain rot in the slop deluge, pumping out hallucinations for a click-farm economy. This paper interprets these contradictory affects as co-constitutive elements of the deeper techno-logic of datafication. By analyzing foundational texts in Silicon Valley's theorization of datafication and AI, as well as examples of slop, the paper shows how the epistemology underlying large language models produces this affective contradiction. Generative AI was made possible by the project of datafication that has unfolded over the past two-decades. As a system, datafication presumes everything contains information and so records indiscriminately. This generated the training data necessary to create the predictive language models whipping up affects today. Datafication forms a distinct epistemology, in which everything sits on the threshold of signification; nothing is in principle meaningless. Your Alexa, for instance, treats ambient noise – your coughs, farts, belches, and groans – as data points to record and correlate. In this epistemology, the twentieth-century distinction between information and noise no longer holds: noise is just information waiting to be decoded. This paper contends that this epistemology is itself hallucinatory, based on visions of a world throbbing with secret meanings. Both the fantastical hallucinations of LLMs and the human fantasies of godlike machine consciousness emerge from deep within the sensorial stack. Our sloppy affects are an opportunity to struggle over what counts as meaningful, and thereby to also struggle over what computation is for.

**Keywords:** AI, Datafication, Hallucination, Epistemology, Slop, Media Theory, LLMs, Silicon Valley

# Affectations of Quantum Nature: Quantum Art Between Quantum Policy and Radical Practice

**Presenters:** Radek Przedpełski

**Affiliation:** Trinity College Dublin

“The Second Quantum Revolution” designates the current era of Quantum Technology marked by operationalisation of the principles of quantum mechanics to perform complex computational tasks and solve problems intractable for classical computers. Frequently framed as an “uncharted new territory” sparking the “race to win technological advantage,” the technology is however still at the NISQ (Noisy Intermediate-Scale Quantum) stage. The chief problem Quantum Technologies are facing is noise, which pushes a quantum system into decoherence, for example through an interference of the outside milieu. Despite these concerns Quantum Technologies are presented as the only possible, inevitable future. The paper asks what are the affects of the quantum stack, and how this looks from the vantage point of quantum policy, art and engineering. In particular, the paper examines what is currently entailed by “quantum art,” which either leverages the principles of quantum mechanics for artistic purposes while remaining squarely within the constraints of current quantum policies, or treats quantum technologies as a conceptual provocation, allowing a disruptive rethinking of the pursuit of technological progress. Wrapped around a case study of digital artworks by Refik Anadol, Pierre Huyghe and Black Quantum Futurism, the presentation is pre-emptively asking: What could be the possible shape of these new communications technologies and how do they relate to the constraints of quantum policy? Would these be McLuhan’s *pull* or *push* media? And with what politics—with a radical edge serving social justice, decolonisation and anti-capitalism? Or an extension of the ruling techno- feudalism and imperial mindset?

**Keywords:** Emerging Technologies, Quantum Technologies, Quantum Art, Affects of Infrastructure, Radical Making

# Breaking the Ice: the Dawn of Cooling (In)convenience Technologies

**Presenters:** Maddie Bruegger

**Affiliation:** UT Austin

The opening ceremony of the Austin Air Conditioning Village marked the beginning of an experiment that would change American life as we know it. 22 homes each outfitted with a central air conditioning unit. Originally a racialized experiment in access to comfort cooling, the Austin Air Conditioning Village illustrates how access to cooling infrastructures has always been a colonizing project. Drawing from Berlant's (2022) theorization of inconvenience, I offer (in)convenience as an affective lens to think through comfort climate technologies that insulate another from a precarious outside of global warming, toxins, and waste. In her book *Media Hot and Cold* (2021) Starosielski defines thermopower as "the ways that temperature management defines subjects, produces objects, and locates both in grids of social and political organization" (7). According to Starosielski, thermopower is a form of biopower, where thermopolitics operates as a form of necropolitics through which thermopolitics condition, construct, and destruct environments. Research demonstrates that extreme heat agitates communities, causing increased aggression and violence in individuals (Chauhan et al., 2025), including domestic and interpersonal violence (Parks et al., 2026), suicide (Burke et al., 2018), terrorist attacks (Craig et al., 2021), and mass shootings (Geoffroy and Amad, 2016). As Daniel A. Barber, architect and climate designer (2020) states: "Air conditioning is people conditioning." Exposure to heat agitates, interrupts, and disrupts interpersonal relationships within communities. Yet, climate technologies such as air conditioning also exacerbate the problem of extreme heat in communities. These complex relationships between communities, climate, and technologies introduce messy ecologies for theorizing climate change and implementing social change given the immense climate exigencies our world faces today. Thus, this presentation seeks to grapple with the poiesis of domestic central air conditioning, how the technology created intimate relations between inside/outside, and how those relations impact who experiences extreme heat today.

**Keywords:** Climate Technologies, Environment, Air Conditioning

# Confessions of a Quantum Thinker: "Sensory Assault" of the New Physics and Jack Whitten's Notes from the Woodshed

**Presenters:** Meha Gupta

**Affiliation:** CUNY Graduate Center

How can geometry aid survival within a technological society? In his studio notes published as *Notes from the Woodshed*, artist Jack Whitten wrote that growing up Black in America gave him "an advantage in dealing with the unique psychology of vision"—a felt navigation through what he called the "sensory assault of technology forces." This paper reads Whitten's studio notes as an archival ethic of thinking-feeling through *processual writing*. My study is historically grounded after the two Quantum Revolutions (Alain Aspect), events that had socio-onto-epistemological ramifications as well as material effects on technologies like quantum computing, semiconductors, LEDs, and optical fiber. Akin to the industrial revolution, I argue that reading the aesthetics of science in aesthetic objects like Whitten's notes will allow us to understand why quantum physics offers a vocabulary for differential perception. Recent scholarship by Donovan O. Schaefer and Erica Frettwell has reported the cognitive and sensory modes of 19th and 20th-century science, and Black Studies scholars like Katherine McKittrick and Denise Ferreira da Silva have made visible how the spatial geographies of Black lives operate alongside frameworks in physics. If, as these scholars might collectively suggest, science is felt through thought, how do the quantum revolutions MAKE Black space? In Whitten's thoughts entangled in his processual writing, I situate his aesthetic and intellectual practice within a broader inquiry into how felt space conditions our encounter with the quantum revolution. If the art surface is a material intervention in worldly relationships, then thought is not an object but energy—processual, atmospheric, sensory. Whittens felt-thought-imaginary allows us to move away from the universalizing neutrality of quantum physics and see that matter, after the quantum revolution, in its literal immeasurability, renders "BLACK FOLKS [ARE] PHYSICAL" by investigating the modality of the organization of aesthetic space itself.

**Keywords:** Aesthetics, Jack Whitten, Quantum Physics, Black Studies, Space, Processual Writing

# Danmaku as Affective Ritual: Let's Play Videos and the Non-Representational Interface on Bilibili

**Presenters:** Chuxuan Zhang

**Affiliation:** University of Edinburgh

This paper explores how danmaku (bullet comments) in Bilibili Let's Play videos transform the spectatorial experience of gameplay into a mediated affective ritual. Existing research on danmaku tends to approach danmaku as emotional expressions, narrative participation, or community bonding, while Let's Play studies have often emphasised interaction between streamers and audiences. Less attention, however, has been paid to how danmaku is temporally and spatially organised around specific gameplay moments: the affective flows that emerge when game events, the Let's Player's embodied performance, and viewers' screen-overlying comments converge. To address this gap, this paper asks: How do danmaku intensify, redirect, or modulate viewers' affective responses to key game moments? And how do these practices enable non-playing viewers to participate in the construction of gameplay experience? These questions are probed through an affective node analysis of selected Bilibili Let's Play videos, focusing on moments of heightened intensity such as jump scares, plot twists, character deaths, player failures, and collective danmaku outbursts. Rather than treating danmaku as textual response alone, the paper reads game event, performer reaction, and danmaku feedback as a single affective assemblage. It argues that danmaku operates as both a visually charged spectacle of affective intensity and a kind of autonomous overflow that momentarily binds viewers into a shared, pre-personal resonance. By recasting danmaku as an affective ritual, this paper works toward an analytic discourse for analysing encounters with games and interactive media beyond the binary of playing and watching.

**Keywords:** Danmaku, Let's Play Videos, Affective Ritual, Bilibili

# Homopostsocialist Diva-Cyborg, Queer Techno-Orientalism and Disidentificatory Futures: a Case Study of Lexie Liu's Pop Aesthetics

**Presenters:** Jiajun Lin

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This paper examines how Chinese pop artist Lexie Liu's recurring cyborg persona organizes queer affect in China at the intersection of postsocialist governance, platform regulation, and transpacific techno-Orientalist circulation. Bringing queer techno-Orientalism as method into conversation with homopostsocialism, ornamentalism, disidentification, and animacy, I argue that Liu's diva-cyborg functions as an ornamental technology: a racialized and technologized surface through which queer and trans publics in China become perceptible without stabilized identity claims. Rather than treating the cyborg as merely representational, I read it as a sociotechnical interface shaped by algorithmic moderation, state censorship, platform affordances, and the uneven circulation of Asiatic femininity across Chinese and Western-facing media infrastructures. Drawing on close readings of Liu's 2024 StarInc. tour, her 2025 single and music video "POP GIRL," and a digital ethnographic archive of fan interactions on Chinese social media, I trace how glitch aesthetics, rainbow lighting, robotic choreography, drag cosplay, vernacular humor, and platform-specific codes transform a commodified celebrity image into a semi-legible infrastructure of queer recognition and survival. In China-facing circuits, Liu's cyborgian surface becomes iterable and available for disidentificatory reuse under censorship; in Western-facing circuits, the same figure risks capture by techno-Orientalist regimes that reduce the "Asian cyborg girl" to synthetic ornament and machinic femininity. By relocating queer techno-Orientalism from racialized subjects to black-boxed infrastructures, I argue that queer life in contemporary China is increasingly shaped by convergent regimes of U.S. racialized security and Chinese moral governance. Yet this cyber-biopolitical management is never total: under censorship, queer and trans users reanimate the racialized shell through flickering, humorous, and nondeclarative affects, revealing the porosity of technological control itself.

**Keywords:** Queer Techno-Orientalism, Homopostsocialism, Disidentification, Ornamentalism, Queer Affects

# Smooth Is Fast (Smooth Is Sticky)

**Presenters:** Judith Dutil

**Affiliation:** Urban College of Boston

Smoothness now governs contemporary digital life. Designers streamline interfaces, refine images, and optimize outputs for speed, clarity, and legibility. This paper shows how smoothness operates not just as an aesthetic preference but as an affective and ideological condition tied to acceleration. Drawing on examples from AI generated imagery, social media platforms, and data visualization, it shows how systems prioritize speed, flow, and legibility. Within this logic, smoothness becomes necessary. Texture introduces friction. Friction slows movement, complicates interpretation, and interrupts seamless circulation. Systems remove it. Smoothness does more than simplify visuals. It reshapes how we feel. As Sara Ahmed argues, affect sticks to surfaces and directs how we encounter bodies and objects. Smooth surfaces do not simply erase texture. They redirect attention toward clarity, coherence, and effortlessness. They thin out signals that once helped us register presence, labor, identity, and materiality. The result is a flattened surface that moves quickly and feels increasingly uniform. This shift also changes how we read effort. In the past, smoothness required labor, skill, and intention. Now filters, generative tools, and platforms produce it automatically. When systems handle the work, the surface can feel low energy, signaling less investment, care, and presence. More subtly, removing friction changes what we notice. Texture once helped us detect imbalance or distortion. Without it, dysmorphic or unnatural appearances pass with less resistance. Discomfort fades. What once looked off begins to look normal. As both an academic and the mother of a frictionless-loving tween, I return to what this models for the next generation. If texture helps us see effort, care, personhood, and humanity, what happens when we stop seeing it? This paper asks what we lose when systems design friction out of our environments, and what it might mean to notice, preserve, or reintroduce texture in spaces defined by speed.

**Keywords:** Smoothness, Friction, Texture, Affect, Artificial Intelligence, Digital Aesthetics, Social Media, Filter, Blur, Visual, Tactile

# Techno-Somatics: Algorithmic Architecture, Mobile Atmospheres and Corporeal Intelligences

**Presenters:** MacKayla Kelsey

**Affiliation:** University of Nebraska Lincoln

From recommendation engines and predictive systems to social media platforms and generative artificial intelligence, algorithmic technologies increasingly participate in shaping how bodies perceive, attend, orient, and move. These technologies do not simply mediate experience. They participate in configuring the conditions through which experience becomes possible. If systems are lived through bodies, then all systems are bodily. Drawing on mobility and spatial studies, rhetorics of atmosphere, and choreographic praxis, this paper develops 'techno-somatics' as a framework for understanding how algorithmic technologies function not merely as information systems but as somatic infrastructures. Techno-somatics names the ongoing process through which algorithmic systems reorganize corporeal intelligences, shaping capacities for perception, attention, movement, and sensemaking. The paper draws on artifacts produced by undergraduate students enrolled in a course on culture, technology, and education. Through practices of metaphor-making, choreographic mapping, reflective speculation, and media retrospection, students traced their experiences of moving and feeling within algorithmically modulated environments. Students mapped moments of lingering and dwelling, adherence and abandonment, attraction and avoidance, tracing how algorithmic environments organize movement across varying speeds, scales, and distances. In doing so, the artifacts function less as representations of technology and more as cartographies of relation, documenting how bodies orient toward, move through, resist, and become entangled with computational systems. Grafting to ideas like Ingold's wayfaring and Baudrillard's hyperreality, the paper advocates for how algorithmic literacies might be reimagined as a practice of "critical sensing" and 'critical feeling' rather than critical thinking alone. Such a shift does not reject cognition but situates it within broader corporeal processes, asking what forms of perceptual relationality and sense/making become possible when technologies are understood not simply as objects of analysis, but as architectures that reorganize the conditions of bodily life itself, proposing how we might begin to recognize this process as its own kind of literacy.

## S18. Minor Theory Amid Transactional Forms (Other People Have Become Incoherent to Me)

If my writing makes a mess of things, it's not to flee understanding, but to map (mis-)understanding as a verb  
—Douglas Kearney, *Mess and Mess and*

What is it about small lapping waves that makes them so intimate?  
—Lyn Hejinian, *The Fatalist*

The minor persists amid transactional forms of relation, modes of exchange negotiated through institutional exigencies and embodied precarities, and logistical slowdown (Moten and Harney 2021). The transactional forecloses the potential for relation in a stable yet incoherent system. It urges legibility and clarity as a strategy for movement. To move, you become legible yourself, or attempt it. Meanwhile you attune to its performances: you sense out where someone's lack or overabundance of words, an eyeroll, a pause or hesitation marks misunderstandings and their timely fallout, a failed exchange. Just as we critique this space, someone else learns how to materialize or profit from it, making confusion a personal problem. Yet simplifying the form does not always yield clarity or understanding. The diagnostics or naming processes of theory are also part of the transactional machine.

Are our payments unconditionally tethered to this practice—of theory-making? Do we even know what is happening anymore? What modes of sensemaking and exchange take shape around incoherence, the mis-understanding? And how do we feel into the intimacies of being, proximity, and the personal in a contingent space of transactions?

Amid the institutionalization and disciplining of thought from the noise of lived experience, the minor might lurk or lag behind a worlding—"an imperial promise of a form barely roughed out..." (Berlant and Stewart 2019:22). It is shaped through power dynamics and political excesses but asks, "why do we care whether or not the master notices?" (Katz 1996). It might settle in opacity, out of view of the profitability of ambience and the illusion of 'free' thought which, is, at worst, extracted from personal lives, histories and practices that provide a backdrop for theory and its material circulations. We turn here to poets because they might be considered theorists of the minor gesture (Manning 2016), or the everyday, or the incoherent. Poets live in the messiness of making that reanimates the relational and resists the disciplining of thought within the institution. Form becomes possibility and play instead of formulaic ethos. But poets also need groceries, and cash. "Poetry is not a luxury" (Lorde). As poet Journey Streams writes, "They've added a laugh track to our love lives and sold us our old feelings and fed us the crumbs in the corners of our shoes" (2026). What modes of sharing, reading, citing, exchange might be modeled against the terms of legibility and transaction that instead re-value the poem, and life, in its "uselessness" (Manning 2023)?

This stream is interested in micropolitics and minor theorizing that shows up in what could be described as incoherence. We are especially interested in works that play against academic forms and contemplate the ideas below:

- a "dissociative poetics" (Berlant) that describes tactics of withdrawal, or not taking things personally
- mishearing, misunderstanding, wtf moments / micro-expressions that index the inadequacy of community
- the implications of clarity, form, legibility or consensus / theft and authorship / opacity, fugitivity, poetics
- the management of history in the everyday / the history of management in the everyday
- the exhaustion of representational thinking as "confrontations with stupidity" (Deleuze)
- illegible forms of thought; how thoughts come out before they are disciplined
- race, affect, and the genealogy of minor theory
- creating reciprocity, care, support, different forms of giving/taking, sharing
- humanity as institutional performance

# A Distance from Ourselves: the Permutations of Precarity and the Poetics of Relational Textures

**Presenters:** Alecia Beymer

**Affiliation:** University of Cincinnati

Aggrieved, the world / of other people. I let it go. – Cameron Awkward-Rich  
Seen rainbows in puddles. /  
Been recognized by stray dogs. – Dean Young  
We are a distance from ourselves (Beachy-Quick, 2017),  
transacting in the interstices of daily wanting and grieving, negotiations gone awry. The relational subsists on the possible transaction and contrived politeness – we don't dare answer the question "how are you?" with a particularity of truth. At faculty meetings, we nod to each other like we know something, most of us a version of acquaintance relegated by distance. All relations seem to rest in the transaction. This essay is shaped by the permutations of precarity and the poetics of navigating the intimacies and relational textures of being with and knowing others in a time of collectively navigating ongoing dehumanizing conditions of living. I interweave conceptual patterns and ordinary events, rooted in reverberations of grief: relentless small talk with coworkers who do not like you, going to the Wendy's drive-through to buy your dog her last meal, talking on the phone to an old friend who used to know you, but does not anymore. As Carson (2016) notes, "The threadlike pressure of small social conditions...Again the picking / of small stones / out of rice." Further, I trace what happens when we are arrested from the transactional state because of grief. There is a slip of the facade, and someone tells you something true about who they are: the car is a mess because it is riddled with remnants of dog drool, a coworker can't meet because they have an appointment for chemotherapy, a student begins to cry for no apparent reason in the middle of class. Sincerity is off-putting. It reanimates humanity. Your eyes arrive; you begin to be recognized.

**Keywords:** Precarity, Intimacies, Relational Textures, Grief, Poetics

## **Affect, Body, and Lyrical Survival in Nine Parts of Desire**

**Presenters:** Dilan Kızıl

**Affiliation:** Başkent University

Iraqi American playwright Heather Raffo's *Nine Parts of Desire* reveals various facets of the sociopolitical traumas experienced by women in Iraq. In each scene, she shifts into different female characters, underscoring multiple aspects of social and psychic repression within the lived experiences of Iraqi women. Amid the chaos created by the Saddam Hussein regime and the American occupation, women adopt survival mechanisms. Through poetic monologues, Raffo crafts a space where these women can embrace their emotions and reject victimisation. In this paper, I argue that the characters develop within an affective environment and express themselves through different forms. By showing how they exist in their own bodies in various ways, they challenge the Western gaze that views the Middle Eastern subject only through the lens of trauma.

**Keywords:** Heather Raffo, Affect Theory, Minor Theory

# Affective Quilting: Piecing Knowledges and Lives with Fabric as a Creative-Praxis

**Presenters:** Wendy J. Truran; Catherine E. Paul

**Affiliation:** Northeastern University

Quilting is an affective and political practice. Cloth itself, one of humanity's oldest technologies is experienced intimately from the first moments after birth until the last moments before death (Burman, 2023). It is deeply embodied (fabric holds smells, skin, bodily fluids, is shaped by touch). Quilts can be powerful holders of memory (the AIDS quilt), of narrative (Foster, 2025) and of community (Cash, 1995) and thus they carry great sensory, affective, and associative significance. As such, quilts have enormous capacity for conveying meaning and inviting social change. Emphasizing the processual, our creative-praxis with and through quilting stitches scraps of our knowledges to fragments of writing (pieced, unpicked, and pieced again), that are then sewn to fabric literally (exchanged via mail) and figuratively (into quilted text). We use the technique or hand piecing—meaning the act of assembling and stitching pieces of fabric together and the collation of fragments of writing—to manifest the words and worlds that concern us and the affective investments that drive us. Piecing, as a method of meaning making acknowledges the always incomplete nature of our understanding; yet it also shows us that by collectively stitching together scraps of our lives, experiences, and intuitions we may weave them into an unexpected (uncertain but also ungoverned) materiality. Our notion of affective quilting in this paper explores the potentialities of quilting in three imbricated ways: 1) as a creative-praxis for research and composition, 2) as a way to think with tactile/textile histories e.g. Gee's Bend Quiltmakers, Coast Salish Weavers, Social Justice Sewing Academy, 3) as an invitation to collectively craft knowledges and futures with others (through a textile activity during the panel talk and a workshop, see below for details). We argue that affective quilting, and quilting affectively, offers a way of cultivating deeply relational zones and political possibility.

**Keywords:** Textiles, Affective Quilting, Sensory Methods, Compositional Methods, Tactility

# An Ohio Polycrisis for Every Landscape

**Presenters:** Harshavardhan Bhat; Megan Gette

**Affiliation:** University of Cincinnati

Situated from the context of the American midwest, our collaborative work offers a dialogue between a constantly remediative present with practices of coming to know the world through an experimental humanities pedagogy, and its illegibilities. Ohio offers a density for the scene of the global polycrisis: its settler colonial storytelling led and developed the United States nuclear weapons programme which simultaneously evolved into the corporations that would split and patent modified seeds. The histories of nuclear making – such as the Monsanto Chemical Company's involvement in the development of polonium in Dayton, OH, and the remediated ecological Fernald Preserve near Cincinnati formerly used for uranium processing – become obscured by in-landscape designs made to seem and feel like any other. We present here two pedagogies of white settler sense making: one, of displacement - that repair is a site moved out of itself to another where those concerns remain; and secondly that a participative project of repair is performed within institutions that retain the land, thereby offering us a story of security and maintenance where a polycrisis is a perceivably sustainable practice that not only reinforces American identity but also its broader apparatus and systems. Therefore, what do we do in the classroom, as researchers and educators commissioned to teach this interconnection? What are our methods? And in these affects? We discuss

**Keywords:** Polycrisis, Pedagogy, Midwest, Settler Colonialism, Ecology

# Between the Hush and the Hush-Hush: Mishearing the Permian Basin

**Presenters:** Megan Gette

**Affiliation:** University of Oslo

This essay thinks with mishearing as an attunement to evasiveness. It considers mishearing through the im/materialities of interruption, noise, hesitation, confusion, and withdrawal. Drawing on fieldwork in the Permian Basin, I attend to rural life as a site where people say nothing ever happens — yet it is endlessly exposed to the “quiet encroachment of the ordinary” (Bayat) that negotiates thresholds of toxicity in an energy sacrifice zone. In scenes of atmospheric attunement to wind, darkness, seismic disturbance, mishearing registers environmental injustice, the twisting of facts into stories, and failures to listen. Wind turbine infrasound becomes a destabilizing force of the unreal, overhearing radio noise from border patrol at a Dairy Queen leads to speculation, whispering in the dark turns a telescope’s accuracy into one of blurs and blobs, and “did you feel it?” prompts conspiracies to unravel. Mishearings emerge around “ephemeral quasi-events” (Povinelli) that may fail to cohere or register as mattering. They return to the site of error — a word, a noise, a sensation — where relation is thrown into view as partial and uncertain. Mishearing points to an affective logic that moves between the perception of nothing happening (or nothing wrong) and something hidden or undisclosed. Rather than resolve tensions wherein the event of mishearing is disentangled from intent or agreement, I examine how worlds evade grasp. As Anne Carson writes, “what we engage in when we do poetry is error.” A poetics that mishears resists making ‘claims.’ Instead, form trails off, remains unfinished, and hesitates. Subjects are uncertain or convinced of something beyond the frame. Evasiveness invites modes of “counterlistening” (Ouzounian) attuned to what is both lost to the wind and tactically withheld. This reimagines the ethnographic as a practice where perception folds into an ‘irreducible ambiguity’ (Serres) of unlikely relations and mistakes.

**Keywords:** Mishearing, Poetics, Im/Materialities

# Minor Gestures in the Dark: Dissociative Poetics and the School Lockdown Drill

**Presenters:** Presence O'Neal

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

When high school students crack jokes during lockdown drills, they are often read as inappropriate, immature, or missing the point. This inquiry asks: what if the joke is the point? This proposal forwards a cartographic vignette, or a theoretically grounded and politically situated account of the present drawn from performative accounts of classroom teachers, that attunes to the affective atmosphere of students joking during lockdown drills (Braidotti, 2022). Students are legally compelled to attend school or risk arrest. They are also compelled, once there, to practice surviving a school shooting through drills that offer, at best, a marginal chance at harm reduction. Students feel the absurdity of the conditions of their education. The joke that emerges is not a failure of seriousness but what Berlant (2022) describes as a dissociative poetics: a tactic of withdrawal, a minor collective practice of sense-making. Read this way, jokes that emerge from a lockdown drill enact a form of solidarity that surfaces precisely because the terms of compulsory schooling foreclose other forms of agency. To demand seriousness from students in this moment is to miss the point. Drawing on Fanon's (1963) theorization of colonial violence as constitutive and pedagogical, I read these jokes not as instances of misbehavior but a poetics of dissociation. A poetics that is collective, affective, and counter to an educational system that produces student bodies as simultaneously at-risk of being shot and individually responsible for their own survival. The vignette moves between potestas and potentia: the foreclosures of compulsory schooling and the minor, insurgent, otherwise-worlding that happens anyway, in the dark, during a drill, when someone says something that makes everyone laugh.

**Keywords:** Feminist New Materialism, Decolonial Studies, Qualitative Methodology

## Misunderstanding the "Music" Out of Musicology.

**Presenters:** Patrick Nickleson

**Affiliation:** University of Alberta

Black studies scholarship from Moten and Harney, Alexander Weheliye, Stephen Best, Katherine McKittrick, and many, many others makes constant, loving reference to music and songs. This paper asks whether the music present in Black studies is the same as the music in my own field, musicology. Or, rather than ask that question, I propose that it is not the same music: musicologists have much to gain from recognizing the irreconcilable difference and misunderstanding between how we address music and how everyone else in the world understands, knows, and loves music. In *The Undercommons*, Moten and Harney outline a model of work, in but not of the academy, that they name "study." In this paper, I propose a "music study" that recognizes, well before any other "underlying ideological principle," that (nearly) everyone loves music and knows it—intimately, intellectually, and critically. As Dylan Robinson and Patrick Nickleson have argued, the primary disciplinary product of academic musicology has been a sort of alienation from music for those who love it personally, but without explicit disciplinary training in its *ology*. As such, this paper builds from my recurring experience of hearing brilliant, engaged, thoughtful music lovers in and out of academia claiming that they "don't know anything about music" to suggest that, perhaps, musicologists are the most likely to be badly misunderstanding or even hallucinating our idea of "music."

**Keywords:** Musicology, Black Studies, Moten and Harney, Misunderstanding, Disciplinarity

# Stickiness and the Threshold of Affective Injustice

**Presenters:** Peixuan Zhao

**Affiliation:** Ghent University

Philosophers have increasingly turned their attention to a distinctive dimension of injustice: the wrongs done to individuals in their affective and emotional lives. A growing literature has examined phenomena such as affective dismissal (Bell, 2023), emotional imperialism (Archer & Matheson, 2023), and the deprivation of affective goods (Gallegos, 2021). Yet existing accounts share a common omission: the question of what conditions are sufficient to elevate affective harm to the level of injustice has gone largely unaddressed. This omission is not without consequence. It has led either to conceptual overextension: some accounts criticized for setting the threshold too low; or to explanatory gaps: leaving unclear why certain affective harms fall short of injustice. Without an answer, the boundaries of the concept remain unsettled and its critical force weakened. This paper argues that structural origin constitutes a criterion for affective injustice. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's account of stickiness (2004), it argues that when affective harm is systematically produced through the encodings attached to group identities within social structures, it crosses the threshold from harm to injustice. Stereotype threat serves as an illustrative case. By operating at the level of general principle rather than case-specific identification, this criterion opens a structural dimension that interpersonal (Bell, 2023) and goods-based (Gallegos, 2021) frameworks have not fully reached, suggesting that affect theory offers underexplored resources for theorizing affective injustice.

# Sticky Figures: Animation and the Violence of Relation

**Presenters:** Robyn Taylor-Neu

**Affiliation:** University of Alberta

"Stop looking at meeeee!" Bunny snarls, looming on the thin screen between us. Her jumpsuit is matted, raw pink. She plunges two small hands into her belly and draws out fistfuls of cotton, strewing it around the enclosure. Shrieking, she smears her face across the pane, leaving thick streaks of coral, cream, and powder blue. Soon, she'll crawl back to plead for forgiveness. Then she'll somersault through flirtation, accusation, fury, and remorse once again—and again, as the stop-motion animation loops. Felicia Bergström's installation *Cycle of Violence* (2020) is less a depiction of intimate violence than a choreography that casts audiences into the eye of the storm. It doesn't settle into familiar narratives of relationship abuse or domestic violence. In fact, nothing about the artwork is settled: Bunny's body overstretchs and overfills its bounds, her mood oscillates between extremes, her relation to you shifts moment to moment, and you leave (and are left) without moral, epistemic, or narrative resolution. This unsettling both spurs and suspends interpretation. How to write with and alongside forms whose force seems to resist formulation? And how to do so amid pressure to render one's work legible through airtight exposition and portable concepts? My ethnography with Berlin-based animation filmmakers has entailed wrestling with these questions of form, force, and formulation. Here, with Bergström and Bunny, I attend to the force conveyed through forms' dissolution and commingling, where "form" describes both sensuous figures and the patterns of perceiving, thinking, and writing that stabilize artistic and academic discourse. In this light, intimate violence doesn't only manifest as the rupture or unravelling of relation; it stirs in the viscosity of forms, in relatedness itself. Just as others become incoherent to me, so too might "I" come undone, adhering too much to the wrong objects.

**Keywords:** Animation, Relation, Violence, Form, Intimacy

# The End of (Being) “Okay”: On Censorial Time, Neoliberal Legibility, and Fugitive Possibilities

**Presenters:** Christopher Pham

**Affiliation:** Independent

This writing treads through the social violence felt across and through the recent censorship of Chinese American transracial adoptee artist Madalyn Drewno. Her censored artwork, *None of Us Are Free Until All of Us Are Free*, maps a tapestry of transnational solidarity across Palestine, Sudan, Congo, and anti-ICE whose visual indictment of local politicians sparked its immediate institutional containment. Analyzing how target institutions leverage public statements, digital subthreads, and legal defenses to turn radical dissent into diffused, moot records, this work troubles neoliberalism’s administrative capacities (Melamed & Reddy, 2026) to siphon dissent and disgruntledness—quell them into liberal and legal registers—so that they are not just palatable for civil society but remain legible and, in turn, governable as *minor*. As the liberal subject’s heuristical desires of freedom (Reddy, 2010) and representation tap into liberalism’s variance (Hall, 2021), neoliberal multiculturalism has only tethered the social reproduction of model minorities closer to the social violence of racial capitalism as “new model minorities” (Shomura, 2026) and the “overseer class” (Thrasher, 2026). Given these authoritarian times as a corollary of this censorial aftermath, this essay wrestles with the incoherence wrought by liberal (il)legibility—when the neoliberal atmosphere and episteme is so thick, there is nowhere to go but to yield feelings of misunderstanding, feelings of *otherwise* inhabited by the fugitive, the yellow peril, the bad refugee, or, notably, the censored. What affects fester and flourish upon being illegible? What if every scorching resentment after the ends of an “okay” in any bureaucratic uptake singed just a little longer? Attuning to the poetics of Drewno’s titular and visual artwork, this paper plays and pushes against the “regimes of expropriation” (Kim, 2024) to parse together protest as necessarily incoherent and inscrutable (Huang, 2022) for the survival and creativity of the radical lifeworlds in-the-making.

# The Weather in O'Hara

**Presenters:** James Garwood-Cole

**Affiliation:** University of Chicago

This paper (following Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's essay "The Weather in Proust") engages climate as an object for and subject of New York School poet Frank O'Hara's poetics between people, poems, paintings and things. Scenes of intersubjectivity, their atmospheres and environment, are frequently and often disarticulated by O'Hara in their progress as frustrated and negatively constituted transmissions and miscommunications. These scenes, which I argue form a ground and bedrock of the emotional life of his poetry, are dissolved into a function of affective weather that is so cloudless as to be notable and finds expression as a *form*. This fact, the dual articulation of atmospheres of feeling with a surprising O'Haran anonymity, has been little noted by his readers, who presume a more straightforwardly affirmative attitude to the environment *and* to affective and literary forms in the famously upbeat, out-and-about poet. I build particularly on the instability of affect but consistency of warmth in his early poems, finding there a fictive, uncertain, and overburdened hypothalamic regulation that is expressed as a poetics. This paper moves through discourses of temperature to deepen and complicate attitudes to "relatability" as a misrecognized O'Haran mode in the contemporary. Moving beyond eco-moralist accounts of O'Hara, I articulate figured weather in O'Hara as a function of being-in-the-world and mood much more than any totalized attitude to nature *as such*. In this service, I relate ekphrastic traditions, art history, affect theory, and the aesthetics of weather in the history of poetry and painting in order to most properly grasp and articulate the activating contradictions of O'Hara's intersubjectivities.

**Keywords:** Poetry, Poetics, Weather, Frank O'Hara, Temperature, Relation, Intersubjectivity, Dissolve, Miscommunication, Painting, Climate, Regulation

# Un-Becoming Chinese Diasporas (I Have Become Incoherent to Other People)

**Presenters:** Yuyue Sun

**Affiliation:** University of Bristol

What happens when becoming different means becoming illegible, unknowable, and incoherent? Inspired by cultural geography, queer theory and Asian American studies (Rose, 2023, Huang, 2022, Manning, 2016), this paper traces ordinary moments in which one un-becomes oneself overdetermined by major frameworks of identity and belonging, instead turning into a cluster of intensity and negativity hovering on the edge of recognition, coherence and representation. In this sense, unbecoming does not necessarily equate with militant anti-normativity, but rather a more playful testing of the limit of the very relationality. I animate my proposition by introducing three Chinese diasporic interlocutors. Facing both an authoritarian Chinese state enforcing national belonging on its minor populations and a disinterested White audience simplifying complex lifeworlds to logics of legible, multicultural differences, diasporic Chinese subjects improvise with all of their creativity and desperation to unbecome themselves. In my reading, their life stories indicate distinct modes of undoing Chinese diasporas, ranging from an ambivalent attachment to the fantasy of Chineseness to an inactive style of showing up to activist politics. In curated artistic performance and in everyday life's mundane unfolding, I argue that these diasporic, rarely pronounced acts are minor gestures that expose the inadequacy of major representations, create fleeting spaces for rest and inattention, and strive for the right to a non-representational subjectivity. I conclude this presentation by discussing how an attention to the negative might offer new insights into diaspora geographies, and vice versa.

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Incoherence, Unbecoming, Subjectivity, Micropolitics

## S19. Multispecies Affects: MAKEing Worlds in Precarious Times

Amidst planetary precarities, lives lived continue to make worlds. Faced with blooms disrupted by climate change, bumblebees maintain synchrony with floral partners by biting leaves to stimulate flowering (Pashalidou et al., 2020); itinerant mushroom pickers roam abandoned industrial forests in Oregon, gleaning livelihoods from ephemeral fungal partnerships (Tsing, 2015); elephants seeking states of intoxication raid distilleries in postcolonial Sundarpar, generating affective animus amongst local communities (Barua, 2024). Practitioners studying multispecies relations take these worlds seriously, expanding terrains of sociality and interpretation. Multispecies affects are concerned with severed, fragmented, durable, and novel associations between and across species; they comprise the energies, atmospheres, and forms of ecological attunement and discordance that inhere in the making and unmaking of more-than-human worlds.

On a planet terraformed by colonial capitalism, how might attending to multispecies affects give insight into the ways lives are lived, and, the conditions that impress upon these forms of life? This stream invites panelists whose work attends to this question by bringing affect theory and multispecies studies into conversation. Participants are encouraged to submit research, methodological explorations and/or creative and aesthetic engagements.

Questions to consider:

- What methods, tactics, practices make multispecies affects sensible?
- How do distributions of the sensible inform politics of inhabitation, coexistence, or animus?
- How might atmospheres inform relationships between humans and other than humans?
- In multispecies worlds, who knows?
- Can multispecies affects energize political transformations?

Potential topics include:

- Lively capital (Haraway, 2008; Barua, 2023; Collard, 2020)
- Attunement, listening, and sensorial methods (Durand and Sundberg, 2026)
- Affective approaches to wild life politics and abundant futures (Collard, 2020; Collard, Dempsey, and Sundberg, 2015)
- Affect, biopolitics, animality (Rutherford, 2022)
- Multispecies rhythms (Despret, 2021; Van Patter, 2023)
- Animals' geographies, mobilities, and atmospheres (Hodgetts and Lorimer, 2020; Lorimer, Hodgetts, and Barua, 2019)
- Affect, ethologies, and geography (Barua and Sinha, 2019; Lorimer 2011)
- Affective ecologies and multispecies encounters (Myers and Hustak 2012)
- Vegetal affects (Subramaniam 2024)
- More-than-human contact zones (Isaacs and Otruba, 2019)
- Postcolonial fauna and flora (Barua 2024)
- Disabled ecologies (Taylor, 2024)
- More-than-human making practices (Andreyev, 2021)

# Atmospheres of Uncertainty: Multispecies Non-Knowing and the Holy Whale in Vietnam

**Presenters:** Huy Hoang Nguyen

**Affiliation:** Independent

This paper examines the multispecies affects that emerge in relations between fishermen in Quy Nhơn, a coastal city in Central Vietnam, and the Holy Whale, a marine deity revered for saving lives at sea. Fishermen often describe encounters with the Holy Whale through the expression *mơ mơ màng màng* (half-dreamy, half-awake), a trance-like state in which distinctions between perception, memory and imagination become uncertain. Rather than treating such experiences as symbolic representations of a non-human being, I approach them as affective modes of affective attunement through which human-more-than-human worlds are mutually constituted. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork among fishing communities, I argue that *mơ mơ màng màng* functions as a multispecies atmosphere that renders the Holy Whale sensible without reducing him to a fixed object of knowledge. Through ritual practices, storytelling, dreams, and devotional encounters, fishermen cultivate an aesthetic disposition that privileges ambiguity, movement, and relational openness. I call this “atmosphere of uncertainty” whereby thoughts about the non-human are not merely a non-anthropocentric mental orientation but an ethnographically charged encounter expressed in and making up the boundaries of aesthetic contact zones. In these encounters, the Holy Whale appears not as a stable ontological category but as a presence whose force is felt through shifting intensities, bodily sensations, and imaginative participation. I further suggest that this atmosphere of uncertainty is inseparable from the precarious conditions of life at sea, where attunement to the Holy Whale unfolds through more-than-human contact zones constituted by both the ecological affordances of the marine environment and the aesthetic dimensions of ritual practice. By examining how ambiguity becomes a cultivated mode of relating, this paper provincializes multispecies affects, sensorial methods, and more-than-human contact zones in ethnographic encounters. Attending to *mơ mơ màng màng* encounters therefore becomes a practice of multispecies non-knowingness in atmospheres of uncertainty.

**Keywords:** Uncertainty, Atmosphere, Aesthetics, Contact Zones

# Eco Violence: the Toxic Sublime and Contemporary Art Amongst Polluted Water Bodies

**Presenters:** Elise Kristin Sæhle

**Affiliation:** Oslofjord Triennial

In the era where capitalism functions as a way of organizing nature, aquatic ecosystems have become archives of industrial pollution and slow violence. From the suffocating depths of the Oslofjord to the evaporating, toxic shores of the Salton Sea, polluted water bodies record the long-term, attritional damage inflicted by human industry. This article interrogates how contemporary art navigates these compromised landscapes. Rather than treating environmental collapse as a spectacle to be documented, this study examines how artistic practices can visualize hidden ecological destruction and challenge how we treat unhealthy water bodies. By analyzing the divergent strategies of these two initiatives, the paper establishes two primary findings. First, it identifies two methodologies in contemporary art practice, contrasting the Bombay Beach Biennale's occupation of a terminal aftermath with the Oslofjord Triennale's focus on urgent, preventative care for a living ecosystem facing real-time 2026 fishing bans. In the discussion, the paper argues that true environmental attunement requires a democratization of data, positioning art as a vital translator that elevates intimate, bodily experiences to the same level of authority as institutional laboratory science. Ultimately, this research draws upon frameworks by Stacy Alaimo and Max Liboiron to conclude that under late capitalism, eco-art must abandon the detached, visual gaze of the coroner performing an autopsy on a dying planet. Instead, by activating our most intimate senses of touch and scent, art can cultivate a collaborative community of practice, teaching us how to maintain interspecies kinship and navigate survival from within the ruins of a thoroughly trans-corporeal world.

**Keywords:** Eco- Art, Slow Violence, Necroscene, Necropolitics, Interspecies Kinship, Toxic Sublime, Neoliberalism, Capitalism

# Funerals at the End of the World: Dirt, Decomposition, and Dy(e)ing in the Anthropocene

**Presenters:** Dale MacDonald

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

When I began dyeing socks with indigo a few years ago, a student asked me what I had planned for a weekend and without thinking twice, I said, "Dyeing". The response was followed by an extended silence as the teenager attempted to decipher a joke that didn't exist. Something was born in that dead air, between dying and dyeing. This paper manifests this auditory confusion through research-creation methodology, making the worlds and ecologies of our future corpses. The act of dyeing one's own burial shroud from decomposable fabrics and pigments engages our ability to sense multispecies affects, both within and without our bodies. We project our consciousness to a body that will find itself in a state of becoming-multispecies as it is carried through the earth by innumerable critters. Taking up Natalie Loveless' call in *How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation*, I am attempting to "inhabit human, nonhuman, never-been-human, and more-than-human social webs differently" (100 emphasis original). But what we choose for our bodies in death is not simply a matter of individual eco-awareness. Our final disposition must contend with the deep entanglements of capital and law, extending not only to where and how our bodies are disposed of, but also into our imagination. In defiance of this "capitalist realism" (Fischer), the shrouds I ask us to dream of do not come with price tags beneath them. These art-pieces deprive the death industrial complex of trackable profits and data points and instead become the kind of "action and thinking that does not fit within dominant capitalist cultures" Donna Haraway seeks in *Staying With The Trouble*: "new practices of imagination, resistance, revolt, repair, and mourning and living and dying well"(51).

# Greenhouse Atmospheres

**Presenters:** Ceall Quinn

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

Industrial greenhouses orchestrate growing conditions in pursuit of profit. Productivity imperatives infuse the atmospheres of these interior climate controlled spaces where light, temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide levels and soilless media are patterned to the biotic rhythms of plants and animals to achieve a kind of 'mastery under glass'. This paper attends to a specific element within tomato greenhouses in Delta, British Columbia, namely, pollination relationships between commodified bumblebees and tomato plants that require sonication to set market worthy fruit. I chart the historical production and implementation of common eastern bumblebees (*Bombus impatiens*) as lively capital, suggesting that the biotechnological appropriation of bees makes them into critical affective instruments for greenhouses. The notion of affective instruments indicates how bumblebees are (re)made as organic machines to perform pollination services previously carried out by intensive human labour within the highly mechanized ecologies of modern greenhouses. Manufactured within a supposedly closed loop of production, bees are reared to carry out a function only to be destroyed at season's end once their usefulness has ceased. Affect plays a crucial role within this greenhouse ecology as it is the specific capacities of bumblebees to sonicate and manipulate the poricidal anthers of tomato flowers in conjunction with their eusociality that has facilitated commodification; here, capital harnesses and intensifies involutory relationships between insects and plants to suit the rhythms of greenhouse production. While much of this presentation focuses on the highly subsumed natures of greenhouses, I also consider the cracks that form in the veneer of mastery by turning to the escape and subsequent naturalization of commercial bumblebees. Through transgressing the commodity form, feral bees' agency comprises an excess to profit-oriented calibrations of non-human life that produces reverberating effects on ecological surrounds.

**Keywords:** Lively Capital, Affective Ecologies, Political Ecology, Atmospheres, Pollination

# How Do I Love an Invasive Species? a Sensorial Exploration of Political Affective Ecologies, Deviance, and Portals of Possibility

**Presenters:** Sabrina Meherally; Safeera Jaffer

**Affiliation:** Pause and Effect

What happens when a single word seeps into the atmospheric space between multispecies bodies and begins to slowly reorganise what is felt there? This exploratory session is inspired by Blackberry Bush whom I had come to know and love before learning they were classified as “invasive.” Our session proposes that classificatory language such as invasive, deviant, disabled, and abnormal operate less as designations and more as political affective ecologies capable of restructuring the felt conditions of relationships. These atmospheres are enforced through repeated exposure to built environments such as schools and workplaces that teach us what ways of being are “acceptable.” Like the invasive species, bodies that do not conform are not just labelled as different. They are made to feel like problems rather than portals. Drawing from Sara Ahmed’s (2004) discussion of stickiness and affect, labels such as invasive circulate and “stick” to certain multispecies bodies, guided by colonial capitalist norms and histories. At the centre of this inquiry is the so-called invasive plant, as a sort of “post-colonial” presence. Unruly, ungovernable, and showing up precisely where there has been colonial disturbance. They do not grow where they are told. They follow cracks, waste margins, disturbed soils, and the edges of what has been cleared and extracted. Labelled as threatening, they are also in their deviance, gesturing toward other possible worlds. What happens when we follow their unruliness? This session moves that question into multispecies encounters and the affective body. Through sensorial and participatory practice, participants attend to the atmospheres that organise compliance in designed spaces – and experience, together, what shifts when more-than-human atmospheres are disturbed.

**Keywords:** Invasiveness, Deviance, Political Affective Ecologies, Coloniality, Atmospheric Shifts

# Kelp Erotics; Speculative Aesthetics in Multispecies Worlds

**Presenters:** Luke Iandoli

**Affiliation:** New York University

This article argues that disgust affectively mediates human and nonhuman encounters, emerging in relation to industrial apparatuses of value. Foregrounding kelp as an industrial deviant, this article traces the history of lipid extraction as a form of more-than-human governance that controls biological proliferation according to narrowly human values. Lipid extraction, as a genetic intervention into kelp's molecular structure, polices material growth by enlarging valued matter (the lipid) while mitigating excess. Kelp, however, MAKES worlds through these disgusting emissions purged in lipid extraction; rot and slime—the unnecessary bits contaminating the lipid— facilitate the continuation of coastal ecosystems. This article argues that the purged excess is the material basis of disgust, and industry operates materially and semiotically, assigning value to matter according to its applicability to scalable economic practices. Disgust, therefore, is a political aesthetic that characterizes matter that serves 'no purpose' to anthropocentric value. This intervention develops Kyla Wazana Tompkins' account of deviant materiality and Jacques Rancière's work on the 'distribution of the sensible,' to put multispecies studies and aesthetics in conversation. By exploring the affective aspect of multispecies encounter, this article hopes to explore an environmental aesthetics located outside idealized spaces of purity. Theorizing from my own embodied encounter with the disgusting materiality of kelp, I draw on the erotics, as theorized by Audre Lorde, as a sensory process that destabilizes binaries between self and other. This article develops "kelp erotics" as an embodied methodology that draws out the affective aspect of attunement, focusing on what it feels like to encounter subversive materiality.

**Keywords:** Blue Humanities, Aesthetics, Kelp, Affect, Disgust, Multispecies Relations

# More-than-Human Listening for Making Worlds Otherwise

**Presenters:** Juanita Sundberg; Leticia Durand

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

This paper theorizes more-than-human listening. To this end, we build from Lisbeth Lipari's (2012, 236) argument that hearing and listening enact "different ways of being in the world." While hearing is oriented toward assimilating the other into the self, Lipari argues, listening involves encountering and receiving the other. We incorporate two main ideas from Lipari's work to conceptualize listening to more-than-humans, an oft noted yet seldom elaborated practice. First, listening rejects the imperial self that treats nature as a set of resources available for exploitation. Second, listening entails appreciating, in non-hierarchical terms, the continuities and differences between distinct modes of being and communicating. More-than-human listening implies cultivating a disposition that allows others to affect us and interrupt our usual anthropocentric thoughts. We suggest that such interruptions throw humans into ecological relationality by revealing our interdependence and entanglement with others. Understanding ourselves as relational beings who do not precede their bonds and relationships is a first step toward world building otherwise.

**Keywords:** More-than-Human Listening, Ecological Relationality

# The Affective Ecologies of Greek Nomadic Beekeeping in the Context of Polycrisis

**Presenters:** R. Caroline Stampliaka

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

Greek nomadic beekeeping is a way of life and livelihood, but at its core, it is also a moral and affective practice. In search of optimal foraging and overwintering conditions for their honeybees, nomadic beekeepers in Greece have seasonally relocated their apiaries since antiquity (Mavrofridis et al. 2023). Across generations, they have transmitted place-based environmental knowledge cultivated through sensory, tacit, and embodied learning, as well as ecological attunement, ‘becoming with’ the more-than-human world (Haraway 2010). Consequently, their affective states and experiences are profoundly interconnected to the health and vitality of their honeybee colonies and the landscapes they move through. However, the rapidly accelerating pace of climate change—including intensifying droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, and floods—is disrupting the timing of blooms and honeydew flows, desynchronizing the traditional beekeeping calendar. Based on three months of ethnographic fieldwork in northern Greece, I examine how climate change is reshaping the ‘affective ecologies’ of interspecies relations among bees, beekeepers, plants, and landscapes amid structural inequalities (Myers and Hustak 2013; Puig de la Bellacasa 2015; Münster 2022). Employing multispecies and multisensory ethnography, along with affect theory and political ecology, I analyze nomadic beekeepers’ accounts of changing seasons and landscapes, and weakening bee colonies, as well as their adaptation efforts, set against a precarious political and economic context. Here, the term “polycrisis” aptly describes multiple overlapping crises occurring simultaneously and intersecting in complex ways across space and temporality (Henig and Knight 2023). I argue that the breakdown of interspecies ecological attunement undermines affective ecologies and, in turn, the very conditions under which local environmental knowledge is produced, lived, and transmitted. Thus, pervasive atmospheres of uncertainty, exhaustion, and precarity among nomadic beekeepers are restricting possibilities for multispecies coexistence and flourishing.

**Keywords:** Nomadic Beekeeping, Multispecies Ethnography, Affective Ecologies, Climate Change, Local Environmental Knowledge, Political Ecology, Polycrisis, Greece

## S20. Occluded Atmospheres: Esoteric Aesthetics, Night Knowledges, and Sensory Shifts

Affect theory has long emphasized atmospheres as diffuse yet palpable conditions that shape how bodies feel, move, and relate. Yet not all atmospheres register equally. Some saturate experience so completely that they appear as the background of life itself, while others remain partly hidden—sensed only in the minor registries of experience. Specifically, this stream turns to *esoteric aesthetics* and *night knowledges*—modes of perception oriented toward the subtle, the nocturnal, and the partially hidden in order to register these sensory shifts.

Whereas occulted knowledges are studied and learned, however unconventionally, occluded atmospheres are sensed into and immersive, calling in not only practices and methods such as divination and ritual but also affects and states such as grief, illness, opacity, dreams, confinements, and the boundary lines where proficiency or literacy shift into intuition or illegibility.

To think atmospherically about occlusion is also to ask how certain forces remain difficult to perceive within dominant regimes of knowledge. Atmospheric conditions may be normalized through habit, concealed by infrastructures of power, or rendered unintelligible by epistemologies that privilege clarity, visibility, and measurement. Yet many aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual traditions cultivate ways of sensing atmospheres that exceed these frameworks. *Esoteric aesthetics* and *night knowledges* become salient as expanded calibrations.

*Esoteric aesthetics* names artistic and cultural practices that register forces often considered intangible, diffuse, or atmospheric: energies, presences, vibrations, tonalities, and other subtleties that move through environments. Across literature, visual art, performance, ritual practice, and speculative thought, such aesthetics develop forms of attention capable of rendering occluded atmospheres perceptible.

*Night knowledges*, meanwhile, gesture toward epistemologies that emerge through intuition, sleep, scent, ritual, divination, embodied attunement, and other practices that register worlds beyond the limits of daylight rationality. Rather than treating these themes solely as objects of analysis, this stream approaches them as modes of atmospheric sensing—ways of perceiving and navigating environments saturated with diffuse affective forces.

This stream invites contributions that explore how occluded atmospheres emerge across aesthetic, social, ecological, technological, and political contexts as well as through different methods, including performative, speculative, or practice-based approaches that engage atmospheres sensorially rather than only analytically. What forms of perception arise when attention turns toward what is ambient, partially hidden, or atmospherically diffuse?

Possible lines of inquiry include:

- How do esoteric aesthetics register or render perceptible occluded atmospheres?
- What are night knowledges, and how do they cultivate sensitivity to subtle atmospheric forces?
- How do artists, writers, and cultural practitioners develop forms or methods capable of sensing or transmitting atmospheric intensities?
- What atmospheres become perceptible through experiences of illness, vulnerability, grief, disability, or altered sensory awareness?
- How do ecological, technological, or political conditions produce atmospheres that remain partially hidden or unevenly sensed?
- How might practices such as divination, dreamwork, ritual, or altered perception create atmospheric shifts, and to what end/s?
- What practices of intention, attention, or attunement allow occluded atmospheres to become momentarily legible?

- What forms of nocturnal, cyclical, or non-linear time emerge in practices of atmospheric sensing?

By foregrounding atmospheres that remain subtle, obscured, or difficult to articulate, this stream asks how affect studies might expand its vocabulary for sensing the opaque conditions that shape collective life.

## "At 4:45 A.m. the Door of No Return Is Visible": Dionne Brand's Nocturnal Po/Ethics

**Presenters:** Andrew Santana Kaplan

**Affiliation:** University of Denver

Dionne Brand's *A Map to the Door of No Return* is an exemplary mode of attention to occluded atmospheres at the intersection of esoteric aesthetics and night knowledges. Although the Door of No Return refers to historical sites on the West Coast of Africa where slaves were sent to the Middle Passage, Brand understands it primarily as a "spiritual location" that marks "the only space of true existence" in the Diaspora. The Door is a paradigmatic occluded atmosphere that shapes the total climate of anti-Blackness—not only in the modern World but in the psyche. It follows that *this* Door often materializes itself in liminal states, such as in periods of insomnia. Brand describes such an esoteric episode as she reads/writes poetry in the middle of the night: as "the pen moves in scars," one's body emerges "naked through its rough portal," allowing one to "feel the stone of its sides with one's hands," which is "how [she] felt at 4:45a.m." This is what I am calling Brand's "nocturnal po/ethics," wherein esoteric aesthetics and night knowledges enter a zone of indistinction, rendering material the specter of the Door, offering a map back to its threshold—at once the threshold of modernity and the "end of the world" as we know it. Adopting *poethics* from Denise Ferreira da Silva, I write "po/ethics" as a means of indexing a modality that dwells in a threshold that is simultaneously a caesura. Brand ushers readers into the Door's fracture between poetics and ethics, such that her nocturnal poetics brings us to the threshold-caesura of an unspeakable ethics. Insofar as the Door haunts all modes of belonging, Brand attunes us to the threshold-caesura of non/belonging, wherein the Door indexes not only a spiritual location but "also perhaps a psychic destination"—if we are willing to inhabit its threshold.

**Keywords:** Dionne Brand, Anti/Blackness, Insomnia, Poethics, Attunement, Non/Belonging

# Alien Enchantments, Nightly Knowledges, and Ontobiographical Affairs

**Presenters:** Laurie Gries

**Affiliation:** University of Colorado Boulder

I was once abducted by an alien in the hills of New Mexico, in the glass tower of my earth ship, dug deep into the iron-rich dirt, turned red from years of oxidation. As I was sleeping, the alien gently touched my hand, and I gasped awake. "Shh..." she said, "I just want to show you what life is like." Soon, we were flying above the hills of Cerrillos, an old mining town outside of Santa Fe. The full moon lit up the terrain below, but nothing had any form. Everything, everywhere, was just pure and total energy, a sea of vibrating particles dancing diffusely in a translucent wave of shifting shapes. -- In this presentation, I introduce new materialist ontobiography (Gries 2020) as a critical-creative means of tapping into the multi-sensory phenomenological experiences of such occluded atmospheres. To model this method, I share a series of previously untold extraterrestrial events that I experienced in the mid-1990s to explore how meaningful night knowledges can emerge through enchantment with alien encounters. For the purposes of this presentation, I define night knowledges as glimpses of reality, or impressions of life, born from ephemeral encounters experienced in the otherworldly unfolding of the dark night, and I argue that in the name of upholding Western rationality, sanity, and acceptability, we too often miss instructive insights and/or disavow meaningful theories that can be discovered through nightly enchantments with an alien Other. Drawing on Jane Bennet's theories of enchantment, Diane Davis' notion of rhetoricity, Buddhist psychology notions of presence, and my own alien revelations about energy, I ultimately advocate for prying ourselves open to the affective-persuasive forces of nightly encounters--of allowing ourselves, no matter our fears, to "be struck and shaken" by the extraordinary ontobiographical experiences that have potential to open up new horizons of meaning.

**Keywords:** New Materialisms, Phenomenology, Enchantment, Extraterrestrialism, Ontobiography, Methods, Atmospheres, Knowledges, Energies

# Autotheory and Anorexia: Atmospheres of (De)forming

**Presenters:** Quinn Daugherty

**Affiliation:** Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

Both experiences of illness and acts of creative expression are shapeshifting forces, undoing previous molds and inhabiting new forms. This paper explores how the psychosomatic condition of anorexia and the artistic methodology of autotheory live in the occluded space between form and formlessness. There is a growing impulse among contemporary female-identified writers to grapple with eating disorders using the performative and citational affordances of autotheory. Autotheory, as a feminist practice integrating lived experience with theoretical discourse, and anorexia, as a feminized illness negotiating the relationship between mind and body, share shapeshifting capacities — both are interested in giving shape to *and* obscuring the individual subject. As such, I examine contemporary works of autotheory that deform dominant interpretations of anorexia and register the liminal space between self/other, revelation/occlusion, form/formlessness, including Chris Kraus' *Aliens and Anorexia* (2000), Emmeline Clein's *Dead Weight: Essays on Hunger and Harm* (2024), and Amber Husain's *Tell Me How You Eat: Food, Power, and the Will to Live* (2026). Engaging autotheory as both object of inquiry and methodology, I integrate my experience with shapeshifting — through anorexia and creative practice — by placing fragments from an original autotheoretical essay in dialogue with the chosen texts. Drawing on Lauren Fournier's concept of citation as a mode of relation, the essay regards autotheory as dreamwork that senses beyond the normative boundaries of the self and attunes to a relational atmosphere of queer feminist kinship. Here, the embodied and theoretical take on amorphous shapes and make space for the ambiguities of illness.

**Keywords:** Autotheory, Anorexia, Atmosphere, Shapeshifting, Form, Citation, Relation

# BED MOODS: Asexual Erotics in an Age of Exhaustion

**Presenters:** Rosie Clarke; Ela Przybyło

**Affiliation:** Rutgers University

In this co-authored paper, we engage with occluded atmospheres and night knowledges by exploring the recent atmospheric turn to rest, opting out, and reducing productivity in dialogue with disability and asexuality theory. Due to colonial capitalist burnout, more and more creators, feminists, and thinkers are turning away from a culture of hyper-productivity, toward discourses of disengagement and respite that acknowledge collective exhaustion. Aesthetic preferences and political orientations such as goblin mode (Coyle 2023; Monteanni 2003), slow quitting or disengaging from work, rest as resistance (Hersey 2022), and turning to the “bed cave” as a site of activism honing the contours of crip temporality (Piepzna-Samarsinha 2018), have gained significant traction. Inspired and energized by this turn to conjuring anti-capitalist atmospheres, we draw on asexuality studies’ engagements with moodiness by way of “the erotic” (Lorde 1984), to think about the cultural figure of the bed as a site for articulating different moods, unkempt modes of being, and surreal experiences of temporality. A place we make space and spend time; the bed cuts a moody figure in this age of critical exhaustion. Specifically, our paper examines two examples of what we configure as “bed moods,” unfurling capacious uses of the bed as a site of rest and decay, withdrawal and abundance in Tash King’s zine project *Bed Zine* (2021) as well as Ottessa Moshfegh’s trend-setting novel *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* (2018). We argue for the need for theories of disengagement to register the fatigued structures of feeling these works capture, that activate both asexual and disabled critiques, and that take stock of exhaustion, languor, and other affects of slow refusal.

**Keywords:** Exhaustion, Asexuality, Disability, Sleep, Erotics, Bed Zine, Ottessa Moshfegh

# Blacking Out: Violence as Pedagogy, Violence as Portal

**Presenters:** Asilia Franklin-Phipps

**Affiliation:** SUNY New Paltz

Blackouts occur when someone must survive a violent attack, particularly when there are ongoing attacks. Blackouts can also occur when someone is overwhelmed by anger or fear and must enact violence on others in order to survive. Absorbing violence might cause one to blackout, but a blackout can precede doing violence. We are living in violent times—state violence, interpersonal violence, self-harm, social violence, police violence, and the violence of neglect, isolation, and being left to die. What knowledge comes from violence? Violence is something that is both ordinary (Stewart, 2007; Sharpe, 2016) and as predictable as the setting sun. There will be violence and it will be ongoing and pedagogical (Cairns, 2022). Violence teaches us who we are and who we might become. How much one knows about violence depends on their imagined and/or actual relation to it. Those most vulnerable to violence shift in response to the violent encounter(s) and adapt to the threat by hiding (maybe blacking out), appeasing, and shrinking. Such responses are expected by those enacting the violence. How might violence be rethought centering those who are positioned as always defending themselves from overlapping and escalating violence? Those with deep and meaningful knowledge about violence, have such knowledge because they must navigate in relation to violence. They must survive present violences, while anticipating more. Inspired by Alesha Haris' 2026 debut film *Is God Is* and the revenge genre of film more broadly, this paper engages the cinematic image of violence, to reconceptualize violence as it relates to metaphorical and literal blackouts. With attention to historical and social vulnerability to violence, I wonder about the ways that the afterlife of slavery, colonialism, and capitalism position bodies in relation to violence. Finally I am concerned with what kinds of atmospheres and knowledge emerge from particular relationships to violence.

**Keywords:** Violence, Gender, Knowledge, Subjectivity, Pedagogy

# Celestial Rays and Atmospheric Perception: the Astrological Cycle at the Palazzo Della Ragione (Padua, 15th Century)

**Presenters:** Laurence Garneau

**Affiliation:** UQAM and Concordia University

This paper reinterprets the fresco cycle of the *Palazzo della Ragione* in Padua within the intellectual, political, and sensory context of fifteenth-century Italian astrological culture, in which celestial forces were understood as materially active. Drawing on Marsilio Ficino's medical theory of astral images (1482-1489), Pietro d'Abano's medico-astrological writings (whose knowledge circulated at the boundary between licit science and suspected magic, c. 1300), and Mary Quinlan-McGrath's work on celestial radiation (2013), I argue that the cycle constructs a space structured by the transmission of astral "rays," subtle forces capable of shaping bodies, temperaments, and environments. Rather than approaching the frescoes as passive and symbolic, the paper proposes that they function as an "atmospheric apparatus" in which pigments, iconography, and natural light collaborate to render otherwise invisible celestial qualities perceptible (Griffero, 2010; Boquet, 2013). These images were not neutral; such visual astrological environments were understood to exert both beneficent and harmful effects. Viewers entering the hall for civic activities were thus immersed in a field of forces influencing affect, complexion, and bodily disposition. An especially significant dynamic within a political setting. The argument unfolds in three parts. First, it analyzes the structure of the cycle in relation to the real cosmic vault. Second, it situates the frescoes within fifteenth-century theories of celestial radiation, showing how the space operates as a medium of astral influence. Finally, it examines selected images to explore their potential effects on the body. In doing so, the paper argues that the cycle engages forms of perception akin to "night knowledges," attuned to diffuse, partially hidden forces. This study situates the frescoes within an "esoteric aesthetics of atmosphere," in which light, pigment, and space work together to make the invisible perceptible and to shape the viewer's relation to a cosmos understood as continuously acting upon earthly life.

**Keywords:** Astrology - Light - Materiality - Environment - Frescoes

# Children of the Night: Trans Life After Dark

**Presenters:** valley weadick

**Affiliation:** University of Toronto

This paper explores trans affinities for nighttime, darkness, the moon and the stars, and what nighttime enables for gender transformation under cover of darkness. Amidst tensions of visibility, harassment, discrimination and violence, nighttime is, contrary to some of its associations for many cisgender people, the safest and most comfortable time to be out in public. While being unable to go out in the daytime indexes the violences that accrue to trans visibility, an affinity for nighttime is tied to the pleasures, attunements, and knowledges that flow from intimacy with the night, its energies and atmospheres. While this vampiric existence can certainly be read as coerced or imperilled, it also holds the unknown treasures of the darkness, the moon and stars, and their shadows. As Black trans activist Sabel Samone-Loreca explains, “we stayed in the house and we stayed in our shelters until about 8 or 9 o’clock, that was daylight for us. And we lived. We were children of the night, you know” (in Drucker 2018)? Examining trans expressions of living after midnight, this paper also explores Syrus Marcus Ware’s art installation “Radical Love” as a means of reclaiming public space for the Black trans bodies displaced from it, and reclaiming the Black trans body as celestial and luminous in an anti-Black and anti-trans world.

**Keywords:** Trans Embodiment, Celestial Bodies, Visibility, Darkness, Pleasure

# From Covert Sense to Incipient Utterance: Edmund Teske's Queer Photographic Abstractions

**Presenters:** Samuel Allen

**Affiliation:** New York University

In 1958, the photographer Edmund Teske formalized a darkroom technique known as 'duotone solarization.' Unlike more familiar forms of solarization—a process closely associated with an earlier generation's Surrealist photographs—Teske's intervention transformed the photographic print's lightest tones into high densities of bronze-colored image material, thereby compromising the legibility of its image. This embrace of duotone solarization marked a radical shift in his practice. Previously, he had seeded his photographs with a coded iconography, derived from Vedanta Hinduism, to express an outlook at odds with Cold War-era gender and sexual mores. While his subsequent work remained informed by Vedantic tenets and resolutely queer, now it registered its ontological nonconformity at the level of materials rather than imagery. The proposed paper frames Teske's photography as a mode of queer abstraction, while attending closely to his sustained engagement with esoteric philosophy and the ritual aspects of his artmaking. It explores the social and conceptual stakes of his turn from wielding an occulted knowledge—making use of a symbolic language only interpretable by initiates—to unleashing his medium's non-human agency. In the process, the paper situates Teske's practice within postwar Los Angeles's gay and countercultural creative circles, amid fellow artists who worked in abstract film and assemblage. The lexical retreat he effected through duotone solarization accorded with similar strategies of artistic and personal survival at play within these communities as they confronted the twinned moral panics of McCarthyism and the Lavender Scare. For Teske and his West Coast peers who lived at the margins of American society, the paper illuminates, this rejection of sense in favor of incipience—cultivating states of the not-yet-articulated within their work—facilitated incisive philosophical investigations while furnishing potent means of collective worldbuilding.

**Keywords:** Photography, Queer Abstraction, Material Agency, Esotericism, Postwar Los Angeles

# Occulted Sensory Infrastructures in Laboratory Craft: the Minor Registries of Experimental Practices

**Presenters:** WhiteFeather Hunter

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

Working sensitively with living biological materials requires forms of attunement and attentiveness that operate within minor registries of sensory experience: noticing subtle shifts in viscosity, colour, temperature, timing, affect, and intuition—factors which rarely coalesce into recognized parameters within dominant scientific frameworks. Laboratory science often operates through systems of discrete measurement and procedural control, while experiential realities of tissue culture and biomaterial experimentation are navigated through diffuse conditions that elude formalization. Working with the unstable agency of living matter requires ongoing acts of embodied calibration: interpreting minute material shifts, anticipating cellular behaviour through tacit familiarity, or responding intuitively to fluctuations, surprise conditions and complex intra-actions which may be difficult to quantify. Drawing from my feminist biofabrication practices involving menstrual biomaterials, tissue culture, and speculative biodesign, this presentation examines how laboratory work is shaped by technical protocols intercepted or altered by atmospheric and bodily forms of knowing that exist at varying thresholds of understanding. How are my hormones undermining or enhancing my experiments today? Do exhaustion, stress, or sensory familiarity shape the outcomes? Examined through frameworks of esoteric aesthetics intersecting with technofeminism, I argue that laboratory practices contain occulted sensory infrastructures. Rather than positioning science and intuition as oppositional, I explore how affect, instinct, and hands-on sensory skills—or, laboratory craft—function as embedded yet under-recognized components of experimental practice. I introduce the term 'wet witchery' to describe atmospheric and sensory modes of engagement that emerge through intimate encounters with living matter. By positioning the laboratory as a ritualized space of subtle bodily sensing, this presentation will consider how feminist bioart practices render forms of knowledge that emerge through opacity, uncertainty, contamination, failure, and embodied encounters with living systems more perceptible. In doing so, I propose atmospheric literacy as a critical mode of engaging biological matter beyond the limits of immediate visibility and quantification.

**Keywords:** Atmospheric Literacy, Occulted Sensory Infrastructures, Laboratory Craft, Embodied Knowledge, Esoteric Aesthetics, Wet Witchery, Feminist Biofabrication

# Photography as Mediumship: Searching for Ectoplasm and Night Knowledge in Shannon Taggart's Séance

**Presenters:** Jenny Zhou

**Affiliation:** Loughborough University

This paper examines American artist Shannon Taggart's photography project documenting spiritual phenomena since 2001, in her book *Séance* (2019). It particularly focuses on her exploration of ectoplasm, which was described as a material substance produced during séances and was photographed as evidence of spirit presence. I argue that Taggart's work shifts the aim of photographing ectoplasm from evidential proof to atmospheric sensing, a form of night knowledge that operates through uncertainty, darkness, and collective relationality rather than visible verification. In her practice, the production of photographs becomes a form of mediumship, and the camera becomes a medium, channelling the visible and invisible, the spiritual and material. Through close analysis of Taggart's photographs and accompanying writings in the book, focusing on images of séance practice, this paper shows how photography visualises occluded atmospheres in various forms, from amorphous vapour to blurry human limbs. I further suggest that, instead of the female medium's bodily reproduction of ectoplasm, Taggart's images distribute it across the atmosphere, in which the visualised ectoplasmic presence is produced across the camera, sitters, objects, dark environment, and collective experience. The ectoplasm is shown as an unstable, fleeting presence rather than a verifiable existence. Using 'photography as mediumship' as an analytical tool, I show that Taggart's work produces a threshold reality in which the presence is sensed, doubted, contested, and partially perceived. Photography becomes less a tool of domination than a medium of sensory relation. By reading *Séance* through the uncertain and contested figure of ectoplasm, this paper proposes Taggart's occult photography as a form of night knowledge that goes beyond everyday visible perception. Taggart's work therefore offers a reimagination of visibility through affect, in which the unseen is not proved but sensed.

**Keywords:** Occult Photography, Ectoplasm, Night Knowledge, Sensing, Shannon Taggart

# Ritual and the Farm: Attuning to More-than-Human Pedagogies

**Presenters:** Haley Kuchar

**Affiliation:** Concordia University

This paper explores how the ritual-like practices of Ukrainian-Canadian farmers foster a heightened attunement to the oft-occluded pedagogical forces of the more-than-human world. I draw on interviews with Ukrainian-Canadian farmers from a multigenerational farm in Alberta in order to activate theoretical and practical inquiry grounded in my own cultural history. Following established research which describes interaction with natural spaces through farming as an aesthetic experience, this paper positions traditional Ukrainian-Canadian farming practices as an 'esoteric aesthetic.' Here, the subtle knowledges that allow someone to sustain themselves on the land—which plants ward against illness, how deep to bury the potatoes, where the wasps always build a nest, when the clouds will break—become perceptible not merely from humans handing down knowledge but through the ritual-like duration, repetition, and embodiment of a person engaging directly with the land. While agricultural labour is commonly (and correctly) understood through the lenses of productivity and human dominion over land, Ukrainian-Canadian farming practices placed high value on living mutually with/on the land rather than strictly profiting from it. Through years of embodied repetition, individuals who grow up on the farm become shaped by and open to the more-than-human world as both a teacher and a space of deep learning in ways that can slip beyond the awareness of those outside this context. Ultimately, like the Ukrainian-Canadian farmers, the embodied routines and practices we engage in since childhood shape which forces we can perceive and thus learn from. By turning our attention towards a group of people and collection of practices that foster a radically different sensitivity to the teachings of the more-than-human, we not only see more clearly how today's standard pedagogies occlude us from recognizing these forces, but moreover we see a set of practices which offer methods of resistance and change.

**Keywords:** More-than-Human Pedagogy, Embodiment, Ritual Practice, Farming Practices, Ukrainian Culture, Esoteric Aesthetic

## Subtle Bodies, Occluded Desires

**Presenters:** Victoria Papa

**Affiliation:** Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

What forms of desire become perceptible only when bodies refuse illumination? This paper moves across literary and visual works by Djuna Barnes, Clarice Lispector, Ottessa Moshfegh, Miranda July, and Isabelle Albuquerque to trace a genealogy of restless feminine and queer embodiment. I read these works as a constellation of scenes and figures in which subtle bodies and occluded desires take shape: sleepless and withdrawn, overheated or hormonally unsettled, sculpturally multiplied, and difficult to know. Here, subtlety names a mode of attention to what rationalist and ableist regimes typically obscure; occlusion, in turn, signals not absence but the persistence of what can be sensed without being fully revealed. Through what I call *esoteric aesthetics*—a mode of perceiving diffuse and partially hidden forces—I examine how these works render desire not as revelation, but as a charged atmosphere that shapes perception. In Barnes's *Nightwood* (1936) and Lispector's "*Where Were You at Night?*" (1974) density, opacity, and resistance to illumination produce forms of queer restlessness that make meaning felt rather than secured. In Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* (2018) and July's *All Fours* (2024), withdrawal, bodily volatility, and unruly desire unsettle feminine scripts of wellness, domesticity, productivity, and self-knowledge. Albuquerque's sculptural practice extends this inquiry into visual form, offering bodies that appear as casts, doubles, rituals, or feral emanations of the human. Drawing on queer theory alongside Sandra Huber's concept of "night knowledge" and Sara Ahmed's "sweaty concepts," I argue that these works ask us to read desire through difficulty rather than disclosure. They offer subtle bodies that do not easily yield themselves to light. In doing so, they cultivate forms of perception attuned to the dense atmospheres through which desire is felt. This paper is drawn from *Subtle Bodies*, my book project on illness, embodiment, and esoteric aesthetics.

**Keywords:** Embodiment, Subtlety, Desire, Esoteric, Aesthetics, Feminist Theory, Queer Theory

# Underground Atmospheres: Nuclear Cloud-Core and the Limits of Atmospheric Thought

**Presenters:** jessie beier

**Affiliation:** Concordia University

What is the sound of the atmosphere underground? Listen closely and you might hear it in the groan of tectonic strain in the subway, the electromagnetic crackle of the ionosphere in radio static, or the very low frequencies of electrical grids near and far. Atmosphere, after all, is never just above; it emerges through unstable exchanges between bodies, earth, energy, and sensation, even as many of these forces remain only partially prehended. Harder to hear, then, is the sound of atmospheric conditioning produced through infrastructural convergence between earth and sky, like hyperscale AI data centres cooled by uranium-backed energy futures, or the pulses of algorithmic computation vented through glowing subterranean crypts of radioactive storage. Angels to some, demons to others. The recent surge in nuclear investments hardly makes a sound when it positions nuclear energy—and its burial sites—as a “cleaner” and “greener” solution to planetary crisis. Here, atmosphere is not just an ambient “vibe,” but the buried underworld of computational futurity, where fantasies of infinite intelligence remain tethered to subterranean architectures that hold the sky in place. This sonic performance-lecture digs into this scene of *occluded atmosphere* to ask what happens when atmospheric thought descends down, down, down beneath “immersive” attunements and into the mud-caked strata of nuclear burial sites and their resonant containment rituals. As part of ongoing collaborative experiments in “underground atmospheres,” the talk traces what we call a *cloud-core dynamic*, where technological abstractions are tied to infernal materialities, raising political questions about the dispersal of infrastructural violence through everyday life. Part sonic philo-fiction, part dehiscent writing experiment, the presentation approaches speculative pragmatism not as abstract theory but as a processual method for thinking at the limits of atmospheric thought, puncturing its tendencies toward phenomenological encircling, affective optimization, and the normalization of exhausted, and exhausting, energetic conditions.

**Keywords:** Atmospheres, Sound Studies, Infrastructure Studies, Energy Humanities, Process Philosophy, Speculative Pragmatism, Nuclear Energy, Cloud Computing, Radioactive Waste, Geotrauma

# Water, Blood, Ectoplasm: Deviant Fluids and Esoteric Atmospheres

**Presenters:** Sandra Huber

**Affiliation:** Concordia University

In 1953, Marjorie Cameron drove into the desert with the ashes of her dead husband, rocket scientist Jack Parsons. Once there, she claimed to conceive a “psychic child” with him, an alchemical being born at the seams of death and desire. Decades earlier, medium Mary M. sat surrounded by cameras and experimenters as ectoplasmic matter streamed from her mouth in ghostly, erotic secretions, challenging the borders between the fraudulent and the sacred. As if in echo of these manifestations, Ana Mendieta pressed her body, like a lover, into rivers, graves, mud, and flowers in the 1970s, allowing the outline of her form to transform into water, earth, fire. “I wanted my images to have power,” she said, “to be magic.” How does fluid, in these instances, work as an affective, energetic, and atmospheric methodology that unsettles the bounded, coherent, and “working” self? In this presentation, I explore how water, blood, and ectoplasm have been ritualized to produce what I call *night knowledge*: opaque and often disavowed forms of literacy that reshape embodiment and perception while resisting colonial, ableist, and rationalist demands for clarity, containment, and proof. Drawing from theory and words by, for example, Neel Ahuja, Kyla Wazana Tompkins, and Clarice Lispector, I focus especially on the deviant, energetic labor and kinship practices these desirous and desirable fluids produce (or refuse to reproduce), where the nocturnal practices of mediums extend into the nocturnal practices of sex workers and charlatans, inviting pricklier affinities with villains, parasites, death, and waste. By following water, blood, and ectoplasm across three eras of feminist labor and art, this presentation explores how esoteric methods invite us to inhabit more permeable and unstable relations with bodies, atmospheres, and a quickly weirding and wilding world.

**Keywords:** Feminist Material Culture, Esoteric Art History, Death Studies, Night Knowledge, Ritual

# What Glows in the Dark: PTSD, Ritual and Night Knowledge in a Bioluminescent Lagoon

**Presenters:** Jason Perez

**Affiliation:** Pacifica Graduate Institute

Who do we become in the dark? Who do we become when the boundaries of stable subjectivities have dissolved through trauma states, when the more-than-human world breaks through and makes itself known as a lagoon? This paper explores these questions through an experience in a bioluminescent lagoon in Oaxaca, Mexico, during an activated PTSD state, where a spontaneous ritual in the dark made possible new sensing, new being, and new becoming. A ritual born in the water cracks the facade of reality and reveals a glowing world, a luminous body, and knowledge invisible in the daylight. To create otherwise worlds we must enact them (Blaser, 2009; Escobar 2018), but enactments are not always voluntary. The PTSD state enabled an involuntary enactment of the world that opened contact with the lagoon as a night being. If trauma states and psychic fractures create conditions of possibility for new knowledge, how can they be engaged beyond the need to heal? Drawing on decolonial (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and more-than-human thought (Anzaldúa, 2015), this paper theorizes states of trauma and dissolution as emergences of otherwise perception, conditions in which the body becomes newly capable of registering atmospheric knowledges ordinarily foreclosed, rather than pathological crisis. Yet ritual and trauma states are not sufficient on their own. They are preceded and enabled by relational orientation. Approaching darkness, both literal and psychic, relationally makes meaningful contact possible with night beings, and the knowledges that arises through them. This paper reads relational gestures, such as offerings, as constitutive of emergent knowing (Barad, 2007): approaching ecological sites as beings capable of response (Simpson, 2017) opens forms of night knowledge that extraction-oriented epistemologies cannot access.

**Keywords:** Ritual, Decolonial Epistemology, More-than-Human, Relationality, Depth Psychology, Night Knowledge

## “Breath as Body: Pneuma as Medium in Contemporary Art”

**Presenters:** Yani Kong

**Affiliation:** Emily Carr University of Art and Design

Pneuma is the ancient Greek word for breath. In the Presocratic tradition, it is the wind, the air in motion, the primordial source for earthly life (Benso 2008). Aristotelian and Hippocratic philosophies locate it as the “vital heat” that travels by breath and in sperm, a life providing force. In Christianity and Judaism, it is the synonymous term for spirit. In early Arabic, the word nafs, derived from nafas, means “breath” or “breathing.” Nafs at once refers to the soul as well as “self” or “person” in both Arabic and Persian languages (Dastagir 2018). The Stoics tied breath to the concept of the soul, where pneuma is the “life breath” (Quinlivan 2012). Etymologically, pneuma, breath, and air are connected, where pneuma refers to the actions of breathing or blowing, as well as the “air in motion” and “breath” as essential to life (Vallance 2016). Mythologies such as Homer’s *The Iliad* signal breath or wind as symbolic of ethereal beings and the expansiveness of the cosmos. Informally, the wind can represent a superstitious presence or a haunted and tragic absence. This presentation explores pneuma, or breath, as a medium in Paul Chan’s ongoing series of inflated artworks, “Breathers”, and the later iteration, “Bathers.” Sailcloth sculptures not unlike the idiotic Skydancers that wave from used car lots on the side of the highway, Chan’s artworks are active objects that incorporate air as a mobilizing force. Otherwise invisible, pneuma is perceived through the quality of the artworks’ active and passive states and the active and passive states it may incite in its audience. I explore it as an enchanted medium essential to the objects’ forms, drawing on Stoic and Spinozan ontologies to argue that air is a body that projects life force and expresses a certain geist, by the artworks’ expression.

**Keywords:** Breath, Pneuma, Stoics, Spirit, Geist, Spinoza, Paul Chan, Breathers: Bathers: Enchantment

## S21. Sensational Affects, Strange Aesthetics, and (Counter)Pedagogies

While an aesthetics of affect encompasses all the elements of the conference theme “Methods, Atmospheres, Knowledges, and Energies”, this stream is interested in exploring the varieties of methods employed by affect theorists, educators, and artists and the ways in which these methods stitch up or unravel communal atmospheres, distribute knowledges, and circulate energies. We wonder, how might thinking with theories of affect help contribute to reshaping notions of aesthetics as sensual pedagogies? “In the midst of so much worldly unmaking”, what can varieties of artmaking produce? Deleuze and Guattari suggest that art is “a bloc of sensations” or even “a pure being of sensation” (1994). This repositions the capacity of art to generate sensation that is beyond the visual, inclusive of a range of human and even other-than-human sensoriums. Furthermore, expanding the binary relation of subject/object or artwork/viewer, the aesthetic impacts of activities of making engage assemblages of materials, spaces, architectures, and bodies that craft sensorial vibrations. This stream seeks papers, presentations, and projects that involve themselves with sense-sational affects, (counter)pedagogies, and strange aesthetics. How do art, art making, and art experiencing make the familiar strange, the everyday uncanny? The late David Graeber wrote, “the ultimate hidden truth of the world is that it is something that we make, and could just as easily make differently” (2024). Making affect, then, is worldmaking. It is to be involved with the materials and entities of the planet, in cycles of formation, destruction, revision, transformation, and remaking (think of the scrappiness of collage and composting). In this way, the affective power of art is always already pedagogical. We seek to assemble panels that bring work at the intersection of affective and aesthetic activity into conversation with pedagogical practices. “What can a body do?” Seigworth (2020) reminds, “is fundamentally a pedagogic matter.” (p. 87) What methods of artistic practice find places within and alongside affective pedagogies? If “places called schools are precarious and provocative affective atmospheres” (Anderson, 2014), how might art provide counter-spaces of sensational alternative, even refuge? And since “teaching is generally considered to be about relations of knowledge transmission, primarily through language” (Dernikos et al., 2020, p. 16), what opportunities might more capacious expressions informed by artmaking offer educators? What “mobile energies” (ibid) does art generate, and what do such affective flows do pedagogically?

While we invite paper proposals that fit normative frames of academic conference presentations, we also encourage presentations that subvert expectations while still working within space-time constraints. This challenge could allow for instances of making to occur within the parenthetical framework of the event of the panel. Write to us with any questions.

Potential presentation themes might explore the following and more:

- Pedagogical and curricular practices that thread affective aesthetics through sites of learning or knowledge production
- Methods and techniques that evoke affect through cycles of formation, destruction, revision, transformation, and remaking. For example, collage as affective method, among many possible others
- Arts-based research and boundary objects that cross disciplinary margins (Loveless 2019)
- Transhistorical and/or transcultural redefinitions, redeployments, subversions, and/or re-implementations of art historical movements such as surrealism, fluxus, propaganda art, etc. into contemporary times
- Exploration of art without objects, such as social justice practices or relational aesthetics
- Post human or planetary aesthetic practices that consider multispecies sensoriums and vital materialist affects (Bennett 2010)
- Making strange or enactivist paradigms for linking affordances with affect
- Counter)pedagogical tactics that emerge from the desire lines that are carved through curricula by excessive, scrappy, resistant or alternative practices. Show us!

# A Genealogy of Screams

**Presenters:** Kaitlyn Patia

**Affiliation:** Whitman College

Whether in agony, grief, pain, horror, surprise, joy, or pleasure, screaming can provide a kind of release or catharsis. The act of screaming can also serve as a call to action. For these reasons and more, it is no surprise that scholars have reflected on the relationship between screaming and feminism (Bahrainwala 2019; Johnson 2025). From “feeling bad” as constitutive of life under capitalism (Cvetkovich 2012) to the “feminist snap” (Ahmed 2017) as response to this affective creep, those writing in conversation with affect theory in particular have attempted to capture the push-and-pull of what we take in and what we give out (Ahmed 2004; Berlant 2022). How does screaming operate within the matrix of our relationships with the world? Bringing together work on affect theory, feminist and disability scholarship (Kafer 2023), as well as scholarship from the field of rhetoric, I begin to trace a genealogy of screams. By gathering and organizing seemingly disparate “screams” into a genealogy, I analyze how screaming can function in pedagogical ways to disrupt the “ordinary” (Stewart 2007). I argue that screaming functions as a register of intensities on the body, and conclude by discussing the potential for screaming as a kind of feminist pedagogy. Bibliography Ahmed, S. (2017). *Living a feminist life*. Duke UP. Ahmed, S. (2004). *The cultural politics of emotion*. Routledge. Bahrainwala, L. (2019). “Responding to ‘white fragility:’ A manifesta of screams.” *Feral Feminisms* 9:21-25. Berlant, L. (2022). *On the inconvenience of other people*. Duke UP. Cvetkovich, A. (2012). *Depression: A public feeling*. Duke UP. Kafer, A. (2023). “Manifesting Manifestos,” pp. 181-194. Mara Mills and Rebecca Sanchez, eds. *Crip authorship: Disability as method*. NYU Press. Stewart, K. (2007). *Ordinary affects*. Duke UP.

**Keywords:** Screams, Bodies, Feminism, Pedagogy, Disability

# Affects and Archives: Some Reflections on Community Archives in Poland

**Presenters:** Adriana Kapata

**Affiliation:** Nicolaus Copernicus University

Community archives in Poland are a phenomenon. There are now nearly 900 of them. They document everyday life, community life, queer people, women, and unknown histories. Such archives are full of emotions, both towards the materials themselves and towards other people. Community archives are changing our relationship to archives. They transcend frameworks and enter into art, interpersonal relationships, emotions, interactions, and art. In my presentation, I will present several cases and examples based on the project "The Impact of Independent Community Archives." The project was implemented from October 2023 as part of a grant. As part of the project, research was conducted on selected community archives. The research examined the impact these archives have on their surroundings, communities, and the world, as well as on the archivists themselves. During the interviews and their analysis, archivists spoke about their emotions, feelings, and relationships. An archive is not just about documents, but also about our approach to them and the emotions evoked in us by the stories of others. In my presentation, I want to present the cross-section of archives and the influences and affects that accompany such grassroots work.

**Keywords:** Community Archives, Archives, Society, History

# Animating Animacies: Teaching Through Abstract Embodiment and Personal Storytelling

**Presenters:** Clara Chin

**Affiliation:** UC Santa Barbara

In an Asian American Studies Performance Workshop that I taught, I assigned Vivian Huang's *Surface Relations: Queer Forms of Asian American Inscrutability*. The students had the option to perform short scenes from existing plays, but wanted to go above and beyond and create a three act play complete with ensemble dance pieces. How can we create the conditions for students to actually want to learn, and what are the positive and negative (and other) consequences that result from this desire to 'work hard' artistically? I will explore the pedagogy I have developed in two classes I designed – 1) an English class called *Animating Poetics: Stop Motion as Literary Analysis*, and 2) the aforementioned Asian American Studies class called *Unsurfacing Performance, Performing, Performativity*. By emphasizing the power of art making and personal storytelling as tools for and outcomes of engaging critical theory, I began to see that students reoriented their relationship to completing assignments. Like in the Asian American Studies course I taught, *Animating Poetics* was based on a critical text; students read Mel Chen's *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*. They were encouraged to think about how they were complicit in and/or challenged animacy hierarchies in their lives, or how animacy hierarchies affected them. They made stop-motion abstract films to evoke these ideas. I will illustrate how a critical text can create a shared vocabulary and be the foundation for collaborative art making. This teaching format allows students to practice academic critique, understand the stakes of theory beyond the classroom and in their own lives, and begin to see themselves as artists. While these projects empower students to see themselves as critics and artists, they can also create fraught affective and emotional resonances for the students as they become more emotionally involved in their projects.

**Keywords:** Pedagogy, Teaching, Art Making, Praxis, Performance, Media

# Art as an Interpretive Amplifier for Organizations

**Presenters:** Paula Wuth

**Affiliation:** Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Although organizations increasingly seek to imagine and pursue desirable futures in the face of societal grand challenges, we still know little about how they develop the interpretive capabilities needed to act meaningfully under conditions of uncertainty. Drawing on a qualitative, multi-method study that integrates interviews with artists and organizations alongside the analysis of audiovisual artistic practices, we examine how art enhances leaders' capabilities for interpretation and meaning-making. Our analysis identifies three interrelated forms through which artistic interpretation operates in innovation: art as a sensor for surfacing the unexpected, art as a platform for collective sense-making, and art as a process for crafting desirable meanings. These forms illustrate how organizations access latent signals, sustain plural interpretations across human and non-human actors, and progressively materialize emerging meanings without premature closure. Our findings show that artistic interpretation functions as an interpretive amplifier, expanding the range of sensory, relational, and material data that organizations engage with when navigating uncertainty. This study contributes to organization theory and innovation research by theorizing art as a distinct epistemology of interpretation—one that strengthens organizational capacities for sense-making, desirability, and action in highly dynamic contexts. Authors: Paula Wuth & Roberto Verganti

**Keywords:** Art, Innovation, Interpretation, Meaning-Making, Desirability, Uncertainty

# Art, Pedagogy, and Attunement to the Affective Atmosphere(s) of Power: Encountered Curiosities in Teacher Education

**Presenters:** Safeera Jaffer

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

The atmosphere(s) of higher education are undeniably affect-laden, and the practice(s) of art-making and world-making are simultaneously evoked in teacher education. While higher education can be a space of learning, transformation, and growth, it also carries the oppressive weight of social and historical influences through surveillance, unwelcoming, and affective violence (Ahmed, 2014; Dernikos et al., 2020). To contend with and pedagogically counter the settler colonial racial capitalist university as an elite and privileged space dominated by prioritizing profit over land and life, this presentation will engage with my experiences using art and creation as a pedagogical practice within a Canadian teacher education program. Invoking art *in* pedagogy and art *as* counter pedagogy is particularly salient in this highly condensed, neoliberal teacher education program, which often prioritizes credentialization and efficiency over attending to affective, embodied, and sensorial teaching and learning practices. Specifically, in my teaching, I engage art practices such as poetics, drawing meditation, and visual representation as affective methods for embodied counter-expression and “transformative play” (De Leeuw, 2017; Rangel, 2016, p. 542). These practices enable learners and educators to become attuned to the non-human, spatial, temporal, and atmospheric contexts of the classroom in relation to the power dynamics and hierarchies of knowledge and curriculum. These affective, creative engagements harness an embodied presence that can lead to solidarities and commitments to justice that challenge oppressive structures of feeling in higher education (Zembylas, 2022). As we collectively build for the future, art and affective pedagogies in higher education are entangled with the encounters, flows, and energies that evoke possibilities, critical consciousness, and an attuned curiosity.

**Keywords:** Affective Pedagogy, Art Practices, Teacher Education, Racial Capitalism, Hierarchies of Knowledge

# Artists in the Archive: Situating the Texts That Shape Our Lives

**Presenters:** Vandhana Ravi

**Affiliation:** UC San Diego

Institutional documents are worldmaking texts that record the histories that shape the lived experience of an institution. However, these materials are often preserved in institutional archives, often restricting access for those whose lives they shape. Even when accessible, they are often read as what Ahmed (2006) called a non-performative speech act, i.e., they fail to produce the effects they name. This paper explores what happens pedagogically when institutional archival material is read at the sites it references, maintains, and/or dis-produces. Could situating non-performative institutional material open up sensational possibilities in the gap between the institution as documented and the institution as lived? Can text and textural-based artistic practices like remixing, juxtaposition, and collage subvert the spatial ordering and documentation of the institution? In this paper, I draw on a teaching practice that I describe as 'situated archival pedagogies', which I have used in various educational settings, including undergraduate courses and after-school art programs. This practice introduces students to working with an institution's archival materials and provides space for them to reflect on how these materials have shaped their learning experiences. I ask students to become familiar with the histories they inherit as students of their educational institution, but also to take the archival material out onto their campuses and to notice shifts in spatial and affective registers as they encounter this material in the places it has shaped. In an analysis of student work from these classes, this paper demonstrates how situated archival pedagogies enable students to see movement between their phenomenological environments and the rhetorical shapes they take in the archive. In approaching this translation as a creative exercise, situated archival pedagogies open up alternative affective possibilities in our relationships with the institutions in our lives.

**Keywords:** Archives, Arts-Based Pedagogy, Collage

# Atmospheres of Knowing: Investigating Art, Space, and the Aesthetics of Management Education Through the Stockholm School of Economics Art Initiative

**Presenters:** Riccardo Masiero; Roberto Verganti; Paolo Quattrone

**Affiliation:** Stockholm School of Economics

This paper develops the concept of atmospheres of knowing to explain how organizational spaces participate in management education. Management learning and education scholarship often treats space either as a neutral container for pedagogical activity or as a design variable that mechanically produces educational outcomes. Against both views, we theorize educational spaces as atmospheric: a sensorial, aesthetic, and affective arrangement that does not produce education, but orients participants toward a particular sense of knowing. We develop our argument through a historical analogy that compares the Stockholm School of Economics Art Initiative and its art interventions across classrooms, corridors, and study areas to the Church of the Gesù in Rome and its Macchina Barocca. Historically, the Church of the Gesù organized belief and doubt through configurations of light, scent, and sound unfolding through mysterious and unexplicable atmospheres. Similarly, we suggest that art interventions at the Stockholm School of Economics help make business knowledge felt, questioned, and inhabited. With our analysis, we identify four pedagogical dynamics through which atmospheres of knowing shape management education: believing, enchanting, doubting, and making. Believing cultivates shared orientations; enchanting intensifies attention beyond rational decision-making; doubting unsettles taken-for-granted assumptions; and making invites participants to compose knowledge through embodied engagement. The paper contributes to management learning and aesthetics studies by showing how business knowledge is formed not only through content and instruction, but through the atmospheric conditions under which knowing becomes meaningful in aesthetic and affective practices.

**Keywords:** Atmospheres, Aesthetics, Management Pedagogies, Art Spaces, Knowing

# Atmospheric Sensory Methods: Cabinets of Curiosities and Anarchives Within Studio Practice

**Presenters:** Nasrin Tork

**Affiliation:** University of North Texas

At the edges and interstices of studio infrastructure, material things accumulate tactile fragments, volatile residues, suspended iterations, and surfaces tried and abandoned. Conventional methodological frameworks frequently treat these accumulations as incidental byproducts; private studio activity that precedes the supposedly real work of research. This paper argues otherwise, positioning these material traces not as passive detritus but as active participants in the research itself. This paper emerges from an ongoing research-creation project focused on touch and sensory knowledge in artistic practice. Cabinets of curiosities and anarchives are here proposed as two atmospheric apparatuses that function in the studio as modes of inquiry. The cabinet draws on the historical Wunderkammern, which were a heterogeneous mode of gathering: they hold material residues in close proximity, allowing meaning to emerge through unexpected juxtaposition rather than predetermined classification. The anarchiv, as conceptualized by Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, operates as a feed-forward mechanism. It maintains drift, variation, and the ongoing generation of new relations over time, rather than preserving a fixed historical record. These two apparatuses render the studio's complex atmospheric dynamics perceptible, including minor contacts, abandoned experiments, and sensory intensities through which artistic knowledge takes form. They model ongoing modes of relationality among bodies, materials, and environments without reducing these micro-encounters to replicable procedures. Ultimately, this paper examines how affect theory might articulate processual and sensory methods without flattening them into prescriptions. What can cabinets and anarchives surface within studio practice that rigid taxonomies cannot hold?

**Keywords:** Atmospheres, Sensory Methods, Touch

# BURNOUT: Femininity, Humour, and Abjection in the Rural Space

**Presenters:** Bianca McDonald

**Affiliation:** NSCAD University

\*Note for clarity: *BURNOUT: Femininity, Humour, and Abjection in the Rural Space* is the supporting paper/thesis for the exhibition mentioned below (*BURNOUT*). The paper serves to expand upon the nature of the artworks themselves, and the theories (affect, the abject, feminist studies), lived experiences, affects, and stories which contributed to their making. Abstract below: *BURNOUT* is an interdisciplinary exhibition which examines rural identity, gendered labor/pleasure, and inherited social practice. Drawing from notions of affect, the abject, humor, rural feminism, and lived experience, it examines how women and femmes in rural spaces negotiate visibility, tenderness, and belonging by adopting or strategically performing hyper-masculinity as a means of survival in spaces structured by risk, hyper-masculinity, and machismo. Neither purely oppositional nor entirely assimilative, these negotiations occupy a complex third space - a space where tenderness and humour persist alongside rage, danger, and thrill. Through performance, ready-made objects, and sculptural interventions, *BURNOUT* launches into an immanent critique of rural cultural codes, centering grief, humor, risk, play, and emotional memory. The works operate as affective archives, critically examining resilience as an adaptation to conditions of violence, threat, and endurance. Rather than framing it as a monolith, *BURNOUT* insists on rurality as a complex, nuanced, contradictory site, attending to the affective and relational dimensions of being in-between: between the tough and tender, belonging and endurance, play and danger.

**Keywords:** Affect, Abjection, Rurality, Humour, Rural Feminism, Risk, Hyper-Masculinity, Identity, Third Space, Social Practice

# Collaborative Video-Making as Infrastructural Imagining: Enacting Affective Cycles of Making

**Presenters:** Charlotte Seegers

**Affiliation:** Cardiff University

This paper develops collaborative video-making as an affective method grounded in iterative cycles of filming, cutting, replaying, and recomposing visual material. Drawing on Tyson E. Lewis's notion of infrastructural imagining as an "open-ended experiment with what can be done with space," video-making is approached not as representation, but as a speculative practice of remaking lived experience together. Through filming and recomposition, experience is disrupted and replayed, generating situated possibilities for inhabiting life otherwise. The paper draws on research with women endurance cyclists who identify as childfree, exploring embodied attunements to exhaustion, fear, love, thrill, and repetition. Here, the white line of the road becomes both orientation and deviation in Sara Ahmed's sense: a shifting guide through which riders unsettle normative temporalities of femininity, kinship, and adulthood. Methodologically, the paper foregrounds two interconnected capacities of collaborative video-making. First, drawing on Phillip Vannini's work on mobile video methods, collaborative video-making operates as an affectively evocative and enactment-based practice through which embodied intensities can be sensed, replayed, and collectively experienced. Second, inspired by Lewis's notion of infrastructural imagining, collaborative replay and editing become material practices of speculative orientation. Through embodied movement, audiovisual recomposition, and the infrastructural conditions of cycling and editing, alternative ways of inhabiting intimacy, kinship, and adulthood are collectively explored and rehearsed. The presentation draws on scenes from *My Bike, My Baby*, a collaborative film developed as a snapshot within the wider video-making process. While the co-edited opening sequence foregrounds the affectively evocative capacities of collaborative video-making, the final editing-room discussion is approached as a material practice of speculative orientation. The paper argues that collaborative video-making operates simultaneously as an affective and speculative method: a weak utopian practice that opens new possibilities for sensing, moving, and relating otherwise.

**Keywords:** Infrastructural Imagining, Collaborative Video-Making, Worldmaking, Affective Ethnography, Feminist Mobilities, Weak Utopianism

# Encountering More-than-Humans and Space Affectively Through Arts

**Presenters:** Hsuan Chi Liu

**Affiliation:** Florida State University

This presentation aims to explore how affective atmosphere-building through arts can shape humans' experience of encountering more-than-humans. It discusses how creative practices through affective lenses may promote ecological awareness and foster post-human subjectivity (Braidotti, 2013), which may support the well-being of humans and more-than-humans alike (we are never apart). I explore this thread of thoughts through my involvement in multiple experience-design practices in Taiwan and the United States. They incorporate living inquiries interwoven within the nature-cultural realm through arts. My friend and I co-curated in an eucalyptus forest in Nantou, Taiwan, providing a participatory, mindful, and artistic experience for visitors to practice an alternative way of perceiving and being in the world. This engagement was hoped to restore human connection with natureculture and through affective and reflective knowing, to resonate with ordinary traces of life. The self-guided setting was also transformed into a workshop format in collaboration with the cohort from Florida State University. I would also share (co-)facilitation of artistic workshop cases conducted on a campus lawn, in a bookstore, or in relation to museum exhibitions. These examples demonstrate the potential of creative embodiment and expressive art-making to unfold dialogues of the environments we dwell in and our lived experiences, including LGBTQIA+ identities, ecological issues, or the relationship between humans and things in daily lives. As a museum practitioner, these experiences inform my dissertation research, which plans to create pedagogical encounters for local ecology/ environment in a museum setting with community participants. Affective art-making would be important to help the becoming process, developing the post-human subjectivity. Through the lens of participatory and multispecies ethnography with artistic practices, I imagine how we can invite participants as co-inquirers and extend affective vibrant forces to meet more-than-humans and the environment halfway.

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, More-than-Humans, Artistic Practices, Ecology, Environmental Education

# Errant Textilities: Research-Creation Acts in the Early Childhood Studio

**Presenters:** Sylvia Kind; Tatiana Zakharova-Goodman; Alex Berry

**Affiliation:** Capilano University

This presentation will explore how research-creation approaches open up alternative, affective, and artful dimensions of research with young children. Within this orientation, art becomes something other than object or form, rather it is a certain kind of attunement and way of moving, acting and activating. Creativity is understood within an ecology of relations, research becomes a co-compositional event, and the early childhood studio a space of and for pedagogical invention, symbiotic relationships, erupting tensions, and collective improvisation. This presentation discusses processes and insights from the first year of a three-year SSHRC Insight Grant, Transforming art studio pedagogies through research-creation in early childhood. Through illustrative instances of working with distinct and errant textilities, we consider the hyphenated and agitative relation of research and creation, the emergent processes of theorizing-creating, and the daily practices of knowledge co-creation with children in the early childhood studio. The work of four studios in British Columbia and Alberta is brought together to highlight that, other than retrospective meaning-making, research-creation strives to animate rather than interpret. Through cultivating the conditions of emergence and the 'yet to come', and artful and improvisational processes of moving-with others in their co-compositions and material experimentations, attention is given to how things come into being and the processes of their formation. Our artistic, pedagogical, and research practices become artful ways of responding, answering to, and joining with the flows, forces, and potentialities of emergent relations, politics, ideations, and artistries. Multiple knit, thread, yarn, and textile lines interweave with waste systems, plastics, songs, screams, drawings, enactments, stories, histories, and memories. Itinerant, affective and improvisatory formations arise in the errant wanderings and tangles.

**Keywords:** Research-Creation, Early Childhood Education, Studio, Atelierista, Artful Pedagogies, Textilities

# Flesh and Fabric: the Affective Experiences of Fat People and Clothing.

**Presenters:** Jennifer Jolie

**Affiliation:** University of Guelph

How do the everyday practices of dress by fat people carve desire lines into norms that regulate body visibility, movement, and belonging? This presentation explores how women and gender-diverse people's embodied practices of dress hold potential to function as counter-pedagogical tactics that negotiate and possibly unsettle dominant affective expectations around fatness, visibility, desirability, and otherwise how bodies are expected to appear and move. Thinking with affect theory, this work considers how clothing operates not merely as representation or adornment, but as a sensual pedagogy through which bodies learn, orient, and become socially intelligible through sensation, atmosphere, movement, and relation. Drawing from a multi-sensory dissertation research project, this interdisciplinary work examines the affective relationships between flesh and fabric to understand how the assemblage of body and clothing generates sensations that produce affective knowledge about fat embodiment. Dominant fashion aesthetics have long functioned pedagogically by teaching fat bodies what is acceptable, what they deserve, how visible they should be, and what spatial relations they are permitted to occupy. Here clothing holds capacity to act as a disciplining device (Brennan, 2010), shaping bodily comportment through norms of "flattery," minimization, gendered respectability, and legibility. In response, this project asks how fat sartorial practices might generate alternative affective pedagogies. What sensations emerge when fat bodies wear clothing? How do garments participate in fat people's practices of refusal, pleasure, visibility, and worldmaking? Employing arts-based research methods alongside a fashion studies-informed adaptation of object interviewing (Woodward, 2016), this project approaches clothing through a vital materialist lens (Bennett, 2010) which understands garments as vibrant and agentic participants in affective encounters. Situating dress as an assemblage of bodies, fabrics, spaces, and sensations, this presentation argues that resistant practices of fat fashion make the familiar strange, disrupting normative bodily aesthetics while generating counter-spaces of embodied possibility, relationality, and affective knowledge.

**Keywords:** Fat Studies, Affect Studies, Fashion Studies, Object-Interviewing, Photo Voice

# Following the Witch's Flight: Reimagining Professionalism in Early Childhood Literacy Education

**Presenters:** Bessie P. Dernikos; Jaye Johnson Thiel

**Affiliation:** Florida Atlantic University

Historically, professionalism in the field of education has been a contested concept without a singular, fixed definition or theoretical orientation (Dahlberg et al., 2007; Osgood, 2007, 2010, 2019). Recently, the concept of professionalism has taken center-stage in literacy, with increased pressure put on early childhood educators to develop and demonstrate professional dispositions that are linked to content knowledge, values, attitudes, and ethics (CAEP, 2024). Media claims that children can't read because they have not been exposed to scientifically-based instruction, namely phonics, and that early childhood educators are failing young children because of their lack of knowledge and adherence to methods that are unscientific, ineffective, and unethical proliferate (Mervosh, 2023). In turn, affective literacies (e.g. play) become positioned as illegitimate knowledge making processes encroaching upon the reputable kind of literacy backed by "science." Professionalism becomes entangled with neoliberalism and teachers who introduce the "wrong" instructional practices/materials may be subjected to dismissal/felony charges, labeled "groomers," and canceled on social media for exposing children to "woke" content (AP, 2022). This paper explores professionalism *otherwise* in early childhood literacies—as a post↔feminist↔"witchy" ↔assemblage. We think-with (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) the figure of the witch as a heuristic to highlight the hegemonic production of professionalism as taking place with/in the project of colonialism. We present a case for embracing the "witchy" nature of literacies as central to a reconceptualisation of professionalism in early childhood education. We argue that to think professionalism otherwise involves following "the witch's flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Keeling, 2007). We ask: How can thinking with the post↔feminist↔witch in relation to literacies trouble/unsettle colonialist grammars, resignifying professionalism in early childhood education?

**Keywords:** Literacies, Reading Wars, Witch, Witchcraft, Censorship, Posthumanism, Affect, Early Childhood Education, Professionalism

# From a History of Tears to Hope on Display: Affective Curatorship and the Jewish Future at Anu—the Museum of the Jewish People

**Presenters:** Mazalit Haim

**Affiliation:** Vanderbilt University

This talk analyzes the transformation of Beit Hatfutsot (The Museum of the Jewish Diaspora) into ANU – The Museum of the Jewish People, which reopened on the campus of Tel Aviv University in 2021. I read this institutional transformation as a paradigmatic shift in the affective and spatial ordering of Jewish history. Whereas Beit Hatfutsot organized Jewish temporality through exile, vulnerability, and recurrence—most notably in the Martyrological Column and Abba Kovner’s Scrolls of Fire—ANU reorients the narrative toward optimism, vitality, and continuity. The former museum spatialized catastrophe as vertically accumulating and ritualized trauma through cyclical temporality. By contrast, ANU explicitly seeks to undo what its chief curator, Orit Shaham Gover, described as the “legacy of tears” and to foreground the “Jewish capacity for hope” and belief in a better future. I argue that this transformation represents a profound reconfiguration of diasporic affect, from a primary locus of loss and persecution into a reservoir of success, innovation, and global cultural capital. In this curatorial logic, hope operates as an affective force materialized as already realized, secured, and embodied in recognizable figures of accomplishment. Drawing on affect theory and Ghassan Hage’s concept of “virtuosos of hope,” I read ANU as an institutional producer of futurity: it curates not only Jewish history but Jewish possibility, guiding visitors toward specific attachments while marginalizing unresolved loss, ambivalence, and vulnerability.

**Keywords:** Hope, Despair, Lament, Lachrymose, Affective Curatorship, Diasporic Affect

## Hospital Location Codes as T(r)ipping Points

**Presenters:** Nicole Marchesseau

**Affiliation:** York University

*Location codes ring throughout the campus's 27 acres—through wards, emergency areas, walkways between buildings, foyers, atria, the auditorium, beside pianos, and through the poured concrete brutalist architecture of the last standing remnant of the old hospital housing the forensic unit and the hospital archive reading room. Replacing solitude with unscheduled refrains, their sounds initiate ripples of concern just below the skin's surface...* The "antidotal anecdote" provided in this paper involves theoretical and ethnographic figurations around hospital location codes. In the context of a psychiatric hospital in a major Canadian city, I look at how hospital spaces pull the senses and affects into sharp relief through the unpredictable citation and anaesthetization of these codes (Buck Morss 1992). In the context of my wider study on mad art, this account works against erasure from within a space of intense bombardment. It also serves as a concentrated t(r)ipping point, a kind of colportage where "moments of the past...are glued onto the experience of the present" (Seremetakis 1993, 7). With goals of writing against trauma narratives, I followed artists' dispositions about the project (my dissertation research) and how they saw themselves as contributing to it. In this way, my artist interlocutors guided my research trajectory. To K Zimmer, who features in the account explored in this paper, the composition of "antidotal anecdotes"—an idea K and I drummed up—has been "life-saving."

**Keywords:** Affect, Sensation, Art, Spatiotemporalities

# Listening Back to Affect: the Audio Essay as Research-Creation in a Feminist Oral History of Theatre

**Presenters:** Maude B. Lafrance

**Affiliation:** University of Québec in Montréal

What is the proper *partage du sensible* for a feminist historiography? How do we transmit the affects of a minoritized history? I suggest that the methodological commitments of feminist oral history – doing research with rather than on its subjects (Gluck & Patai, 1991), learning to listen rather than to extract (Anderson & Jack, 1991) – are betrayed at the moment of restitution when voices recorded in the encounter are flattened into transcript and folded into the conventional scholarly essay. Drawing on oral histories with Montreal performers and scenic creators of the 1980s–1990s generation (routinely minoritized in Québec theatre historiography (Hurley, 2017; Robert, 2005)) I develop the audio essay as a feminist research-creation form that conveys affects. Following Chapman and Sawchuk's (2012) typology, the audio essay is at once research-from-creation and a creative presentation of research: analysis emerges through montage, layering, and silence rather than around the transcript. Della Pollock (2005) names the wager: oral history is already performance – affective, embodied, relational – and refusing that is the disciplinary problem. I read each piece through Deleuze and Guattari's (1991) percept – what renders the world's insensible forces sensible: breath, rhythm, hesitation, the texture the page erases. Methodologically, the audio essay also reorients pedagogy: classroom encounters with voices, breath, hesitation, and laughter teach a different history of theatre than the canon of texts (Taylor, 2003). The pedagogical consequence follows: to listen is to learn a different history, in the precise sense of Hickey-Moody's (2013) affective pedagogy, where "aesthetics can re-map affective routes" (p. 87). I close by playing two short edited segments, proposing the audio essay as a counter-pedagogical, counter-archival form for feminist historiographies. In Rancière's (2000) terms, the audio essay performs a small operation on *le partage du sensible*: it redistributes what counts as audible, sayable, knowable history.

**Keywords:** Feminist Oral History, Research-Creation, Affective Pedagogy, Audio Essay, Québec Theatre Historiography

# Look Both Ways: Towards a Queer Reimagining of Pedestrian 'Infrastructure'

**Presenters:** Eve Stowe

**Affiliation:** University of Kent

Dominant walkability discourses seem to be largely based on the idea of a universal pedestrian such that the pursuit of walkable spaces centres an imagined pedestrian, divorced from the broader political, socio-economic, and technical processes that shape walking experiences. Such approaches risk negating the experiential dimensions of walking as socially located bodies experiencing the embodied and affective resonances of public spaces with their multiple rhythms and forms of largely inevitable (and algorithmically dis/organised) relationality. Whilst 'not necessarily physically excluded from mobility opportunities' queer pedestrians 'pay hidden costs to travel safely' involving 'identity and visibility compromises and heightened levels of fear while travelling' (Weintrob et al., 2021). So, there are clearly other dimensions involved in shaping how walkable a space actually feels for pedestrians living at the intersections of marginalised (non)identities, beyond the built environment. This paper considers how the affectivity of vision and perception for queer pedestrians in public spaces is mediated by the logics of pre-emption embedded in the digital technologies we walk-with. Now that algorithmic technologies play a key role in the dis/organisation of sociality, the way we see ourselves, others, and our place within the world are mediated by algorithmic logic and the values and biases of those involved in the design and creation of digital media. Mis/disinformation and anti-trans political rhetoric shape the affective genre through which we anticipate the relationality of space, mediating the possibility of queer mobility. Whilst pursuits of walkability typically involve integrating pedestrian networks into existing transport infrastructures, this paper proposes that a queer walkability necessitates a more expansive definition of what constitutes 'infrastructure' in this context. We might consider infrastructure as those patterns, habits, norms and scenes of assemblage that mediate the everyday, that is, the living mediation of what organises life (Berlant, 2016).

# Making (Refuge) Otherwise: Sensational Pedagogies and the Affective Economy of Refuge

**Presenters:** Ashley Hagy

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

This paper explores refugee education as an atmospheric, affective practice of world-making. I contrast workforce-oriented programming with Women's Community Literacy, a project that emerged through refugee women's collective refusal (Espiritu et al., 2022; Xiong-Gum, 2025) of state-funded, neoliberal models of education. This refusal opens alternative pedagogical spaces grounded in place, relationality, and sensation. Learning here exceeds language, generating affect and energies that ripple across bodies and spaces, developing emerging knowledges and methods. The program unfolds as an assemblage of bodies, materials, and environments, where participants engage free-to-access public sites (zoo, parks, museums, etc.) through roleplay, storytelling, (counter-)mapping, and multimodal interpretation. Gesturing toward what exists in excess of the global assemblage of refugee resettlement, this paper employs agentic assemblage theories, which understand power as distributed across a dynamic configuration of human and more-than-human forces (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Bennet, 2010; Weheliye, 2014). I home in on the voice of this agentic assemblage (Mazzei & Jackson, 2017) to examine settler-colonial, neoliberal narratives that attempt to silence refugee voices and obscure coercive control. Drawing on Ahmed's concept of affective economies (2004), I first examine how dominant resettlement models (re)produce oppression and deficit; then, I imagine, alternatively, a sensational, affective economy of (pedagogies of) refuge and desire (Tuck, 2009). This paper dabbles in critical, feminist phenomenology (Guenther, 2021; Ahmed 2004, 2012, 2017); leaning into trans-/inter-disciplinary messiness and post-qualitative inquiry. The scrappy, collage-like pedagogical and research methods reimagine everyday community spaces as sites of encounter, resistance, and transformation. Centering hope as a discipline (Kaba, 2021) and refuge as what Campt (2017) calls the future real conditional, as something that must be (brought into being). This (counter-)pedagogy is a necessarily creative act, cultivating place-based, collective world-making where a-/e-ffective learning and teaching become a sensational practice of imagining and making (refuge) otherwise.

**Keywords:** Affective Pedagogy, Refugee Education, Assemblage Theories, Post-Qualitative Inquiry, Affective Economies, World-Making, Counter-Pedagogies, Feminist Phenomenology

# Mark-Making as Sense-Making: Painting as a Site for Critical Perception

**Presenters:** Maegan Harbridge

**Affiliation:** York University

A swish of paint relays both an experience of the tangible and intangible; the adherence of one physical material to another but also the immaterial relationship of bodies in formation—where form touches form. The swish of a cool breeze, the swish of a shoe along an icy path, the swish of two coats in passing. Such minor gestures migrate across bodies, materials, and atmospheres. Mark-making becomes a mode of sense-making. This paper develops expanded formalism as a practice of critical perception attuned to the relational quality of form. Grounded in painting and informed by feminist materialisms and the critical posthumanities, this research asks how foregrounding the interdependency of composition might challenge habits of subject/object differentiation and the instability of bodily boundaries. Rather than treating formal analysis as the description of visual properties, I approach it as a mode of attention that sensitizes perception to the co-constitutive conditions through which forms emerge. Expanded formalism unsettles habits of anthropocentric perception, so that painting becomes a site where relation is made perceptible—not as representation, but as an affective encounter with the restless and historically contingent quality of form. Edges touch, colours simultaneously contrast, figure and ground oscillate. Marks overlap, obscure, and interfere with one another. Seeing is decentered.

**Keywords:** Expanded Formalism, Perception, Painting, Affect, Critical Sensemaking

# Middle Voice of Subject Affectedness: Distributor of Aesthetic Gifts

**Presenters:** Hazel Antaramian Hofman

**Affiliation:** State Center Community College District

Exploring the visual language of Antonin Artaud's self-portraits as case study, we see how subject-affectedness operates as the aesthetic language of corporeal encounters. Body action middle verbs as I write, I draw, I paint, or I dance as processes are utterances of the middle voice and they provide the grammar of the performing body in modalities of disaster. This paper extends the argument of affect in cases of trauma toward the aesthetic development of self-mindfulness in terms of the middle voice, where I paint proffers interactions of an in-between-ness of body and the materiality of paint. The language of subject-affectedness dwells within notions provided within affect theory, briefly defined as the encounter of forces in which a kind of intensity experienced shifts the nature of our understanding of the world. Such an experience moves beyond conscious knowing to the body's perpetual becoming. It is this becoming that is communicated in the middle voice as the grammar of subject-affectedness, the place that acts and is acted upon. Gregory Seigworth and Melissa Gregg state that affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body, where body is characterized as human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise as movement circulating about, between, and adhering to bodies and worlds as impingement as well as the passages of forces or intensities. Utterance of subject-affectedness in pedagogic settings can be facilitated as linguistic awareness arising from a system where one critiques and where one operates within the critique that allows aesthetic actions to speak to the suffering body while the body creates. Here in the middle voice, self makes change happen and is equally changed. Moreover, supported by the research of Kim Fortun, such a self becomes a distributor of gifts speaking in the middle voice rather than the bearer of gifts in the active voice.

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, Middle Voice, Witnessing, Performing Body, Plurality of Aesthetic Mindfulness

# Moving Through an Art Exhibition That Centers Racial Difference Using Affect as an Analytical Tool

**Presenters:** Katie Fuller

**Affiliation:** Florida State University

An art exhibition became a tool for moving through the discomfort of racialized spaces and towards inclusivity and equity as shared values. A year after the police killing of Breonna Taylor, a museum used art as a narrative medium to create space for feeling and processing emotional pain. When researching the exhibition's planning and installation, I focused on bodies encountering other bodies in the museum, art and processes for installation, and the museum as an institution. As colonial spaces that are ordered, labeled, and categorized, museums are institutions defined by racism and segregation. Affective intensities related to difference can overwhelm a body, triggering embodied reactions. These experiences bring together social, historical, and political ideologies that converge in the museum. Museums, with all the designations attached to them, activate powerful, even debilitating, affective responses. Feeling states are productive spaces of potential. Affect vibrates and hums through encounters until the mind connects to these embodied experiences. Sara Ahmed writes about differences in identity as becoming stuck to bodies through time and repetition. Stuart Hall writes about these differentiated identity markers as purposeful and contrived, affective resonances that keep us separated by design. But Deleuze sees difference meeting difference as a space for possibilities. This begs the question: Can an affective charge be generative enough to move difference from its stuck place to being a field of possibility? Art propels affective experiences. An art exhibition about police and race-based violence may have moved the stuck difference prescribed by hegemonies. But museums, as exclusive spaces, are also affective. They have participated in social order and categorization through the roles they play in meaning making. This is a presentation of my findings: How might we gauge the efficacy of a museum exhibition that centers racialized difference before the visitor arrives?

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, Arts-Based Research, Art Exhibition, Racial Difference, Social Justice, Expansive Knowledges

# Poetry as Method: Sensed Speculation at the Limits of Educational Research

**Presenters:** Isabella Bartels

**Affiliation:** Columbia University

In *Queer Times, Black Futures*, Kara Keeling (2019) writes, "Poetry is a way of entering the unknown and carrying back the impossible; it is productive of ideas or knowledges that were incomprehensible and unacceptable before their distillation as such via poetry" (p. xii). In my recently completed dissertation, entitled *Pedagogies of Future Nostalgia*, I took up poetry as this entry point into incomprehensible knowledges through material-poetic interruptions: poems printed on transparent paper to overlay and interlude the 'main' narrative. Some poems were written specifically for the dissertation while others were (re)imagined and (re)created from drafts I had written over the last decade. My aims in the study were to explore relations among desire (Zembylas, 2007), discomfort (Boler, 1999), and memory in a particularly meaning-full assemblage - the high school I attended as a student - toward development of a pedagogical theory grounded in the resonances of nostalgia for the future (Jarvie et al., 2010; Miller, 2010). In the process, I found poetry to be a unique dimension of sense-making which highlighted ordinary affects (Stewart, 2007), played with relations between language and sensation, and made possible speculation of temporalities otherwise. Drawing from poems both in and beyond my dissertation, this presentation explores what poetry can do as a method of speculative educational research. I put to work Keeling's (2019) work on poetics and nonlinear temporalities, alongside Cesaire's (1992) and Glissant's (1997) theorizing of poetics and knowledge; I explore the capacities of poetry to make knowledge strange, to highlight creative affordances and representational limits of language (MacLure), and to reorient relations between author and reader to foreground the pedagogical value of the incomprehensible and felt future-sensations embedded in poetic knowledge.

**Keywords:** Poetry, Method, Speculative Futures, Temporality

# Sensing Strange Intimacies in (Anti-)racist and (Anti-)oppressive Artistic Approaches in a University Art Gallery

**Presenters:** Natalie LeBlanc; Natasha S. Reid

**Affiliation:** University of Victoria

Berlant (1998) redefined intimacy as the aspiration for shared narratives within familiar contexts. This perspective emphasizes the merging of public and private spheres, where personal desires become tied to public institutions while addressing intimacy's role in constructing spaces of belonging, which can also introduce vulnerability and friction in daily life. Balfour et al. (2025) underscore the role that *strangeness* plays in intimacy, bringing us into relation with and being touched by diverse others, arguing, "strange intimacies hold onto an ambivalent space, embodying a queering, resistant, and critical capacity" (p. 73). In this presentation, we draw from our recent study of anti-racist and anti-oppressive artistic approaches through relational events with contemporary artists, university students, and diverse off-campus communities in a university art gallery. We analyze three separate artist residencies utilizing qualitative and arts-based methods to describe and interpret how participants engaged in artistic approaches, physical environments, materialities, and shared encounters. We argue that strange intimacies hold pedagogical potential, focusing on how each residency created a place for refuge, while simultaneously blurring boundaries between the strange, intimate, and fecund; connectedness and estrangement; joy and discomfort; empathy and betrayal (Ahmed, 2004); aesthetic and anaesthetic (Springgay, 2011); rest and unrest (Hersey, 2022) – invitations for diverse publics to experience visceral energies, sensations, intensities, and atmospheres surrounding (anti-)racist and (anti-)oppressive approaches, offering opportunities to disrupt habitual patterns, flows, behaviours, and expectations, especially those ingrained in post-secondary institutions. References: Ahmed, S. (2004). *The cultural politics of emotion*. Edinburgh University Press; Balfour, L., et al., (2025). STRANGE/R/NESS: (Post)digital intimacies in uncanny worlds. *Angelaki*, 30(3), 71–88; Berlant, L. (1998). Intimacy: A special issue. *Critical Inquiry*, 24(2), 281–288; Hersey, T. (2022). *Rest is resistance: A manifesto*. Little, Brown Spark; Springgay, S. (2011). The ethico-aesthetics of affect and sensational pedagogy. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 9(1), 66–82.

**Keywords:** Artists-in-Residence, Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, University Art Gallery Education, Strange Intimacies

# Soft-Boiled Egg Yuko's Leap into Kairos: Champurū as Anti-Fascist Counter-Pedagogies

**Presenters:** Yuko Ida

**Affiliation:** University of Hawai'i Mānoa

Champurū, translated as “jumble” and “assemble” in English, is an everyday practice among common people in Okinawa, Japan, to make things for survival, connection, and conviviality. By maximizing creativity, Champurū combines multiple heterogeneous ingredients on the spot to produce something new, using whatever ingredients are available. Play it by ear is the key. Champurū are verbs, nouns, methods, movements, embodiments, and my embodied subjectivities emerged from the lived actuality of me-on-the-move at contingent encounters with you - human and non-human beings. Champurū is simultaneously folding and unfolding; new things can be added on the rhizomatic move when necessary. As “feminist experimentation” (Tavares, 2016), this auto/ethno/graphic artwork argues that the Champurū is crucial for surviving life-or-death struggles under authoritarian regimes. Champurū's improvisational and relational logic resists fascistic tendencies toward purity, hierarchy, standardization, and closure. With paper as what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call “the full egg,” the author activates Eve Sedgwick's (1998) “experimental critical writing” in her work. When the demarcation between critical and creative is blurred through experimentation, this writing itself performs poetically, aesthetically, and theoretically, evoking the author's experience through Toni Morrison's “rememory” (Rhee, 2021). As “it takes two to tango” (Atay, 2021), this artwork seeks to prompt readers to experience different registers and forms of affect, thought, and memory as alternatives from within through “reparative reading” (Sedgwick, 2003). Champurū is a lifeline against deadlines. The cold, hard institutional grid of intelligibility that governs the bodies and souls of children and teachers under neoliberalism will melt in the fire, swirl, steam, cocoon, and energies of Champurū, as a “radical care” and “space that holds strategic antagonism and liberatory imaginings” for what cannot be measured (Restler, 2023, p. 6). Champurū desires to make inaudible audible, unintelligible intelligible, unimaginable imaginable, unthinkable thinkable, and familiar unfamiliar in the kairos, here and now.

**Keywords:** Experimental Critical Writing, Rhizomatic Move, Playful Disobedient Improvisation

# Sounding Reciprocity: Listening Practices for Multispecies Organizations

**Presenters:** Matthew Bejtlich

**Affiliation:** Dalhousie University

This paper reviews the emerging literature on listening as an orienting practice for multispecies engagement within organizational contexts, drawing across organizational sensemaking, posthumanist theory, sound studies, and acoustic ecology. It maps the conceptual openings for organizational scholarship to take seriously the role of listening in cultivating multispecies ethical engagement. Much of contemporary business practice remains shaped by anthropocentric assumptions that privilege human dominance, control, and the extraction of value from living systems (Ehrnström-Fuentes et al., 2025). With seven of nine planetary boundaries already crossed (PBScience, 2025) and global biodiversity declining by 73 percent since the 1960s (WWF, 2024), incremental efforts to "do less harm" no longer match the scale or urgency of our planetary crisis. Following Oliveros, listening is approached as "listening in every possible way to everything possible to hear"—a multisensory, embodied mode of attunement that includes vibration, movement, smell, and touch as much as sound. Read alongside posthumanist scholarship (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 2016) and ecological embeddedness in management theory (Whiteman & Cooper, 2000), listening emerges as a relational practice through which humans and more-than-human beings co-sense and co-create meaning. While the importance of listening and relational awareness is increasingly recognized in regenerative education and business, a significant gap remains in understanding how sound-based listening practices might be practiced into organizational settings. Unlike visually dominant modes of knowledge, sound-based learning engages the whole body and environment, offering a more immersive and relational way of perceiving and responding to local ecosystemic realities of place-space. The review traces how scholars across sound ecology, organizational sensemaking, sound-based pedagogy, and multispecies justice, have begun articulating listening as a force for reciprocity and aliveness for place and species.

**Keywords:** Listening, Multispecies, Organizational Studies, Posthumanism, Sound Studies, Regenerative Organizing, Acoustic Ecology, More-than-Human

# Sticky Beautiful: the Affective Collage of Zine Making Pedagogy

**Presenters:** Zorianna Zurba

**Affiliation:** Toronto Metropolitan University

Zines are “non-commercial, non-professional, small-circulation magazines which their creators produce, publish, and distribute by themselves” (Duncombe, 1997, p.6). Zines have aesthetic value for their makers and readers (Teal, 2006) due to their form and recognition as a making practice (Triggs, 2010). Incorporating zines into the classroom encourages students to engage art making and creativity; supports the expression of intersectional voices; and, offers a flexible multi-modal assessment (Scheper, 2023; Buchanan, 2012; Wan, 1999; Congdon and Blandy, 2003; Piepmeier, 2008; Jacobi, 2007; Miller, 2008; Yang, 2017). Zine making introduced critical thinking skills: repurposed productivity; critical recycling; anti-copyright; world making; and, DIY skill sharing Scheper (2023). The visual and material qualities of zines “ignite [a] creative urge” (Piepmeier, 2008, p.213). Even within the confines of academic assessment, positive feelings have accumulated around zines. Zines promise happiness as a transformative outcome. To venture inviting happiness into the classroom through zine making seemed like a pedagogical strategy in which any potential negative result was outweighed by the benefit; in other words, a beautiful risk (Beghetto, 2019). Zines may promise happiness, yet, the optimistic attachments (Berlant, 2010) felt toward zines are not necessarily shared by students. Some of my students were stirred up, resistant, anxious, frustrated, and confused by the DIY aesthetic, treasure hunting for materials, and cutting and pasting; thus, rendering the zine a happy object (Ahmed, 2010). The vulnerability and anxiety expressed are part of the collage of affects produced and promised by sticky beautiful risk of zine making. Like the zine itself, the zine making pedagogy is a collage of affects. Through classroom reflections, informal feedback, and student responses, this paper traces moments of hesitation, awkwardness, and resistance which adhered together with the joy, hope, and happiness to describe the collage of affects of critical zine making pedagogy.

**Keywords:** Zine, Pedagogy, Happiness, Collage

# Strategies for Navigating Affective Responses in Planning Pedagogy

**Presenters:** Keisha Maloney; Joanna Kocsis

**Affiliation:** University of British Columbia

Urban planners do the hard, messy, heart-fueled work of bringing community members together to make decisions about the future of their neighbourhood, town, or city. But as divisions between publics are widening, the planner's work of co-creating workable ways forward feels ever more elusive. Planners who engage with the public are often on the receiving end of residents' fears about change, harmful discourse, and divisive ideology. In the moment, the planner has to process their emotional responses, manage the emotions of the group, and try to protect those who may be targeted from harm. Then, they are tasked to synthesize widely divergent perspectives into a recommended way forward that honours community input while addressing community needs. None of this is easy work. For us, this context begs the question, how are planning educators preparing students with the skills to process affective responses in their work? Affect remains merely a tacit outcome in many planning curricula; students muddle through group work and community-engaged projects without adequate preparation or support through the relational complexities that arise, leaving them vulnerable to burnout. Drawing on our combined experience teaching affective capabilities in planning and publishing about their importance, we will discuss affect as a critical framework for both instructors and students to make sense of their experiences in and beyond the classroom. We will share our experiences designing and implementing pedagogical activities to engage students in affective learning. We will discuss student-designed activities and simulations that recreate multi-stakeholder engagements around complex problems. Many of these activities focus on the embodied experiences of conflict and negotiation with no easy answers. While grounded in the discipline of planning, our experiences will be relevant to educators who are carving space to engage with affect in the classroom across disciplines.

**Keywords:** Urban Planning, Public Engagement, Pedagogical Strategies, Emotional Regulation

# Surrealist Inquiry: Affective Pedagogies in the Dreaming of Educational Selves

**Presenters:** Adrienne Boulton

**Affiliation:** Kwantlen Polytechnic University

This presentation explores the design of a Critical Studies in Art Education course as a surrealist (Breton, 1969) inquiry into the educational self. Drawing on surrealist artistic practices, including dream journals, automatism, and synesthetic mark-making, and Pinar's (1975) method of *currere*, the paper considers how affective and aesthetic pedagogies can re/map critical studies through embodied experiences of becoming. Rather than positioning inquiry as a rational process of problem-solving, the course engages teacher candidates in forms of experimentation that emerge through sensation, memory, intuition, and the subconscious. Grounded in surrealist traditions, the presentation draws on Gauss's (1947) assertion that imagination provides a pathway to *truth* through the dream state and subconscious experience. In this research, teacher candidates participated in a series of artistic inquiry practices including dream and memory journals, automatist drawings, and surrealist 2D compositions. These practices were structured through *currere*'s four moments; regressive, progressive, analytical, and synthetical, not as stages toward self-discovery in a Freudian sense, but as affective encounters with the instability and multiplicity of the self. The presentation further engages Bergson's (1988) concept of intuition and the repetition of difference to reconsider the role of questioning within educational inquiry. For Bergson, questions do not emerge from fixed problems awaiting solutions; rather, they arise through processes of becoming and experimentation. In this sense, surrealist inquiry resists instrumentalist models of education that privilege certainty, outcomes, and predetermined knowledge. By examining how artistic and affective practices produce modes of inquiry that are experiential, intuitive, and open-ended, this paper argues for a rethinking of critical studies pedagogy. Within this framework, inquiry does not begin as a question to solve. It, instead, inquiry emerges through the production of questions as an aesthetic and affective encounter with the educational self.

**Keywords:** Surrealism, Inquiry, Artistic Practice, *Currere*, Teacher Education

# That-Has-Been, That-Cannot-Be-Hard: Violent Images and the Affective Counter-Pedagogy of the Civil Contract of Photography

**Presenters:** Zichen Yin

**Affiliation:** University College London

This paper reads Ariella Azoulay's civil contract of photography as an affective counter-pedagogy of spectatorship: a practice of learning and unlearning through which violent images may move viewers beyond shock, pity, voyeurism or fatigue towards a more demanding civic relation. Rather than treating pedagogy as formal instruction, I approach it as an unstable training of perception and response. What must spectators learn or unlearn in order to hear the claims made by photographed subjects whose injuries have been visually present but politically unheard? The paper tests this hypothesis through three constellations of violent imagery: colonial photographs of *lingchi* and Chen Chieh-jen's artistic reworking; the Abu Ghraib prison photographs; and networked smartphone footage from Gaza. In the *lingchi* photographs, the civil contract is captured by a colonial visual economy that turns the condemned man into a passive sign of racialised cruelty and later a philosophical fetish object. Chen's critical engagement becomes a counter-pedagogical practice of unlearning imperial spectatorship by reversing the colonial gaze and exposing a montage of postcolonial violence and historical trauma. Abu Ghraib then shows how photographs can move from perpetrators' trophies into public evidence while still being contained by military and sensational regimes of looking. Finally, images from Gaza reveal a digital condition in which citizen-witnessing becomes both more imaginable and more precarious, shaped by misinformation, algorithmic gatekeeping and the uneven terrain of grievability. I argue that across the three different contexts, Azoulay's 'civil contract' is continually encumbered by the very structures that produce and circulate violent images, making it less an existing democracy than a precarious obligation that must be actively struggled for. In contemporary visual culture, the civil contract becomes an implicit form of affective, aesthetic and political labour with the potential to refuse both cynicism and passive spectatorship through mindful participation.

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, Violent Photography, Civil Contract of Photography, Counter-Pedagogy, Unlearning Imperialism, Spectatorship, Visual Anthropology

# The Courage to Be

**Presenters:** Katalin Halász

**Affiliation:** Brunel University of London

The Courage to Be The paper and the accompanying two-channel film present the first iteration of a longer arts-based research project focused on developing a new theory on courage—not merely as a personal virtue but as a lived affect and a dynamic form of collective political attachment. Based on filmed interviews with fifteen prominent artists who produced some of the earliest performance art in East Germany during the 1970s and 1980s, their artworks, and secret police files the German Ministry for State Security has accumulated about them over long years of tight surveillance, the project aims at exploring how courage drives resistance and creative defiance under conditions of uncertainty and totalitarianism. Artists behind the iron curtain faced significant restrictions of personal and collective freedoms under communist regimes, yet they persevered in creating provocative and politically charged works. In investigating courage as a collective political affect—how it is triggered, transformed, and transmitted through artistic practice—the paper and the film intervene in current debates on politics not as ideologies per se but as politics of feeling. It aspires to reveal how courage, as a mode of political affect, drove artists to risk ostracism, punishment, and even death in order to challenge political oppression and foster underground cultural movements that were crucial in ending state socialism. Taking the work of Paul Tillich as a starting point (1952), the paper and the film investigate how Eastern European artists working under totalitarian systems demonstrated a ‘courage to be’—an affective disposition vital to carve our spaces of freedom despite the threat of persecution, driven by an urgent need for self-affirmation and political and societal change.

**Keywords:** Courage, Performance Art, Totalitarianism, Eastern Europe

# The Dancing Ape: How Play Makes the World.

**Presenters:** Ghalib El-Khalidi

**Affiliation:** Independent

Dutch Historian Johan Huizinga proposes that 'play' is the primary formative element in all of human culture. Huizinga states that, "primitive society performs its sacred rites, its sacrifices, consecrations and mysteries, all of which serve to guarantee the well-being of the world, in a spirit of pure play truly understood," (5). This is not say that all art is formed by play, or that all play is ritual, meaning art, play, and ritual are all indistinguishable, but rather to clarify that although each of these human-animal behaviors are and have been in active and consistent relation with each other, they are also in fact quite distinct. Play, according to Huizinga, offers amplification and adornment of life, rather than reflection, and is to that extent a necessity not for the individual but for the social group. This presentation explores Huizinga's proposal regarding the operational role of play, and engages the mechanics of this operation, as outlined by Huizinga in his book *Homo Ludens*, with Seigworth's fundamental pedagogic matter of answering 'What can the body do?'. The presentation's focus aims to highlight the sensational affect generated by play, in order to further understand how transformative pedagogical and creative practices can be informed, enhanced, or developed through it for a more spontaneous and improvisational, yet not any less serious or grounded, process of making the world.

**Keywords:** Play, Art, World Making, Fun

## S22. Storying Wisely: Speculative Fictionings, Affect, and the Politics of the 'What If?'

This stream focuses on the overlap between affect theory and speculative fictioning. Speculative fictioning, or speculative fiction as method, gathers practices under the provocation “what if?,” taken up in research, teaching, critique, pedagogy, and creation. It often works by making scenes, prompts, and narrative experiments that people can think with, feel with, and act with, using stories and other texts as tools for inquiry. Affect can be understood as a capacity that both builds and leaks: intensities that gather, circulate, and drain across bodies, texts, technologies, and environments. How might affect theory and speculative fictioning work together to open possibilities, or to foreclose them?

This stream understands speculative fictioning as both situated and material: shaped by where and how it is made, by embodied and more-than-human conditions, and by feminist materialist commitments to partial perspective, relationality, and consequence. Storying wisely is a reminder that stories and speculative fictionings are never neutral. In the name of progress, or innovation, speculation is often treated as inherently good, but the question remains, progress for whom? Alongside speculation’s capacity to open futures, there are sinister speculations, forms of future-oriented practice that regulate behaviour, consolidate power, and foreclose possibility through anticipatory governance, racial capitalism, finance, eugenics, and settler colonialism. Storying wisely means staying with this double bind, and staying alert to how genres, methods, and media carry force in the world, including how speculative futures decide who is rendered possible, realistic, curable, and disposable, or written out of the future.

Work in this stream might pursue the meeting of affect and speculative method through forms such as SF, horror, climate fiction, fabulation, counter-myth, speculative non-fiction, research-creation, and speculative pedagogy. When speculative work circulates in academic and policy settings, it is often flattened into metaphor, allegory, or a creativity add-on. This stream keeps speculation in play as practice, taking seriously what speculative methods do to feeling, relation, and the uneven politics of the “what if?”

Papers might take up questions such as:

- In which ways does speculative fictioning operate as an affective method, in research, pedagogy, activism, or artmaking, and what ethical obligations follow from storying wisely?
- In which ways does “what if?” open onto liveable otherwise-worlds, and in which ways does it operate as anticipatory capture that sorts, targets, and forecloses futures?
- In which ways do Indigenous futurisms rework speculative fictioning as method, as relation, and as world-making practice?
- How do Black studies and Black futurity rework speculative method as a practice of possibility, critique, and otherwise-worlding?
- How do Queer and Trans theories rework the futures speculation reaches for, including its norms of the family and the human?
- How does crip theory rework speculative futures, especially the promise of cure, the fantasy of independence, and the demand to be made “normal”?
- What affects, including hope, dread, grief, rage, numbness, desire, and care, organize speculative scenes of world-ending and world-beginning, and how are these affects unevenly distributed?
- How do corporate, state, and institutional counter-speculations mobilize affect to commodify imagination, secure extractive futures, and make harm feel inevitable?
- In which ways do speculative texts and methods make infrastructures of feeling and control visible, and what do they reveal about who is made possible, curable, or disposable?

# An Artistic Exploration of Grief: What if I Collaborate with a Deceased Loved One?

**Presenters:** Alison Shields

**Affiliation:** University of Victoria

In this presentation I ask: What if...I develop an artistic collaboration with a deceased loved one? I share an artistic project that explores speculative collaborations as a way of finding hope in grief. I draw from a Curriculum of Loss (Leggo, 2017) that explores artmaking as a process of learning with and from a deceased loved one following the sudden and recent passing of my 6-year-old nephew in a tragic accident. This year pushed me to unimaginable spaces of 'not knowing' and a desire to understand the unknowable. Through my grieving process, I continuously re-examined my belief systems and have questioned Western approaches to grief that remove death from our everyday lives and encourages linear processes for moving through loss that did not address my desire to continue to care for, learn from and create with my nephew. I've felt torn between a desire to rid myself of the heaviness and a desire to find ways to go deeper into those feelings and work with them to re-imagine new stories with my deceased loved one. Using drawings given to me by my nephew as a starting point, I project those drawings onto canvas and continue the painting in a process of 'call and response' in an ongoing and playful collaboration between us. I view this work as a form of speculative fiction wherein the 'speculative' is embedded within the process as I re-imagine the potentials of collaboration, a future in which I may work alongside my nephew creating paintings that draw on past memories and the evocation of present and future experiences. Through this work, I expand my understandings of care within grief as I move away from simply healing and toward continuing care for my deceased loved one in a way that is collaborative, generative, imaginative and future oriented.

**Keywords:** Grief, Painting, Speculative, Loss

# Audiovisual Media as Untimely Speculations of the Future: from DIY Time Travel Experiments to Fluid Fictional Futures

**Presenters:** Michael Goddard

**Affiliation:** Goldsmiths University of London

This paper will explore the ways that audiovisual and other media can be considered to function as affective time machines and as speculations of the future. All time-based media work on time in a variety of ways, whether through combining past and present material traces, generating rhythms, flows and durations, or speculating about potential futures. In the case of both cinematic and sound recording technologies, these emerged at the same time as the invention of time travel as a concept, and several scholars have noted the synergies between the two and posited cinema in particular as the original time machine. This paper will therefore investigate these temporal deformations and alterations generated by time-based media. It will begin with a consideration of J W Dunne's bizarre text from 1929 *An Experiment with Time* will be examined as an example of DIY affective time travel that blurs the lines between fiction and reality, as does the more contemporary time travel experimentation of *Black Quantum Futurism*. The paper will then consider the TV series *The Peripheral* (2022) based on the William Gibson's 2014 novel and *The Three Body Problem* (2024) that adapts the 2008 novel by Cixin Liu. It will argue that what these texts share is illicit media transmissions between the future and the present, that address social, political, ecological and affective crises, and therefore suggest a media archaeology of the future. In all these speculations affect is key as they confront linear, chronological time as an enclosure of more expansive affective models of duration, and argue that media have the potential to open up more fluid versions of potential futures. This will be argued to correspond to both Nietzschean ideas of the untimely, and Steven Shaviro's concept of fluid futures (Shaviro, 2025).

**Keywords:** Futures, Experiments, Time Travel, William Gibson, Cixin Liu, Audiovisual Media, Fictions, Speculation

# Cartographic Vignettes as Speculative Fictioning: a Feminist New Materialist Methodology in the Aftermath of School Shootings

**Presenters:** Presence O'Neal

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

Mass school shootings in the US are often framed as crises of individual pathology or institutional security, with dominant frameworks presupposing self-contained, autonomous human subjects whose actions can be understood, prevented, and ameliorated through prescriptive analyses. Rather than approaching school shootings this way, this inquiry takes them up as a new materialist methodological provocation: what speculative fictioning practices are demanded by school shootings as a phenomenon of the posthuman convergence, and what do they make possible? (Braidotti, 2022). The posthuman convergence describes our contemporary political landscape as the intersection of advanced technological development, cognitive capitalism, and environmental depletion. Here, this convergence is made palpable through proliferating surveillance infrastructures that mark student bodies differentially along the lines of race, gender, and class, through social media feeds within which affective atmospheres of fear, threats, and safety are made palpable in real time, and through histories of gun violence which interpellate students and teachers. In this context, inquiry demands a speculative feminist methodology adequate to the ethical stakes of what is otherwise produced by damage-centered and individualistic research approaches. Situated as such, this topic demands knowledge production practices and examples of life in excess of domination centered on those most dehumanized and excluded by forces of colonialism. This proposal fleshes out how cartographic methodologies operate as a form of speculative fictioning and how Fanon's (1963) theorization of colonial violence enables an attunement to how speculation forecloses as readily as it opens. This inquiry unfolds as a series of vignettes that map affects and bodies generated by school shootings. The figurations that emerge attend to both potestas and potentia, and are drawn from accounts of youth activists, pre-service teacher candidates, and practicing classroom teachers. Read with Fanon and Barad, the vignettes generate figurations as collective sites of embodiment where otherwise-worlding is already being practiced.

**Keywords:** Feminist New Materialism, Decolonial Studies, Curriculum Studies, Qualitative Methodology

# Dreaming of Potato Chips: Speculative a/R/Tography with Everyday Objects in Between Hope and Despair

**Presenters:** Ken Morimoto

**Affiliation:** Tokyo Gakugei University

In May 2026, a major food company in Japan announced plans to change the design of their potato chip packaging into black and white driven by severe NAPTHA due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Disruption of the iconic visual language of their potato chip packaging that has persisted over decades makes visible the fragility of seemingly monolithic institutions and impresses the significance of geopolitical and large-scale environmental effects and fictioning on everyday life. Affectively attending to the phenomenon of the monochromatic potato chip bag offers an opportunity to examine and critique the proliferation of colonial and neoliberal narratives that inform visual culture. Leaning on the practice-based arts educational research methodology of a/r/tography (LeBlanc & Irwin, 2019) and specifically speculative a/r/tography (Coleman, 2024), this presentation works with the monochromatic potato chip bags as a material proposition with which to engage in the speculative fictioning of futural potato chip bags that gesture toward alternative social and ecological futures. In making new potato chip bags in-between dystopic and hopeful imaginaries, such practices of creative counter-storying become opportunities for artists, educators, and scholars to feel and respond to local and global crisis against narratives of exploitation and erasure toward generative, ethical relational worldbuilding.

**Keywords:** A/R/Tography, Arts-Based Research, Potato Chip-Based Inquiry, Speculative a/R/Tography, Hacking

# Feeling the Otherwise: Citizen Sleeper and the Affective Grammar of Speculative Fictioning

**Presenters:** Timo Alexander Zwarg

**Affiliation:** Kennesaw State University

*Citizen Sleeper* (Jump Over the Age, 2022) is a narrative video game set in the ruins of interstellar corporate capitalism. The player inhabits a corporate AI: a digitized human consciousness housed in a decaying proprietary body, surviving on a derelict space station. Through its system of finite daily energy and mechanics of mutual dependency, the game builds a community organized around food, story, and care circulating through bodies that are failing. Sylvia Wynter's account of *Homo Narrans* provides the theoretical frame. Humans are a self-narrating species whose genre is instituted through sociogenic codes operating below conscious awareness, producing affective reward for behaviors that confirm *Man(2)*'s grammar of the rational, productive individual. Wynter's project of overturning that genre is necessarily affective in its mechanism: the codes operate through felt reward and punishment, and their overturning requires a different felt reality, the inhabiting of an alternative story from the inside. I read *Citizen Sleeper* as a speculative text that stages precisely this, routing the player through an affective sequence Sara Ahmed's vocabulary makes legible. The player begins in discomfort, in the acute surface-awareness of a body that cannot sink into the spaces organized for it. That discomfort opens onto anger, which is, with Ahmed and Lorde, "loaded with information and energy," oriented toward what is not yet. And anger, in Ahmed's account, opens onto wonder. Wonder is where I locate the game's specific contribution. Ahmed's wonder reveals historicity: it allows us to see the surfaces of the world as made, interrupting the reification that renders the ordinary inevitable. *Citizen Sleeper* generates wonder at the ordinary conditions of collective survival, food shared, maintenance performed, finite time inhabited together, and in doing so produces the felt sense that the world came to be this way and might yet be otherwise.

# If Men Had Birth Control

**Presenters:** James Estrada

**Affiliation:** Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Inspired by Gloria Steinem's 1978 essay "If men could menstruate" I imagine how we might prepare for new methods of sperm-based contraception that may be FDA approved by the end of the decade. Based in data from studies conducted by Planned Parenthood and the Male Contraceptive Initiative, and grounded in a critical history of the development of contraception designed for people who can get pregnant, I ask what necessary futures we might need to nurture in order bring this new science, and indeed, this new practice in sexual relations, safely and enthusiastically into our world. I also consider how the scientific paradigm of the gendered responsibility of preventing pregnancy has not yet included those who produce sperm, and ask: why not, what if? Despite a so-called conservative turn in gender relations and declining self-reported "feminism" among young people today, I share how signals from youth, from their preferences in contraception, to their ideas about fatherhood, and their practices of the body, and trends in male focused wellness, actually make a case for a nascent social readiness for innovation. These sperm-focused methods, from hormonal topical methods to vas-occlusive "temporary vasectomies" also require a reframing of the field of sexual and reproductive health and require it to orient itself toward different balances, different kinds of sex education, different kinds of sex perhaps un-gendering the act itself. Based in my close work with companies developing these drugs and procedures, and my work with SRH and reproductive justice leaders, this paper invites gender studies scholars and especially heterosexual women whose paradigm is most disrupted to think critically about the role of assigned-male at birth partners in bodily autonomy and in the future of family planning. What if?

**Keywords:** Masculinities, Contraception, Feminisms, Manosphere, Science, Gender, Heterosexuality, Reproduction

# Multiplicity of What-if Questions as Affective Forces Driving Experiments with Forms

**Presenters:** Yuko Ida

**Affiliation:** University of Hawai'i Mānoa

Life is made of contingent encounters with others. Teacher Yuko—Yuko-sensei—was produced through the millions of contingencies that co-exist with multiple what-if scenarios. This performative writing is a product of contingencies re/produced through the labor of my reading, writing, thinking, teaching, caring, relating, desiring, and hoping with you here and now. By activating what Eve Sedgwick (1998) calls “experimental critical writing,” this paper is written in the hope of (re)claiming solidarity with other educators - and even myself. As such, it is written not with resentment to regain the lost something but with convivial jouissance, affirming the joy of life with you whom I have met and not yet. This paper will introduce poems and non-fictional stories to explore the embodied subjectivities of the multiple Yukos who ask: “What if I did not become a teacher in Okinawa, what would I have been doing today? What if I had not encountered the educational policy called ‘Zest for Living’ back in 2003 at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa? What kind of life would I have lived afterward, including today? Would I have even submitted this abstract to attend this conference? And what else might have been otherwise?”

**Keywords:** Contingencies, Conviviality of What if Scenarios

# Philip K Dick, Paranoia and Totality: 'a Scanner Darkly' and Paranoid Police Power

**Presenters:** Vladimir Rizov

**Affiliation:** University of Sussex

In his authoritative study on science-fiction, the late Fredric Jameson (2019) classified Philip K Dick's (PKD) writings as rooted in the exploration of subjectivity; even more so, Jameson argued PKD's work marked a stage in the development of the genre. While I will argue that many of Dick's screen adaptations tend to be preoccupied with paranoia and suspicion, this paper will focus primarily on the novel and its film adaptation 'A Scanner Darkly' (2006, dir. Richard Linklater; 1977) as an example par excellence of this phenomenon. I will explore both versions of 'A Scanner Darkly' as representation of what PKD described as 'androidization,' the state of being in the world where one is 'to be pounded down, manipulated, made into a means without one's knowledge or consent' (1972:299). For Dick, androidization requires subjects that are both obedient and predictable. In this paper I will seek to extract Dick's problematisation of surveillance and everyday life by taking seriously his representation of police agents as 'subjects assembled and produced, becoming instruments of violence' (Linneman, 2022:118). In broader terms, I am interested in exploring the overlap between approaches to the ideology of police power and affect. As Berlant has argued, affect theory should be understood as a continuation of the study of ideology (2011: 53). Taking the 'what if' of science fiction seriously requires an engagement with the way in which the manifold indeterminate affects it generates are also 'a way of talking about the impact of the world on subjects and the way they try to assess their belonging to the world' (2016).

**Keywords:** Philip K Dick, Fredric Jameson, Lauren Berlant, Police Power, Affect, Ideology

# Rehearsing the Future as Past: Speculative Remembrance as Affective Pedagogy in Contemporary India

**Presenters:** Sakhi Upadhyaya

**Affiliation:** Michigan State University

In the science-fiction story *A Visit to Partition World* (Saint, 2019), an amusement park opens in 2047 — a hundred years after the Partition of the Indian subcontinent — offering visitors immersive simulated experiences of the event, ranging from the quotidian to the spectacular. Taking seriously invitation to speculate on "What would it be to remember the past (and present) in the future?" as a kind of time travel, this work presents creations emerging from theatre-based explorations developed with teachers and postsecondary students. What does it mean to remember? With the rise of Hindu ethnoreligious nationalism in India, and the consolidation of a unified Hindu-Indian subject as a primordial given to naturalize expulsive violence against the Non-Hindu other, the Indian public confronts a deepening crisis of remembrance. History itself becomes a "flat field where all kinds of memories have an equally interesting status" (Sarkar, 2019, p. 172), with memory-work driving diffused perceptions of what counts as knowledge, who produces it, and whose experience is legible within it. The work is an attempt to disrupt these perceptions by asking: How are affects galvanized (Ahmed, 2004) across multifarious narration(s) of the Indian subcontinent's history? What affects circulate between historical figures, sites, texts, architectures, and modes of knowing and being to create the conditions for dangerous and/or hopeful worlds? How are these affective infrastructures mediated by the ways in which we build pedagogical relationships to remembrance as a public, and what is the role of the arts in reimagining this mediation? At the heart of this work lies the question of which affects are stirred when the rehearsal room becomes a space of speculation, deliberation, and play with remembrance. The creations presented are co-constructed with workshop participants, set in motion through Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, visual fabulation, improvisational and documentary theatre.

**Keywords:** Memory, Hindu Nationalism, Speculative Remembrance, Time Travel, Theatre

# Speculative Ecologies: Affect and World-Making in Women's Territorial Defense in Latin America

**Presenters:** Claudia Diaz-Diaz

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

In Latin American contexts, women are on the front lines of community organizing and ecological defence. Their leadership exposes the climate and gender disparities resulting from Global North extractive industries (mining, forestry, and hydroelectric projects) operating in Indigenous and rural territories. Drawing on a community-engaged research project, this paper brings affective theory (Ahmed, 2004; Million, 2009) and Métissage (Donald, 2012) to centre the affective, speculative, and experimental potential of women-led collective work. Specifically, I centre women's individual and collective poems and illustrations, created as part of a climate and gender justice research project, to answer the question: What emotional intensities and tensions arise when a group of women imagine a future amid the climate crisis? Using the prompt: "And we still hear the birds singing", women create speculative texts that decenter strategic rationality, giving rise to world-making practices that acknowledge the presence of the more-than-human, such as native trees, birds, and the river, in their history and future. Their texts reveal the affective and emotional complexity and fragility of their collective action, how it feels in their bodies, and the world-making possibilities it entails. This paper offers new applications of affect theory to a growing literature on women-led movements against extractive industries in Latin America. Ultimately, this paper contributes to better supporting women's collective actions by challenging the modern grand narrative of progress at the core of the climate crisis and centring affect as a vehicle for knowledge production and ecological change. References Ahmed, S. (2004). Affective Economies. *Social Text*, 22(2), 117–139. [https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-22-2\\_79](https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-22-2_79) Donald, D. (2012). Indigenous Métissage: A decolonizing research sensibility. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 25(5), 533–555. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2011.554449> Million, D. (2009). Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History. *Wicazo Sa Review*, 24(2), 53–76. <https://doi.org/10.1353/wic.0.0043>

**Keywords:** Affect, Métissage, Speculative Ecologies, Climate and Gender Justice

# Speculative Fiction and Eco-Futures: A Call to Engage Pre-Service Teachers in Affective Writing Practices

**Presenters:** Bradley Sullivan

**Affiliation:** University of Oregon

The capitalist ideologies that govern education in the present serve to negate futurity. Capitalist notions of futurity are premised on the never-ending expansion of capital, which ultimately extends the present into the future indefinitely (Slater, 2025). Education is purported as a means for individuals to obtain future success in the capitalist economy. Thus, education actually serves to reproduce existing societal structures, the very institutions, policies, and practices that contribute to identity-based oppression, climate crisis, and political instability. At the same time, “capitalism shackles education to an impossible task of resolving the social, economic, and ecological crisis that have resulted from its systemic contradictions” (Slater, 2025, p. 227). Therefore, education has served as a statist apparatus of capture (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) within the capitalist machine. Though envisioning alternatives to these challenges may seem near impossible, I have hope in speculative fiction’s theoretical, ideological, and pedagogical capacity to invoke radical reimaginings of possible futures. This paper is primarily concerned with speculative fiction that examines ecological issues. There are several forms of speculative fiction that address environmental topics including solarpunk, ecopunk, ecotopia, hopepunk, Afrofuturism, Indigenous futurism, and climate fiction more broadly. Each of these approaches seek to address specific ecological concerns. For example, Indigenous writers often challenge dystopian stories about climate futures that ignore the colonial violence responsible for climate issues in the present (Whyte, 2018). Part of the promise of eco-futurist writing is to envision possible liberatory futures that hold the potential to transform our modes of engagement in the present. Drawing on Haraway’s (2016) notion of speculative fabulation, I argue that engaging pre-service teachers in speculative writing practices about ecological futures—where affective intensities circulate amongst human and more-than-human bodies (Deleuze, 1988)—has the capacity to transform instruction in support of more just and equitable environmental and educational futurities.

**Keywords:** Affect Theory, Speculative Fiction, Eco-Futurism, Teacher Education

# Tender Disaster in the Otherworld: the Affective Excess of 'Making Kin' in Transcultural Fictions

**Presenters:** Yilin Zhang

**Affiliation:** University of Georgia

What if we truly make kin with the more-than-human world? What does it feel like? This paper attends to what Donna Haraway's "making kin" leaves underarticulated: the erotic pull toward the more-than-human Other, and the affective consequences of acting on it. Although contemporary speculative fiction often focuses on the ecological, political, and economic consequences of the ethical claims advanced by posthuman theorists, often through crisis-oriented forms of inference, what I refer to is the ineffable affective truth of encountering, fusing with, and separating from the Other. Through transcultural fictions, I ask where the desire to fuse with the Other comes from, and what it feels like to follow that desire to its limit? I propose *tender disaster*, developed from Blanchot's *The Writing of the Disaster*, to name an affective structure in which disaster arises not from violence but from the excess of tenderness. I ask whether tenderness, when pushed to its extreme, might turn into a form of violence—and how such violence, through the harm it inflicts, reminds us of the ethics of cohabitation and its inherent fragility. I investigate this question through three otherworldly texts: Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation*, where transgression and the dissolution of boundaries in Area X open onto a multispecies world; Lispector's *The Passion According to G.H.*, where the communion between human and cockroach culminates in the dissolution of the self; and *Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio*, where cross-species love carries both punishment and excess. Here, speculative fictioning is not merely a performative gesture towards the future, nor is it neutral. Rather, it is deeply affective, drawing the audience into its unfolding narrative. Bringing together my own artistic practice, writing, and sounds, I engage in storying and world-making through a multisensory approach, one that reminds us that the essence of this universe is a single tear.

**Keywords:** Speculative Fiction, Transcultural Texts, Affect Theory, Making Kin, Donna Haraway, Posthuman Theory, Annihilation, Cross-Species Love

## S23. Taxonomy, Psychology, and Beyond: Affect in the History of the Sciences

How, and when, did affect come to be understood as antithetical to the kind of cognitive discipline that defines scientific inquiry? As the “Knowledges” theme for this MAKE conference points out, capital-K Knowledge is associated with a cluster of concepts that are “[s]ubtractive of feeling” and “[e]liminative of affect”—a state of affairs in which the understanding of science as the ultimate bearer of instrumental rationality has played an important role. And yet, as scholars from Lorraine Daston (1995) to Donovan Schaefer (2022) have pointed out, affects are and always have been inextricably entangled with the theory and practice of scientific investigation. The posture of aloofness with which affects are taxonomized, as these scholars have revealed, is itself also affectively determined.

This stream asks: what is the history of affect’s entanglement with knowledge practices and its subsequent disavowal? How does this historical narrative map onto contemporary politics—where it is possible for Ben Shapiro to argue that “facts don’t care about your feelings” in defense of religious fundamentalism, while professional scientific associations like the American Psychological Association come under fire for their empirically-derived support for gender-affirming care of minors?

We invite submissions from a broad range of disciplinary, geographic, and historically-framed points of focus that explore and complicate this long-held problematic. From late scholastic “sciences of the soul,” to the emergence of early modern psychology and taxonomies of affect in the 17th century, to the 18th- and 19th-century development of political and population sciences of the mob, to the 20th-century advent of psychoanalysis and its theory of drives, intellectual history is rich with examples of the imbrication of science and affect (even if often holding them as mutually exclusive of each other).

We welcome papers on how affect has been marginalized, discounted, or disavowed in the sciences, but also how it has been incorporated, mobilized to advance Knowledge (singular) or knowledges (plural), and turned into an object of science in its own right. What is gained or lost by the objectification of affect, and what epistemological premises allow affect to become an object of science specifically as opposed to, or alongside, other fields, such as poetics, visual art, ethics, or religion, to name a few?

Possible topics for this stream include but are not limited to:

- How do modern notions of science and its epistemologies produce or determine our ideas of what “affect” is (if at all)?
- How does the inclusion or exclusion of affect in the history of the sciences affect the orders and hierarchies that science generates?
- How do gendered perceptions of science and affect respectively inflect their mutual imbrication in our understanding?
- What affects are implicated in the scientific or biopolitical discourses and practices of colonial or neo-colonial management?
- How do artistic or literary ways of knowing, themselves “arts” rather than “sciences,” generate or critique affect in manners not possible within the bounds of science, however defined? How do they mediate our knowledge of science and themselves in relation to science?
- Religion, like affect, has a complicated history as one of the “others” of modern science. How have religious and/or Christian concepts, both metaphysical and social-political, determined the structures of science (e.g., reason as “transcendent and all-seeing”) or provided alternatives?

# "Electronic Erectile Dysfunction": Ironic Pathologization and Vernacular Knowledge-Making in Chinese Digital Culture

**Presenters:** Weiting Du

**Affiliation:** University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

"Electronic Erectile Dysfunction" (电子阳痿, dianzi-yangwei)—a Chinese internet vernacular for a gamer's loss of motivation to play—offers an unexpected site for examining how lay actors, through collective self-diagnosis, taxonomize affective experience through the borrowed grammar of biomedical science. This paper asks two related questions: what epistemological work does this folk taxonomy perform, and what affective states does it simultaneously organize and foreclose? Drawing on affective discourse analysis of Zhihu and Bilibili discussions, we show that naming gaming fatigue as "impotence" allows structural conditions—labor exhaustion, time poverty, platform-mediated precarity—to surface as explanations, but only within an individualizing therapeutic frame that positions such conditions as causes of personal dysfunction rather than objects of critique. Rather than describing "symptoms," such a taxonomy selectively organizes affect according to pre-existing medical and gendered knowledge, rendering structural grievances legible only insofar as they confirm individual pathology. We further argue that this taxonomization operates through ironic pathologization: an affective practice that simultaneously borrows scientific authority to legitimize collective feeling and maintains ironic distance from clinical medicalization. This dual move is epistemically consequential: while structural conditions are named, the medical idiom forecloses their critique by absorbing them into a therapeutic logic of self-adjustment. At the same time, it reinstates a gendered framework that equates male subjectivity with desiring capacity, precisely through the performance of self-deprecating humor. This taxonomy's cultural legibility is historically conditioned: for a generation of Chinese youth who came of age under a state-endorsed moral panic branding gaming as "electronic heroin," gaming and sexuality share a parallel history as objects of institutional prohibition—both marked as addictive, wasteful, and antithetical to productive self-cultivation. This shared grammar of forbidden desire makes the metaphoric substitution intuitively resonant. This paper seeks to explore how ironic pathologization represents a form of vernacular knowledge-making that is affectively driven, epistemically consequential, and inherently masculine.

**Keywords:** Affective Discourse Analysis, Affective Practice, Folk Taxonomy, Digital Self-Diagnosis, Masculinity, Precarious Manhood, Chinese Digital Culture

# A Feeling for Language: the Changing Role of Affect and Emotion in the Science of Nonhuman Animal Communication

**Presenters:** Cristian Hernandez-Blick

**Affiliation:** Independent

During much of the 20th century, emotions and affect were peripheral topics in the science of animal communication and the study of its evolutionary development. A number of factors contributed to this attitude. The methodological difficulties of measuring subjective states and a concern for anthropomorphism led many to favour frameworks that forwent the complications associated with attributing internal experience to nonhuman animal subjects. Researchers thus tended to gravitate toward quantitative, empirically verifiable, and otherwise more scientifically rigorous accounts of evolved functional reference, information encoding and transmission, and operational descriptions of observable behaviour. It was also assumed that the affective and emotional dimensions of animal communication were limited to primitive signalling motivated by bare survival and core drives such as fear, aggression, and reproduction. Seeking evidence for more sophisticated communicative capacities beyond innate, rudimentary expression, some researchers turned their attention to other areas of study, such as referential communication and compositional semantics in nonhuman animals. Recent research has begun to challenge the aforementioned assumptions and approaches, pursuing new methods for studying consciousness and sentience across the animal kingdom and embracing emotion and affect as critical modalities of complex communication, namely in the study of pragmatics. By considering contemporary research in the context of earlier traditions, this paper will explore the shifting status of emotion and affect in the scientific study of nonhuman animal behaviour, psychology, and communication, tracing both their historical marginalization as well as their recent emergence as productive sites of scientific inquiry.

**Keywords:** Affect, Emotion, History of Science, Animal Communication, Evolution of Language, Consciousness, Pragmatics

# Reading Affect in Marshall McLuhan's Understanding Media

**Presenters:** Emma Palmer

**Affiliation:** Vanderbilt University

The founder of media studies Canadian theorist Marshall McLuhan's ideas around media's possibilities were inextricably linked to the scientific developments of his lifetime. Mid-century public intellectualism emerged in a time of technological development so life-changing that it produced existential crises. From the wake of the A-bomb to the increasingly interruptive presence of television in the home, the impact of media upon the body moved so quickly that McLuhan writes in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964) "with the arrival of electric technology, man extended, or set outside himself, a live model of the central nervous system itself" (53). In this paper, I seek to relate McLuhan's theory of media, in particular his sense that media is an *extension* of man, to affect theory. For McLuhan, technological development emerges from the necessity to inoculate humans from the rapid and anxious pacing of Modernity. I argue that this idea of media *necessitates* an affective reading: McLuhan's theory means that we must always read media and technology through their impact on the body. Placing McLuhan in conversation with the likes of Bruno Latour, Walter Benjamin, and Donna Haraway, I argue that what has been perceived as McLuhan's "technological determinism" (Raymond Williams) is instead a provocation to take seriously what it means for both humanity and media when McLuhan asserts that our current technologies are not separate from, but extensions of ourselves. I argue that affect in *Understanding Media* is not antithetical to scientific knowledge; it is essential.

**Keywords:** Media Theory, New Media, Network, Modernity, Post-45

# Scythian Melancholy: Feeling Trans Before Sexology

**Presenters:** C. Libby

**Affiliation:** Penn State

“Scythian Melancholy: Feeling Trans before Sexology” investigates the entanglement of affect and medical knowledge by examining how the disease known as Scythian melancholy functioned as a site of pre-sexological diagnosis for cross-sex behavior during the eighteenth century. In 1732, the Classical diagnostic category melancholia Scytharum (Scythian melancholy) makes a surprising reappearance in a medical text written by botanist and medical doctor Francois Boissier de Sauvages. His text, *New Classes of Diseases*, used melancholia Scytharum to categorize the “delusion of changing sex.” De Sauvages draws on Hippocrates’ fifth-century writing on this malady, which described a condition suffered by Scythian men who became eunuchs, did women’s work, lived like women, and conversed accordingly. Scythian melancholy’s legacy is complicated by the fact that it functioned as a disease category with religious and ethnomedical significance. Byzantine scholar Roland Betancourt explains that the illness “draws on the well-known ancient theory of racialized difference, which divided the known world into climate zones and regarded differences in skin colour as a by-product of the exposure to the sun of both skin and humours.” The medieval theory of climate zones envisioned the inhabitants of outlying regions as having unusual customs and physical characteristics. One manifestation of difference was the attribution of religiously inflected cross-sex practices to those living in extreme climate zones. These practices were linked to a melancholic disposition that enabled metamorphosis (human and nonhuman). The paper concludes that Scythian melancholy’s reintroduction as a diagnostic term to describe gender nonconformity in the sixteenth century revitalizes this premodern racialized and gendered category suffused with affect. Although Scythian melancholy disappears again by the twentieth century, the association between trans subjects, racialization, and melancholy persists.

**Keywords:** Melancholy, Nosology, Transgender, Ethnomedicine, Sexology

## S24. The Making of an Affective Cosmos: Between Art, Science, and Philosophy

A combination of knowledge and atmosphere, this stream is oriented to the very literal manner in which the cosmos, the cosmic, and cosmology have infused our conceptions of knowledge and reality and how these themes have enjoyed a resurgence of sorts in multiple fields (for instance, affect studies, new materialism, Deleuze Studies, process philosophies, environmental studies) which seek to re-potentialize and rethink the relation of affect to bodies, earth, and universe. How can cosmological thinking expand our understanding of, and sensitivity to, affect? What new affects are unleashed when we turn our theoretical attention to the cosmos, allowing perhaps that we must traverse the boundaries between philosophy, art, and the sciences to do so? Cosmological questioning is also a resource for great imaginings, from different worlds, to the reconfiguration of space and time, when we challenge ourselves to think beyond the human, beyond even the earth, to the outward bounds of reality, we open possibilities for rethinking our ethics, our politics, and our very modes of existence. This is where the creative spirit of affect studies takes hold, producing a new and fecund atmosphere for thinking and being anew. We challenge contributors to this stream to use the powers of the cosmos, the open-ended questioning that has always infused thought and philosophy as pertaining to the ineffability and expansiveness of this topic, to think differently and create new concepts which challenge the boundaries between the sensible, the intelligible, and the affective.

One may find an authentic cosmological sensibility in much recent continental philosophy, namely for thinkers like Nietzsche, Whitehead, Bergson, Husserl, Heidegger, Axelos, as well as Deleuze and Guattari, yet the tradition of looking to the stars, contemplating the atmosphere, and imagining brightly the ineffability and possible significance of the cosmos is baked into the deepest deposits of human thought. This stream invites participants to address this history through any variety of the compendium of thinkers whose work addresses the cosmic, but to do so with fresh eyes, through the lessons and interventions of affect theories which have expanded our understanding of the vitality and variety of materialities and challenged the priorities of the purely human. This stream also provides the opportunity to entertain the confluence between the sciences and philosophy of cosmology. Our scientific knowledge of the strange phenomena of the cosmos, from the molecular to the macro, has yet to find home in our conceptual frameworks. Creating bridges between these areas of conceptuality, philosophy, and science is crucially needed in our quest to reimagine the world and our place in it. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that some of the most fecund and productive spaces in which a cosmological sensibility has been engendered is in the artworld itself. How can art inspire thought and offer tools for helping us understand the affective nature of the cosmos? Papers in this stream might include topics such as:

- The ways by which contemporary artworks strive to grasp non-terrestrial forces that are affecting the world's materiality
- Abstraction in art as an expression of natural entities being affected by c(ha)osmic forces
- The challenges in expressing artistically invisible, cosmic forces that are affecting materiality
- The affects involved in recent theories in scientific cosmology (chaotic universe, fractal universe, relativity, string theory, loop quantum gravity, etc.)
- The status of affects in speculative cosmology
- The (in)compatibility of human experience with scientific cosmology
- Cosmic affects as connectors between the human experience and vast, impersonal structures
- How might philosophy contribute to newer cosmological questionings at the crossroads of art and science
- The reassessment of the relation with the Earth in light of the affective turn

# Atmospheric Modernism: On Emergence, Chaosmospherology, Kairomorphosis, and the Aerocene in Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*

**Presenters:** Yu-Cheng Cheng

**Affiliation:** National Cheng Kung University

The paper concentrates on how modernist Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room* presents atmospheric modernism and experimentalizes "air" and "cloud" to potentialize the issues of emergence, chaosmospherology, kairomorphosis, and the Aerocene. Woolf repeatedly turns air into a metamorphic force in different temporal agencies, such as "the air a wavering, quavering"; at the same time, the listless air of an empty room (Woolf 61, 124). Clouds perform weather as a choreographically kinetic process of emergence, entanglement, intra-complexity, disappearance, and reappearance, as Woolf narrates that clouds are "turning and turning," "cross the sun" in the moment, "wavering" over "Athens," and "darkening the Acropolis" (Woolf 18, 51, 249, 261), as if enacting in/corporeal practices between deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Reverberating with affect theory, atmosphere functions as a transcorporeal, non-chronological, and posthuman affectivity in the multi-dimensional intersections of intensities. I delve into how Woolf's atmospheric modernism unveils threefold perspectives – emergence, chaosmosphere, and kairomorphosis in the Aerocene. Theoretically, emergence is understood less as analytic metaphysics than as a trans/in/corporeal phenomenology in which affective co-configurations interweave between air and cloud across micro/macroscales. Therefore, I further propose "chaosmospherology" through the theoretical trio of Peter Sloterdijk, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, who present "chaosmos" and "spherology" to conceptualize Woolf's atmospheric modernism as not merely gravitating on Earth but also diffracting on the chaosmosphere and theoretically echo to Tomás Saraceno's the Aerocene, embracing kairomorphosis (Kairos signifying both time and weather in ancient Greek) and kinetic emergence between air and cloud within the chaosmosphere in Woolf's *Jacob's Room*.

**Keywords:** Atmospheric Modernism, Emergence, Chaosmospherology, Kairomorphosis, Aerocene, Virginia Woolf

# Ecosophy, Deep-Time & Machine-Vision: Mapping an Affective Cosmos

**Presenters:** Delphi Carstens

**Affiliation:** University of the Western Cape

Diffraction through the dark haecceity of current permacrisis times, what exactly has been optically, haptically and affectively revealed by the vision machines of end-stage capitalism? Complex interferometry and tremendous amounts of algorithmic data-crunching, for instance, recently conjured a haunting image of the accretion disk around the supermassive Sagittarius-A black hole. Coming at us on the very cliff-edge of an unfolding sixth mass extinction event unfolding 26,000 light-years distant here on Earth, this image, along with other algorithmically-processed images of cosmic arche fossils and aporias, conjure asignifying ruptures that signal an event horizon for human (im)perceptibility; gesturing at the 'becoming-molecular' that we are, with the aid of machine learning, beginning to undertake on the cusp of our own possible finitude. This paper speaks to how machine-processed images of 'unthinkable cosmic arche-fossils' (Meillassoux 2009), along with scanning electron microscopic images of the invisible microbial world can be used to fabulate pedagogical lines of flight and rupture that move us toward a 'critical cartography' (Braidotti 2011) of the becoming subject located within an affective cosmos. Working from my own attempts to teach the principles of ecosophy at a South African university, this paper explores how artistic, scientific and philosophical encounters with technologically-mediated deep time imagery, discoveries and realisations might be harnessed to the pedagogical task of moving ourselves away from the Western Enlightenment myth of "individuals" as "bounded units" involved in "zero-sum games" delineated by "competition equations" (Haraway 2017: M28) toward a more heterogenous ecological/cosmological self of "becomings and intensities" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 162).

**Keywords:** Ecosophy, Permactrisis, Cosmic Arche Fossils, Machine Vision, Critical Cartography, Pedagogical Lines of Flight, Heterogeneity

# Expressing the Cosmic - Imperceptible, Infinite, and Affective – Through a New Image of Artisanal Thought

**Presenters:** Janae Sholtz

**Affiliation:** Alvernia University

A central issue in D/G's work is developing an image of thought adequate to the cosmos. This paper delineates the cosmic in terms of the imperceptible, the infinite, and the affective, asking what forms of expression are conducive to these characteristics. Section 1 develops the infinite in terms of movement and perpetual variation, envisioning a nontotalisable universe of fundamental indeterminacy. The problem for thought is that to think infinite variation is fundamentally paradoxical. To make the momentary consistent would be to preserve those moments, yet to preserve those moments also distorts the reality of the cosmic. I will argue that when Deleuze and Guattari endorse Spinoza's Ethics as having produced 'a movement of the infinite and [giving] infinite speeds to thought,' they are insinuating a form of thinking beyond the concept, where 'one can only speak of music, of tornadoes, of wind and strings' (1994: 48). Fundamentally, the idiosyncrasy of thought is an admission to its inherent artistry. This is why Deleuze and Guattari link the task of expressing the cosmic to the art. This brings us back to the idea of a new image of thought. The second section explores image-making through affect and sensation. This section addresses how the affective directs our attention to the matter of the sensible as an expression of the cosmic. The final section links this new attunement to the aesthetic figure of the cosmic artisan. A new image of thought that is adequate to the expression of the imperceptible, the infinite and the affective must be mediated by the idea of a new affective attunement, way of being, and style of thinking embodied in the cosmic artisan as a new conceptual persona for philosophy's concept creation.

**Keywords:** Cosmic Artisan, Infinite, Imperceptible, Affective, Immanence, Image of Thought

# Fractal Cosmology, Chaomological Thinking and Affect Theory

**Presenters:** Alain Beaulieu

**Affiliation:** Laurentian University

Deleuze and Guattari thoroughly engaged with fractal theory, one of the most revolutionary scientific breakthroughs of the last century, creatively incorporating it into their chaomological thinking and vocabulary (using terms like “fractals,” “fractalization,” “fractalized,” “fractions,” and “fractional”). This presentation explores the productive interference between philosophy and science by examining Deleuze and Guattari’s use of fractal theory. It investigates how their approach establishes a fractal cosmology, and questions how a possible fractal structure of the universe might inform Affect theory. The study is structured in four parts: (a) A brief history of fractal theory, highlighting contributions by polymath mathematicians such as Richardson, Lorenz, and Mandelbrot; (b) An examination of fractal theory’s integration within Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy, especially their concepts of the plane of immanence and smooth spaces; (c) An introduction to speculative scientific theories of cosmic fractals alongside a discussion of Deleuze and Guattari’s enthusiasm for fractal cosmology; (d) A reading of fractal cosmology in relation to affect theory, focusing on artists inspired by fractals and/or by Deleuze and Guattari’s chaomological thinking.

**Keywords:** Fractals, Cosmology, Affect, Science, Art

# On the Nature of Breath in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*

**Presenters:** Sarah Sharp

**Affiliation:** The New School

This paper offers a close reading of Lucretius' account of breath (*aura*) in Book IV of *De Rerum Natura*. It argues that this account of breathing offers a way into understanding the inside/outside structure of affectivity Lucretius argues for more broadly in his account of atomism, including how sense-perception, thinking, imagining, falling in love, sky-based phenomenon like thunderstorms, natural disasters, and plagues are all possible in this model of the cosmos. Lucretius' account of breathing is especially relevant for his understanding of life and death, creation and destruction, as breath and air (*aera*) also, for Lucretius, make up parts of the soul (*anima*). Lucretius' investigation into the nature of things is also necessarily an investigation into the inner workings of one's own soul--the microcosm that both reflects analogously and is affected by literally the macrocosm of the universe itself. Like the atoms (*primordia/principia/elementa/semina*) which compose, along with void, the cosmos in its entirety, the structure of soul cannot be perceived in and of itself, even as it allows for the very conditions for thinking and perceiving to be possible at all. Finally, breath is a way into understanding Lucretius' opening appeal to the goddess Venus (whose name is close to *ventus*, 'wind') to infuse his words with an "ever-living charm" (1.28) despite his attacks on superstition, *religio*, throughout the poem, including belief in the gods. Here breath seems tied to poetry and the necessity of any 'scientific account' of the cosmos to be infused with "the Muses' delicious honey" (1.947) in order to be digestible. I argue that *De Rerum Natura* is an investigation into the affectivity of the cosmos that cuts across philosophy and science (or as Lucretius would put it 'reason,' *ratio*), insisting not just on the pleasure but necessity of poetry for its very comprehension.

**Keywords:** Breath, Lucretius, Wind, Atomism, Perception, Soul, Poetry

# Oneiric Dreams: Archipelagic Correspondences of Relation

**Presenters:** Giovanna Soares Malpighi; Bianca Scliar Cabral Mancini

**Affiliation:** State University of Santa Catarina

This paper presents and analyzes the artistic research developed during the residency Encantar a percepção: Ecodelias Oníricas (Enchanting Perception, Oniric Ecodelia), held in a natural reserve in southern Brazil in 2025. The paper discusses methods of perceptual attunement developed through experimental practices in relation to the conference's inquiry into cosmological sensibilities and affective entanglements between bodies, Earth, and universe. The residency explored collective dreaming, somatic attention, and ecological perception as situated techniques for producing relational fields in which bodies, environments, and more-than-human agencies co-compose shared atmospheres. Drawing from Afro-Brazilian epistemologies of enchantment developed by Luiz Antonio Simas and Luiz Rufino, the paper frames encante as a force that destabilizes fixed notions of the human and opens perception to ecological and cosmological modes of existence. In dialogue with relational theories of embodiment, from Alfred North Whitehead to Erin Manning, perception is approached as a co-compositional field in continuous formation. The paper details experimental procedures from the residency, including liminal practices between sleep and wakefulness, collective forest walks carrying dream-affects, and improvisational dance practices translating oneiric intensities into movement before verbal articulation. These methodologies are understood as ecodelic operations of perception, redistributing sensation across bodies and environments and enabling forms of collective attunement beyond representation. Rather than treating affect as secondary to interaction, the residency approached it as a primary cosmological and ecological material continuously produced through rhythm, gesture, attention, and environmental immersion. Dreaming thus emerges as a distributed practice through which micro-perceptual intensities resonate with broader ecological and cosmic processes.

**Keywords:** Dreams, Performing Affect, Pedagogies of Perception, Bodying

## Other Worlds, Other Affects: Sun Ra's Cosmic Jazz

**Presenters:** Adrian Switzer

**Affiliation:** Kansas City Independent Radio

The proposed paper is about Sun Ra's efforts in the 1960s-70s to create a new avant-garde music called Afro-Futurism or Cosmic Jazz. The latter designation is of particular interest. What does it mean to make Cosmic music? How does an artist create cosmically? Why is jazz uniquely suited to representing the Cosmos in listenable form? Born Herman Poole Blount in Birmingham, Alabama, after an early religious experience Ra identified as a Saturnite sent to Earth to share his wisdom: "They t[ought] me [on Saturn] [...] that when it looked like the world was going into complete chaos [...] then I could speak." Not just speak and sing, but play music unlike anything heard before. Following his revelation, Ra assembled a band to play beautiful, enlightening music. Musicianship mattered less than a felt spiritual connection – learning an instrument could come later. Here in rudimentary form is the origin of the group that accompanied Ra throughout his career, variously renamed the Cosmic Space Jazz Group, the Intergalactic Research Arkestra, or simply the Arkestra. Asked about his own identification with Saturn and the group's "intergalactic" status, Ra explained, "[t]hat's the dimension I'm [...] involved in [...] things outside our galaxy [...] [what's] unmeasurable and [...] eternal." Cosmic Jazz, then, is unmeasured, timeless music transmitted to and through Ra and the Arkestra because of their extraplanetary standing. This is not a metaphor nor an abstraction. The energy of the cosmos travels in Sound Waves: i.e., the red-shifted background "noise" of the Big Bang. Affectively receptive of cosmic noise because beyond the bounds of such earthly constraints as tradition and commercialism, Ra and the Arkestra translated it into spiritual, transcendent music. Dissonant, cacophonous, searching music that rewrote jazz in different scales, time signatures and arrangements, and pushed listeners into a free, transformative future.

**Keywords:** Cosmic Affect, Sun Ra, Jazz, Avant-Garde, Afro-Futurism

# Remembering the Immemorial: a Swim in the Cosmic Ocean

**Presenters:** Richard Polt

**Affiliation:** Xavier University

I propose to present material from a work in progress on memory and the past. I describe key past events as attractors—even black holes—that exert gravitational force on our temporality, the meanings of our existence, and our affective responses to those meanings. To evoke those responses and not just analyze them, I use a poetic and aphoristic style. *“If time gravitates around events that emit and absorb significance—so that temporal galaxies orbit black knots of meaning—can the galaxies communicate?” “A black hole rends appearance and punctures the whole. The whole and the hole are not things, but events. Happening holds happenings that escape it.”* The cosmic language is more than a metaphor, as I extend the meaning of the past beyond what is remembered, individually or collectively, into the immemorial and total surge I call “the Once.” Other passages shift to oceanic language in order to affirm our belonging to this singular surge, although the thought retains cosmic resonance. *“We swim in the past. We are out at sea. We are the sea. It is us—transitively. Now the darkness is manifest as substance. Now oblivion is manifest as depth. Now the past and future emerge in their opacity, incalculably greater than the present. But the present is not demoted; it is elevated to its right rank as the opportunity for the Once to attend to itself—to be, for once, in attendance.” “Finally we understand that beneath the shining, continuous surface of consciousness lies an ocean of forgetting; that vast territories resist our incursions; that the remembered, not the forgotten, consists of a few patches stitched together by the constant labor of imagination.”* This presentation will evoke affective links between the work of remembering and the workings of the spatiotemporal whole that we inhabit.

**Keywords:** Memory, Forgetting, Black Holes, Oceanic, Temporality

# The Nomadology Visualizer: Four Nomadic Models of Capture and Flight

**Presenters:** Andrew Culp; A Thousand Plateaus Reading Group

**Affiliation:** California Institute of the Arts

The Nomadology Visualizer is an interactive tool inspired by the work of French thinkers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, designed to model the tension between capture and flight. Rather than simply illustrating theory, the visualizer lets the model realize unexplored elements of the book *A Thousand Plateaus*. It translates four physical domains into parameterized simulations you can actively manipulate: pitting laminar flow against turbulent vortex, rigid lattice against superfluid, forced resonance against noise, and stable orbit against chaos. This matters now because while AI has opened a vast plane of computational possibility, the default output is overwhelmingly slop.

Modelization, in Félix Guattari's sense, offers a way to work against this generative homogeneity. This is because models can be made that do not represent a picture of something that already exists, but rather extract tangible outputs from a field of pure potential. The visualizer is a small experiment in doing this deliberately, with a specific politics attached. The talk will center on a live demonstration of the tool, using it to think through what modelization offers for contemporary computation from the architecture of generative systems to the institutional apparatuses that deploy them.

**Keywords:** Digital, Art, Code, Nomadology, Lines of Flight, The State

# Toward a Cosmic Aesthetics: String Theory and the Affective Limits of Thought

**Presenters:** Ewa Szumilewicz

**Affiliation:** Brock University

String theory is not only as a scientific attempt to unify the laws of nature, but also a philosophical and aesthetic phenomenon that reveals the limits of human thought. It begins with the idea of a Theory Of Everything: a long-standing goal in physics aimed at unifying all fundamental forces. This ambition is presented as both epistemic and affective: it reflects not only a pursuit of knowledge, but also a desire for coherence, order, and an intelligible cosmos. The ongoing division between General Theory of Relativity and Quantum Mechanics highlights a fundamental conceptual rupture. String Theory resolves this tension by proposing that the basic constituents of reality are one-dimensional vibrating strings. This model eliminates infinities and provides a framework for unifying all forces, while introducing additional dimensions, dualities, and possible changes in spacetime topology. A central claim is that aesthetic values such as beauty, elegance, and symmetry are intrinsic to scientific thought. Furthermore, they are tightly linked to the theory's accepted mathematical and logical framework, and they shift in nuanced ways as that framework evolves. It is closely tied to affect, emerging when thought confronts something it cannot fully grasp yet finds compelling. The elegance of the theory is experienced as a sign of alignment with a deeper level of reality. Drawing on Deleuze's philosophy, this experience is understood as an interaction between the actual and the virtual, where theoretical imagination engages with a field of potentiality. Cosmic beauty arises at this limit, showing that knowledge and aesthetic experience are inseparably intertwined. To think cosmologically, in this sense, is not to master the universe, but to remain open to its transformations; to inhabit a space where knowledge, affect, and imagination are no longer separable, and where the beauty of the cosmos lies precisely in its capacity to exceed us.

**Keywords:** String Theory, Beauty, Cosmos, Deleuze, Imagination

# Virginia Woolf's Iridescences as Instances of Cosmic Affect

**Presenters:** Eret Talviste

**Affiliation:** University of Tartu

When looking at Woolf's references to the rainbow, it appears that iridescence functions as a certain bridge between mythical and scientific understanding of the world in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). The reader encounters Mrs Ramsay, a myopic Victorian housewife who knows the world through embodied experience, focusing on what is close to her. The reader also encounters Mr Ramsay, a philosopher who knows the vast world beyond his immediate proximity through scientific rationalism. This paper is interested in how Lily, an unmarried painter, bridges these two perspectives in the novel, putting forward a concept of philosophy and art where knowing and not knowing touch, and in their touching form a certain affective way of being in and knowing the world. In Woolf's novel, the references to the rainbow myth allow her to emphasise the beauty of not knowing and staying with wonder and to acknowledge that a variety of knowledges – mythic and scientific, daily and cosmic, myopic and far-sighted – can coexist and complement each other to create an intimacy with the world that attaches characters to life in the widest sense of the word. This paper is based on my previous work on wonder in *To the Lighthouse* (Talviste 2022; 2025), but develops it with George Lukács's concept of 'transcendent homelessness', Max Weber's 'disenchantment of modern life', and Amitav Ghosh's idea of 'the great derangement', to consider whether and how modern and contemporary novels can 'fit' cosmic affects and forces into their helplessly human-sized forms and timescales. Jane Bennett's *influx and efflux* will provide a guide to understanding how Woolf 'bespeaks an I alive among vibrant matter' in *To the Lighthouse* by contrasting and entangling cosmic deep time in 'Time Passes' section of the novel with the more human dominated first and final parts.

**Keywords:** Modernity, Literature, Iridescence, Myth, Science, Virginia Woolf, Knowledges, Ethics

# What if Water Contains It All

**Presenters:** Tom Lönnqvist

**Affiliation:** Mille Plateaux Records

The elements of water, hydrogen and oxygen, were formed 13.8 billion years ago in the Big Bang. Since then, they have traveled through the universe, taken part in the birth and life of stars, and eventually arrived on Earth in the form of ice, rain, and oceans. I imagine that these atoms carry within them a memory of this journey. What happens if part of this memory becomes visible when water changes its state—between ice, liquid, and gas? Through art, can we perceive traces of this ancient narrative? The project emerged from my need to understand the Earth—and my own existence—as part of the cosmos. I have begun working on a composition based on Luonteri. The piece is rooted in a bodily experience of the Saimaa lake system—how clean freshwater is deeply integrated into living here. The visual material of the work relates to pareidolia—the human tendency to see life and faces in inanimate forms. It brings with it a sense of the unknown, but also something deeply human. I have documented the states of water at Rakokallio (Anttola) and Luonteri (Saimaa). The locations are selected for their moisture, biodiversity, and relative untouchedness. By combining artistic practice with sound technology and astronomical research, I seek to expand our experience of space, time, and place. I hope the work can evoke a sense of the infinite scale of which humans are a part, as well as the uniqueness of being able to live here and now.

**Keywords:** Water, Memory, Space, Earth, Scale

## S25. Theory (for Now)

Treasured intellectual and cultural resources prove themselves increasingly toothless in the face of state terror, ecological collapse, genocide, labor abuse, and a hard reactionary lurch in political landscapes. The atmospheres of social and political life are thick, foreboding, full of dread and anguish, posing hard questions to theorizing, teaching, and study itself. Are these practices still possible? If so, how? Might contemporary atmospheres shift what theory entails? This stream asks participants to consider how atmospheres shape intellectual work and how rapidly shifting, increasingly complex, and often terrifying affective terrains—scholarly, political, social, economic, and ecological—threaten theory, demand theory, and rewrite assumptions about what theory is/can be. In short, this stream flows through the mucky, fraught, and potentially promising connections of atmosphere and theory.

At the same time, atmospheres can easily be registered unevenly when dominant sense regimes, which govern the blurs of corporeal and intellectual labor, filter out a range of affects to consolidate a dominant mood. And a range of conflictual and messy affective states can be the byproduct of clashing movements and forces, or the predictable if not intended result of algorithmic design. A steady stream of terror and violence in ordinary life, the news, and social media feeds is interspersed with other events and aesthetics that generate other feelings, provide escape, and/or amplify the horrors of the now. In the face of systemic violence and immiseration, people have always fashioned joy, beauty, love, and other so called “positive” affects that are never replacements for, lose sight of, and are always intimate with grief, terror, and loss. Atmospheres can make fugitive potentialities sensible. What new possibilities emerge, are created, and are experimented with alongside terrors and threats that are new and unprecedented or extensions and evolutions of longstanding systems of power? How might the minor affects shaping dominant atmospheres be sensed, registered, inflect theorizing? What can silenced, co-opted, and incarcerated knowledges teach us about how we theorize the effects and affects of atmospheres?

What can theory do in a scenario where a mass audience doesn't need convincing that things are very, very, dire? For decades, tools like (to name just a few) cruel optimism, queer negativity, Afropessimism, crip theory, and Indigenous thought have brought to light the systemic violences underpinning the world. As it becomes increasingly hard to deny that the world is being consumed by violence—just as it is increasingly hard to deny that bodies of all sorts resist violence, act creatively, push for other worlds—what can theory do? In this stream we invite you to report back from your atmospheric location—which may be narrow, broad, or dispersed—and let us know how the weather is. What's theory for now?

# Affect, Futurity, and the Reconstruction of Collective Desire

**Presenters:** Mingmin Gu

**Affiliation:** Simon Fraser University

Over the past decades, we have witnessed the global proliferation of discourses on affective labor, ordinary feelings, atmosphere, attachment, sexual affect, and etc., often mobilized to critique universal alienation and exploitation under capitalism at the level of affect. Yet despite this apparent expansion of political expression, "cruel optimism" is reaffirmed, as such practices ironically possess the potential to aestheticize precarity and universalize Euro-American experiences. Affective politics is often reframed as pathological and absorbed into dominant narratives of inclusion, recognition, or even state benevolence, rather than being allowed to destabilize the horizon of normativity itself. As a result, the normative "good life," grounded in reproductive futurism and developmentalist fantasies, persists globally as a dominant "wannabe" regime. This review considers the value and limitations of affective politics in the various ways it has operated as both a theoretical and political framework. It first traces the affective turn in cultural studies since the 1990s, ultimately arguing for an affect-based approach to complicate any simple distinction between resistance and incorporation by revealing the ambivalent ways subjects continue to inhabit and reproduce the worlds they seek to contest. It then examines the critiques of the diagnostic impasse within affect studies, particularly its limited capacity to theorize how collective political formations might be reconstructed under conditions of global precarity. Finally, it argues the task of affect theory today is to move beyond diagnosis toward the reconstitution of alternative horizons of desire through dialogue with Marxist critique. This requires rethinking how forms of class power might be reassembled through an affective lens, and how disparate and partial proletarian identities might be aligned together, reclaiming the possibility of collective experimentation and making "living otherwise" once again imaginable, practicable, and felt.

**Keywords:** Precarity, Affective Politics, Futurity, Cruel Optimism, Collectivism

# Atmospheres of Shame: Notes on the Anti-Deutsch, Palestine, and Historical Reckoning in Germany

**Presenters:** Sydney Sheedy

**Affiliation:** Radboud University

I submit to Make-Break-Flows to share an in-process thought experiment: I have noticed my own energy divert over and over again to a subject that is uncannily and uneasily related to the research I am supposed to be carrying out. Living in Berlin this year, pursuing a postdoc on “ancestor work” and the search to construct kinship not oriented by whiteness in queer spiritual communities, I’ve become increasingly morbidly fascinated with the contemporary *anti-deutsch* (‘anti-German’) movement in Germany. This is a faction of the “Left” that criticizes the German state, fetishizes Israel and rejects all other leftist politics as thoroughly anti-semitic. I understand it as a poignant example of how generations of “feeling bad” and the negation of German nationalism—postwar suspicion of most forms of cultural pride—has reincarnated as an uncanny fascism in the context of Israel/Palestine. Normally, my work addresses how people grapple with their own locations within empire, and their attempts to betray the fictive emptiness of whiteness. Here, I want to take one of this conference’s themes of “Atmospheres” as an invitation to collect and share my thoughts on what happens when shame has so long functioned as a form of accountability that actual repair becomes ironically impossible. I am interested in how Germany’s globally praised atmosphere of historical reckoning with the Holocaust has on the ground actually manifested as a kind of repetition of history. In this paper I will explore what kind of atmosphere has made the *anti-deutsche* possible, and consider what kinds of energies it nourishes and is nourished by. I plan to do some media analysis and exploratory fieldwork between now and the time of the conference to gather some more concrete examples of the kinds of feelings are shared or in friction across these two opposing factions of the German Left.

# Atmospherics of Theory

**Presenters:** Chad Shomura

**Affiliation:** University of Colorado Denver

This presentation conceptualizes what I call the atmospherics of theory. It proceeds from Lauren Berlant's idea that "A supervalent thought produces an atmosphere, disturbs modes of apprehension, consciousness, and experience." I extend Berlant's sense that supervalent thought gestures "to the domains of the unsaid" by attending more closely to affects and movements ineligible for names. The atmospherics of theory registers how things touch, gel together, move together, fall apart, fall flat. It composes scenes into which bodies are drawn, affected, and leave changed. It preserves affects in their autonomy, their aliveness, their indifference to human wishes. Atmospherics mark a looseness of thought that are grounds for dismissal under scholarly norms of knowledge production. This presentation endeavors to rescue theory from the institutional will to knowledge by tending to its first stirrings in atmospheres. When extending those atmospheres, theory does more and other than explain and clarify. Theory pokes, gestures, emits smoke signals, winks and slips away. What theory can explain or how it can be used are not the first or only questions. What does theory attune us to? What does it enable us to feel—out there, in here, and in all the blurs in between? How might theory help us to feel differently?

**Keywords:** Theory, Atmosphere, Lauren Berlant, Kathleen Stewart, Gilles Deleuze

# Being Affected in Spaces of Perceptual Divergence

**Presenters:** Lena Kostuj

**Affiliation:** University of Groningen and Leuphana University of Lüneburg

With this work, I try to report back from an atmospheric location where the weather is disorienting by design. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in German conspiratorial communities, observing Telegram channels and visiting in-person events, I explore and reflect on what affect theory can do when the researcher and the researched inhabit radically divergent perceptual worlds. Conspiratorial atmospheres may be characterized by a restructuring of what counts as real, threatening, or worth feeling. For me, having entered and repeatedly returned to these spaces as a researcher, what remained was an affective residue that sat uneasily with me, and that said something not only about the communities but also about me. To make sense of this uneasiness, I turned back to the material I had generated for almost three years. First, I re-analyzed my fieldnotes, attuned to what they register about my own *processes of being affected*, for example, tracing moments of disorientation, shock, involuntary attunement, ethical discomfort, or grief. Second, I returned to the *affective counter-practices* I engaged in alongside the fieldwork, which I had documented since the beginning of my project, such as the curation of playlists and participation in cultural and political events to actively re-tune my own senses. Rather than treating these practices as coping mechanisms exterior to the research, drawing on Åhäll (2018) and Sedgwick (2003), I read them as constitutive methodological movements that illuminate what the field was doing to the body and what work was required to remain analytically present within it. By working through these reflections, I argue for the continuous methodological value of affect theory, especially when confronted with the violence of contemporary life. It offers researchers working in such spaces of aversion and perceptual divergence a vocabulary for *'staying with the trouble'* of being affected, instead of resolving it into distance or data.

**Keywords:** Affective Methods, Conspiracy Theory, Counter-Practices, Ethnography, Reflexivity

# Diffracting Neoliberal Theory Through Gender and Affect

**Presenters:** Steve Garlick

**Affiliation:** University of Victoria

Neoliberalism has been a decisive force informing the social, economic, and political conditions that shape the world today. Even as it mutates into new forms in conjunction with the recent rise of authoritarian and nationalist populisms, its influence weighs heavily on the present. Despite work on the affective basis of neoliberalism (Massumi 2014, 2018), it is most often associated with market-based rationality, calculation, and individualism. In this presentation, following Barad (2007) and others, I experiment with diffraction as a means of theorizing the affective atmosphere generated by neoliberal theorizing. Taking up the work of one of neoliberalism's most influential exponents – the economist Milton Friedman – I ask what it would mean to take him at his word as a theorist of 'men'. Diffracting Friedman's work through the lens of Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities, I first examine the ways in which gender often fails to appear in Friedman's work. I propose that this absence is itself an effect of gender, and that his reluctance to address issues of gender in his work is related to the attempt to secure a rational basis for neoliberal society. Friedman evokes a confident, unaffected (and implicitly masculine) neoliberal individual. Yet, he does so by mobilizing affect, thus collapsing the distinction on which his argument relies. A diffractive reading of Friedman illustrates the possibility of turning (post)neoliberal theorizing in the direction of a different relation to nature and freedom.

**Keywords:** Neoliberalism, Men, Masculinity, Diffraction

# Faculty Worker Pride in Beth Burke's 1930s Interviews with Chicago Packinghouse Workers

**Presenters:** Jenise Hudson

**Affiliation:** Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

Among the digitized artifacts housed in the Library of Congress as part of the Federal Writers' Projects archives are the roughly twenty transcribed interviews of Betty Burke, an unemployed writer who joined the ranks of 6,500 other underemployed Depression-era writers to record oral histories from the years of 1936-1939. Little is known about Burke; yet I assert that her transcribed interviews meaningfully contribute to current-day understandings of working-class participants' attitudes, sentiments, and affects with respect to union engagement and membership in the mid-to-late 1930s. Her interviews capture a palpable feeling of pride shared by new CIO members, across race and gender, that inspires questions about how she facilitated the interviews, and about the emotional and material mechanisms forging the collective solidarity of the Chicago workers she interviewed (inquiry into this latter question is especially timely now when many spaces of higher education face increasing pressure to remain in compliance with newly defined requirements for union certification). With an eye toward considering what both the archival materials and theory offer in terms of understanding the galvanizing events shaping worker emotions, and collective social action, I revisit Burke's interviews here. I rely Deborah Gould's scholarship on the 1980s ACT UP movement to center my questions about the relationship between emotion and activism in the FWP transcripts. My goal is to demonstrate that pride similarly holds central functions in Burke's interviewees, as evidenced not only in direct assertions but in the unspoken yet discernable gestures of enthusiasm and solidarity she incidentally captures in interview. I propose Gould's archival research, though centrally concerned with activism in the space of the ACT UP and not labor movements, lays a blueprint for tracing how collective emotions such as pride shape the "emotional habitus" (Bourdieu as qtd. in Gould) that eventually licenses, or catalyzes, political mobilization strategies.

**Keywords:** Federal Writers' Project Emotion Pride Labor Union ACT UP Deborah Gould

# The Cruel Pessimism of Anti-Populism

**Presenters:** Walter Lucken IV

**Affiliation:** Queens College CUNY

In American politics, the premise that progressive candidates can win elections on the strength of their ideas and the conviction of their supporters is controversial on both the left and right. Even more controversial, especially in academic literature about populism and the affective qualities of politics, is the idea that their goals can be actualized if they do manage to take power via democratic means. This paper will explore the anti-populist disposition as a generative affective force structuring discourse about American politics, especially in discussions of the 2024 presidential elections and the role of popular anger over the Biden administration's support for Israel's actions in Gaza in Kamala Harris's eventual loss. In this exercise, I will name the assumption that the left cannot make use of democracy and democratic means to transform American political culture as anti-populism. Anti-populism, as a rhetorical and political disposition, is the expression of two core beliefs: firstly that the contradictions in democracy which give rise to populism cannot be used in the furtherance of left wing political goals, and secondly that the contradictions in democracy which give rise to populism necessarily trend toward right wing political goals. Taken together, these two beliefs create a vexed relationship between political leftism and what Ranciere has termed "hatred of democracy". Further, I will show how the anti-populist disposition functions as "cruel optimism" in reverse, a pessimism about the potentials of American democracy which binds the academic left and the Democratic Party together in a shared political imaginary.

**Keywords:** Democracy, Populism, Pessimism, Politics, Cruel Optimism

# Ugly Feelings, Melancholic Attachments

**Presenters:** K Wang

**Affiliation:** University of Southern California

What do we make of/from our ugly feelings? How can irritation, friction, woundedness, and embarrassment inform how we relate to ourselves, each other, and the more-than-human? In this paper, I engage the negative atmosphere generated by, through, and around Asian/America and its itinerant cultural productions. Asian/American racial formation stems from an originary woundedness: exclusion from citizenship and full belonging to the U.S. nation-state, and by extension, the category of Human. With the proliferation of boba liberalism, carceral logics of movements like #StopAsianHate, anti-Blackness of anti-Affirmative Action Asians, and persistent investment in American imperial/colonial exceptionalism, negativity must be a crucial mode of analysis for Asian/America. Negativity as affective experience returns us to our bodies, and it is attuned to our responsibilities and obligations, precisely because friction and irritability reminds us of our relations to others. It is a reminder of our collective and connective lives. In the spirit of José Esteban Muñoz, I also deploy hope as a critical methodology. I want to think together, and alongside, hope and destruction. What if we never survived the loss? What would happen if we allowed ourselves to be completely wrecked by the loss? What might become of us through fragmentation, in the wake? What new ways of being might we create? This is the project I work towards. As I pick up the melancholic pieces of Asian/American racial formation, I want something that cannot yet be. Borrowing again from Muñoz, this yet-to-be is a potentiality, not the might-be of possibility. What can be—otherwise and elsewhere?

**Keywords:** Irritation, Woundedness, Critical Hope, Potentiality, Asian/America, Relationality

## S26. Make-Break-Flows

Does your paper abstract seem to not find a ready fit into any of our other conference streams? Does your proposal's affective terrain somehow manage to fall outside of their content areas? If so, then you are welcome to submit your paper abstract here. We (the #MAKE team) will serve as evaluators of this catch-all stream. A couple of quick details:

- We will likely still try to see if your paper proposal might find a home in one of the already accepted streams (sometimes an angle of entry emerges as stream organizers shape their submissions into panels)
- Because of the vastness of affective territories, the papers/panels that compose this stream will likely MAKE for some very interesting break-flows. As we have learned from past conferences, this can open up truly brilliant cross-illuminations and conversations.
- All this is to say, don't choose 'Make-Break-Flows' as your immediate default-position but only take this route if there is absolutely no way that you see your ideas fitting within any of the other streams. Feel free though to reach out to any stream organizer or to the core committee to discuss the fit that comes closest to matching your own work, and see what they recommend.

# Affective Stylistics and Method in Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* in Framing the Identity of "Others"

**Presenters:** Farah Siddiqui

**Affiliation:** UT Dallas

The representation of affect is controversial in literature since it contributes to the concept of identity markers where negative affects are attributed to "others." Historically, the characters more susceptible to others' affect, i.e., more empathetic, were not seen in a positive light. In nineteenth-century Victorian novels, female characters and male characters from the lower class were identified with unregulated affects, and emotional labor, whereas, flattening of affect was associated with the upper class and males. Traditionally, affect is symbolic of characters' identity, but the recent affective turn has turned affect into a method. According to Deleuze, affect increases or diminishes the capacity of body to function (Spinoza: *Practical Philosophy*, 68). In the twentieth century, social norms were replaced by media technology in the circulation of affect through images. The image of "Falling Man" by David Janiak captured an unknown victim of 9/11 in his lens; the photograph was subsequently published in newspapers. Don DeLillo employs the image of a Falling Man in his novel to represent the trauma of victims of 9/11 as a "mode of seeing" because shock leads to a flattening of affect. He extends Keith's flattening of affect and lack of empathy to the terrorists who attacked the Twin Towers. In other words, DeLillo represents as affect that circulates in the form of intensities which enhances or diminishes the agency of the characters in a Deleuzian way. Lianne is the female character who sees through the mindset of these fallen men who want to kill others. When she experiences the performance of Falling Man, she is traumatized as it triggers the memories of her father's suicide. The encounter serves the purpose of finally healing Lianne of her previous traumatic experience. Affect plays an important role not only in categorizing characters but also in the circulation of affect.

**Keywords:** Affect, Intensity, Images, Circulation.

# Atmospheric Grief in 1000xResist: Notes on Containment, Perception, and the Wound

**Presenters:** Kirsten A. Miranda

**Affiliation:** Concordia University

Drawing from ongoing MA research on grief-centered narrative games, this paper explores how *1000xRESIST* produces atmospheric conditions through which grief may be sensed beyond linear resolution. Through fractured temporalities, memory diffusion, and uneven access to memory and personal history, the game constructs a contained speculative world shaped by unresolved mourning, isolation, and survivor's guilt. This paper considers how grief structures the game world itself, shaping perception and affective orientation in ways that echo lived experiences of grief. In this sense, the containment becomes evidence of the wound: a world where grief is deferred, inhabited, and continually resurfacing. Engaging queer death studies (QDS), sensory studies, affect theory, and the Dual Process Model of Grief, this paper further considers how grief may be navigated through oscillations of engagement and disengagement, immersion and withdrawal. *1000xRESIST* invites players into altered modes of perception where obscured social, political, and emotional tensions gradually emerge through haunting, fractured memory, and selective encounters with truth. Fantasy, repetition, ritual inaction, and recursive timelines do not distract from grief, but instead form the structures through which grief is lived and negotiated.

**Keywords:** Grief, Affect Theory, Sensory Studies, Queer Death Studies, Dual Process Model of Grief, Memory, Fantasy, Speculation, Temporality, Game Studies, Media Studies, Diaspora

# Contesting Fragility and Freedom in More-than-Human Worlds

**Presenters:** Sreelakshmy M

**Affiliation:** UPES Dehradun

This paper offers a comparative reading of Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* and Octavia E. Butler's *Survivor* to explore how both writers imagine "ways of living" that are grounded in more-than-human relationality. In Le Guin's "ambiguous utopia" of Anarres, Shevek's Odonian practice of mutual aid, voluntary cooperation, and material frugality constitutes a mode of survival. Butler's Tehkohn, led by Diut, stage a radically different but equally more-than-human life-world, in which bodily difference, non-human embodiment, and a harsh yet "just" hierarchy are embedded in multispecies ecologies that challenge the anthropocentric and missionary logic of the human settlers. Bringing ecocritical and posthumanist frameworks to these texts, the paper asks whether Shevek's and Diut's ways of living can be read not merely as strategies of endurance under conditions of scarcity, colonialism, and violence, but as tentative models for thriving that demand a reconfiguration of what counts as "human," "community," and "survival." I argue that both novels refuse consolatory utopian closure: their more-than-human worlds remain fragile, ethically demanding, and politically contested, yet they insist that any viable future must be negotiated through forms of interdependence that exceed the human.

**Keywords:** The Dispossessed, Survivor, Survival, Community, More-than-Human

# Night Knowing: Somatic Psychotherapy, Buddhist Practice, and the Occluded Atmospheres of Healing

**Presenters:** Mia Livingston

**Affiliation:** University of Edinburgh

This paper attends to forms of knowing that conventional therapeutic and contemplative frameworks struggle to hold: the bodily, imaginal, and atmospheric dimensions of healing from complex trauma that exceed what daylight rationality can register or name. Drawing on an extensive autoethnographic record—one year of intensive somatic psychotherapy, encountered as a qualified practitioner with a longstanding Zen Buddhist formation—the paper traces how healing unfolds not through the resolution of traumatic content, but through a transformed relationship to what persists: the chronic somatic disruption that precedes language, the imaginal that surfaces unbidden, the atmospheric shift that signals that something has moved. These are forms of knowing that contemplative practices have always worked with—the breath before the thought, the body before the concept, the image that arrives in meditation without being summoned—but that clinical frameworks rarely name as epistemological. The paper argues that somatic psychotherapy and Buddhist contemplative practice share an orientation toward what S20 names as occluded atmospheres: conditions that are fully real and fully felt, but that resist the forms of visibility dominant knowledge systems require. What is healed in this process is not resolved but re-inhabited: the wound remains, but its atmosphere changes. The practitioner does not exit suffering; she learns to sense it differently. The paper takes its method from its subject: autoethnographic, imaginal, attentive to what the body held before the analysis could begin. It asks what becomes knowable when we treat the somatic session itself—its silences, its imagery, its moments of inexplicable shift—as a site of atmospheric epistemology.

**Keywords:** Somatic Psychotherapy, Buddhist Practice, Complex Trauma, Autoethnography, Occluded Atmospheres, Imaginal, Night Knowledges, Embodied Epistemology, Contemplative Practice, Healing, Zen, Felt Sense, Atmospheric Knowing

# The Cruel Optimism of Carceral Affect

**Presenters:** Jennifer M. Kilty; Michael Orsini; Sophie Lachapelle

**Affiliation:** University of Ottawa

This paper explores the concept of carceral affect as a form of cruel optimism, examining how emotional and affective experiences are shaped by carceral systems marked by logics and practices of security, risk, and punishment. Moving beyond the physical boundaries of prisons, the term encompasses the diffuse, embodied, and often invisible ways carcerality extends into everyday life—through surveillance, control, discipline, and the internalization of punitive logics. Drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship from critical prison studies, affect theory, and feminist and queer theory, we consider how feelings such as fear, shame, guilt, anger, frustration, longing and numbness are produced by and function to sustain carceral institutions, ensuring our collective compliance with a system that produces harm. The concept enables exploring the emotional toll on incarcerated individuals, correctional actors, and broader communities affected by carceral policies, highlighting how it can be mobilized for both compliance and resistance. Carceral affect operates as a form of cruel optimism in hailing the potential of prisons to rehabilitate unruly people. State efforts to “correct” incarcerated individuals reinforce the default state of prisoners as dehumanized subjects devoid of agency. The optimism about this process is dependent upon a denial of incarcerated people’s complex and embodied feelings about the carceral atmospheres in which they are housed. Correctional atmospheres instantiate a series of affects that govern carceral spaces as environments of abandonment disguised as progressive interventions. Ultimately, the analysis of carceral affects provides critical insight into the emotional economies of punishment and the urgent need for transformative justice frameworks.

**Keywords:** Cruel Optimism, Carceral Affect, Punishment, Sensory Criminology, Carceral Atmospheres, Environment of Abandonment, Rehabilitation, Correction

# The Scien[ce]tism of Reading as National Fantasy: Affect, Identity, and the Un/Making of “Citizen-Subjects”

**Presenters:** Bessie P. Dernikos; Daniel E. Ferguson

**Affiliation:** Florida Atlantic University

While affect theories have been largely absent from both scholarly and mainstream Science of Reading (SOR) debates (Graham, 2020), we contend that this absence provokes and sustains particular fantasies that obscure the moods, atmospheres, and visceral feelings circulating with/in classrooms, texts, curricula, and broader educational and national imaginaries. In this paper, we think-with Berlant’s (1991) concept of national fantasy to argue that the mainstream interpretation of SOR—particularly its reductive application of Gough and Tunmer’s (1986) Simple View of Reading—functions as an ideological force that affectively shapes not only literacy curricula and instruction, but also national identity. Reading, then, becomes not a tool for critical inquiry or democratic engagement, but a performance of national belonging, rooted in the illusion of shared, apolitical values. By framing science as definitively settled, i.e. as scientism, narrow conceptions of SOR overlook the ways that literacy is affectively charged, creating a tremendous amount of national anxiety at the thought of reading as anything other than a sanitized, apolitical, and safely “objective” cognitive act. Ultimately, we contend that the optimistic desire to simply “follow the science” is entangled with/in national fantasies that bind emotional attachments to “America” and its “utopian heritage.” Not only do such hidden attachments narrowly shape SOR mandates in ways that promote the “slow death” of children’s knowledge-cultures, but they may also potentially re/produce the very cognitive reading difficulties the SOR movement aims to prevent. “Plugging in” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) to two data-scenes—one dilating attention to the Simple View of Reading and the other to a basal curriculum lesson-set on American “people we celebrate”—we show how attuning to the presence of affect is essential for sensing these attachments, amplifying rather than diminishing cognitive considerations, and reimagining literacy as a site of critical nationalism that un/makes children as “citizen-subjects.”

**Keywords:** Affect, Literacies, Science of Reading, National Fantasy, Citizenship

# When Action Figures Decay: on Fan Time, Sense Making, and Creation Under Capitalist Entropy

**Presenters:** Luke Moy

**Affiliation:** University of New Mexico

Action figures are made from various forms of plastics, wood, and metal. Coupled with their build quality, target audience of children, and assumed framing as promotional stock, these objects carry both the affordances of durability and disposability, contingent on the actions of the fan. Therefore, it is worth investigating what happens when action figures decay, either through the slow wear and tear of frequent use, or through entropy from disuse. How do fans navigate the changing states of the action figure as its plastics begin to erode, its screws and pins rust, as pieces break? This research builds on existing scholarship (Godwin 2018, Heljaakka 2024) concerning how fans lay hands upon action figures and transform them, but pivots to how fans attend to the wearing down of these material items. I argue that the decaying action figure emits an affective atmosphere that the fan must contend with, the senses under strain to engage with material in transition from object to trash, from cohesion to plastic waste. Thus, this project forwards ideas around affective atmospheres and the objects that constitute negotiated sense-making in context. It attends to the ways in which material media carries demands on the body and the space around it.

**Keywords:** Fandom, Material Media, Reception

# “As if Each Silent Grief Were (In)communicable’: Reading the Narratorial Voices of the Dead in *Moby-Dick*

**Presenters:** Alan DeClerck

**Affiliation:** Rutgers University

While literary criticism has begun to account for nonhuman influences on narrative form, attention has focused largely on the narratives of nonhuman animalities and agencies (Herman 2018; Cohn 2025). Following Vinciane Despret's proposition that the deceased are active beings residing somewhere between the physical and the subjective, this paper proposes that the deceased have narratorial voices, including in the crafting of relationships between the living and the dead in Herman Melville's novel *Moby-Dick, or the Whale*. Reading funerary and memorial scenes in Melville's novel, I suggest that *Moby-Dick* makes the deceased's narratorial capacities perceptible by representing literacy situations in which literacy is shaped by the circulation of affects at sites of encounter between the living and the dead (Snaza 2019). Rather than imagining predefined conditions in which the living are considered "present" and the dead are "absent," and where the narrator is solely responsible for the causal organization of pre-existing between events, *Moby-Dick's* account of narrative emphasizes the creation of narrative matrices between the living and the dead (Despret 2021). In the act of making, the novel's narrator Ishmael and the narrative of his crewmates' demise come into being *co-constitutively and simultaneously*. This collaboration, I argue, invites humble modes of reading that decenter processes of interpretation, and by extension, the formal expectations of legibility, expanding who gets to be a "narrator." In other words, in *Moby-Dick*, literacy becomes a generative, uncertain site of engagement with the deceased that rethinks narratorial presence and absence.

**Keywords:** Nonhuman Agency, Narrative Theory, Situation