

PROGRAM

#PITTS

LANCASTER, PA



**PROMISES
IMPASSES
THREATS
SETTLINGS**



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CONFERENCE CORE COMMITTEE

Gregory J. Seigworth
Millersville University

Mathew Arthur
Capilano University

Wendy J. Truran
Georgia Tech

SSA'S 2024 CONFERENCE

So much has transpired in the nine years since the #AffectWTF conference. The study of affect has, by now, variously settled/unsettled within and across a diverse range of academic disciplines, artistic practices, and research approaches. And in the years since #AffectWTF, so much has been settling and unsettling—with different rhythms and thicknesses—around the globe: including, it goes without saying, the ongoing resettlings and upsettings of settler colonialisms in multiple shapes/forms but also emergent AI, insurgent fascisms, resurgent misogyny/transphobia/homophobia/racial and ethnic hatreds, unimpeded climate catastrophe, multi-headed crises in the academy and within the arts and humanities in general, the surging of plutocracies and kleptocracies as the gap between rich and poor grows increasingly divergent, and (too much) more. It is worth noting too that the US Presidential election takes place less than a month after this conference, and Pennsylvania, as one of about a half-dozen key “battleground” states, is going to be front-and-center in whatever electoral shenanigans are underway.

So, yeah: come to Lancaster, PA for the Society for the Study of Affect Conference October 12 to 14.

It's going to be the PITS.



#PITS

PROMISES

We seem to be falling further into calamity at every turn. Are some pits bottomless? There seems little room for “promises” right now but—you know—the study of affect is often understood as perpetually holding out some sliver of hope that sad affects can be actively transformed into something collective, something that might counter the current state of affairs. Where might we find/create/conceptualize/enact the space-time of the “promise” in all that surrounds us?

IMPASSES

Unlike promises though, impasses are seemingly everywhere today. Lauren Berlant considered impasses a kind of “dogpaddling in the meanwhile”: a lateral space-time for gathering one’s senses and feeling out infrastructures of connection, for assessing action or for falling into lassitude, for too often settling (dogpaddling long-term) when the inconvenience of unsettling the impasse feels too unbearable/unimaginable. But perhaps some room can be given to turning the tables? Can we send systems of power, historical developments, and dystopian futures into the PITS? How might we direct seemingly inevitable dark futures into an impasse?

THREATS

Threats, as ever, come from every direction, expected and unexpected, known and unknown: the old-fashioned and new-fangled predations of capital, the toxicity of certain social media platforms (oh hey there X), fascisms (major and micro-), ecological collapse and species extinction, the unfathomable barbarism of contemporary wars and reigns of terror, now-and-future worldwide pandemics with their attendant refusals and resistances to science/medicine/bio-governmentality. In the case of threats, the rising and falling of affect transpires along all the lines and ruptures of filiation and disaffiliation. Positive affects, negative affects, mixed affects, whatever affects—there is no way around or through threats without engaging with the tangle of affects in their midst.

SETTLINGS

Finally, settlings—which can just as readily be unsettlings—are meant to signal how affect sediments, how it sticks or clings to the contexts and histories of encounter. The supposed presentism or immediacy of affect is sometimes criticized (not always fairly) for missing or bypassing the longer/historical, more material, more necessarily distanced space for fully cognized political perspectives and critique. Is affect theory—particularly in relation to any of the calamities and catastrophes mentioned above—bound to regularly fall into relative apolitical quietude? Is the study of affect more prone to settling (settling-in) during those everyday-ordinary moments (and in the face of world-altering events) when unsettling is also on the table as a mode of engagement, of a more “properly” politicized action? But then turning this particular table around, what kind of challenges can we—whoever, whatever we are—issue to/from the stubborn and sticky? Can resistance, affirmative politics, efforts toward an otherwise already here and now find ways to settle into a groove and snowball?

INDEX

Spotlight Panels

Saturday, October 12
10:30am–12:10pm

S1 AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS

● **Tarot/Occult**

TELLUS 360: TEMPLE

Sunday, October 13
5:30–7:15pm

S8 THEORY'S OTHERWISE TEXTURES

● **Unruly Writing: Decomposition,
Figuration, Out-of-Sync Ethnography**

HUB 450
(450 NORTH PRINCE ST.)

Monday, October 14
1:15–3:00pm

S10 BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

● **Slow Upwelling Flows Providing Alternatives
for Scholarly Practices in Academia**

WARE: SALON

Stream Panels

S1 AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS

● **1-6** Sat 3:45–5:15pm

Worlding

WARE: BINNS

● **2-8** Sun 10:30–12pm

Crossing

WARE: CHORAL

● **3-9** Mon 3:15–4:45pm

Genealogies of the Esoteric

WARE: SALON

S2 POLITICAL PITS

● **2-1** Sun 8:45–10:15am

The Affective Circuits of Publics and Power

WARE: SALON

● **3-6** Mon 10:30am–12pm

Affective Un/Makings of Political Subjects

WARE: BINNS

S3 PLANETARY DISPOSITIONS

● **1-2** Sat 2–3:30pm

Sensing Planetary Instability and
Possible Futures/Worlds

WARE: BINNS

● **3-1** Mon 8:45–10:15am

Affective Regimes of Disposability
and Planetary Biopolitics

WARE: SALON

S4 AFFECTIVE SPACES OF OPACITY

● **1-13** Sat 7:30–9pm

Narrativizing Political Mediums,
from Film to Probability

WARE: 3-04

● **2-9** Sun 10:30–12pm

Are You Afraid? Navigating Affects of Horror,
Fear, and the Body

WARE: 3-04

● **3-4** Mon 8:45–10:15am

Aesthetics of Opacity in Experimental Forms

WARE: 3-05

● **3-16** Mon 5–6:30pm

Challenging the Institutions,
From Universities to Elections

WARE: 3-04

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S5 PHENOMENOLOGY/AFFECT/CRITIQUE

- **1-7** Sat 3:45–5:15pm Temporality and Aesthesis
- **2-5** Sun 8:45–10:15am Aliens, Bodies, Fears, and their Unsettling

WARE: CHORAL

WARE: 3-05

S6 PROMISSORY NOTES, OR HOW THE BODY TRADES IN FUTURES

- **1-1** Sat 2–3:30pm Promises I: Potentialities
- **3-14** Mon 5–6:30pm Promises II: Temporalities

WARE: SALON

WARE: BINNS

S7 IS THERE GEOPOLITICAL DIVERSITY IN AFFECT THEORY?

- **1-14** Sat 7:30–9:00pm Precarity, Poetics, Promises...
- **3-5** Mon 10:30am–12pm Bias, Angles, and Strategies: How to Cope with Neoconservatism Through Situated Affect?

WARE: 3-05

WARE: SALON

S8 THEORY'S OTHERWISE TEXTURES

- **1-5** Sat 3:45–5:15pm Textures and Technics: Holes, Containers, Stickiness, Knots
- **3-8** Mon 10:30am–12pm Impulses and Intimacies: Raves, Poetry, Punk Rock, Playlists

WARE: SALON

WARE: 3-04

S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES

- **1-4** Sat 2–3:30pm Sonic Analyses: Past and Present
- **1-10** Sat 7:30–9pm Pedagogies
- **3-3** Mon 8:45–10:15am Affective Reworkings
- **3-7** Mon 10:30am–12pm Space and Pedagogy

WARE: 3-05

WARE: SALON

WARE: CHORAL

WARE: CHORAL

S10 BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

- **2-7** Sun 10:30–12pm Sedimenting Histories Through Watery Settling/Settler Colonial Encounters
- **3-13** Mon 5–6:30pm Watery Attunements for Developing Multisensorial Response-Abilities in a Changing World

WARE: BINNS

WARE: SALON

S11 ENTERING THE HAUNTED ARCHIVES/HAUNTING THE ARCHIVES

- **2-2** Sun 8:45–10:15am "I Am Haunted by Visions of Racist AI": Navigating Digital Identities, Embodiments and Affects of Inhabiting AI-Mediated Spaces

WARE: BINNS

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S12 EROS IN THE END TIMES

- **1-9** Sat 3:45-5:15pm Intimacy and Desire in Crisis
- **2-3** Sun 8:45-10:15am Eros After the Human: Posthuman Affects and Impersonal Desire
- **3-2** Mon 8:45-10:15am Mediating Desires and Transitional Intimacies

WARE: 3-05

WARE: CHORAL

WARE: BINNS

S13 AFFECTIVE WITHDRAWAL

- **1-11** Sat 7:30-9pm The Political Potential of Disaffection
- **3-12** Mon 3:15-4:45pm De-Pathologizing Disaffection: Theorizing Affective Numbness as a Healing Strategy

WARE: BINNS

WARE: 3-05

S14 (UN)SETTLING TENSIONS IN THE RELATIONAL FIELD

- **3-11** Mon 3:15-4:45pm Tangled Relations: Threats of Culture and Context
- **3-15** Mon 5-6:30pm Love, But Not Like That: Conflict and Ambivalence in the Relational Field

WARE: CHORAL

WARE: CHORAL

S15 THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

- **1-3** Sat 2-3:30pm Percepts, Affects, Sensations
- **1-8** Sat 3:45-5:15pm Sonics, Landscapes
- **1-12** Sat 7:30-9pm Sacred + Profane
- **2-4** Sun 8:45-10:15am Futures, Worldings, Assemblages
- **2-6** Sun 10:30-12pm Vectors, Worlds, Platforms

WARE: CHORAL

WARE: 3-04

WARE: CHORAL

WARE: 3-04

WARE: SALON

S16 WORKING WITH AFFECT

- **3-10** Mon 3:15-4:45pm The Use and Uselessness of Affect

WARE: BINNS

S17 NO FIT? DIG YOUR OWN PIT

- **2-10** Sun 10:30-12pm Whither Intelligence? Affect, Artificiality, Appeal

WARE: 3-05



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Evocative PITS (Concurrent)

● E1-1 Sat 5:30–6:15pm	S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES Siren Sixxkiller and Meg Thompson, “Happy Hookers and the Slutty Mycelium of Community Crochet Circles”	WARE: LOBBY
● E1-2 Sat 5:30–6:15pm	Jonathan Eakle, Xiaoyue Zhang, X., and Evan Crump, “Performing a Logic of Sensation with New Painting and New Music”	WARE: 3-14
● E1-3 Sat 5:30–6:15pm	Craig Campbell, “Greeting the Anthropocene”	WARE: LOBBY
● E1-4 Sat 5:30–6:15pm	Mac Kelsey, “Affective Circuits”	WARE: 3-15
● E2-1 Sun 1:15–2:15pm	Film: Dominic Pettman, “Sad Planets”	ZOETROPOLIS (112 NORTH WATER ST.)
● E2-2 Sun 1:15–2:15pm	Workshop: Sarah Gerth van den Berg and Raquel Vigil, “Practicing Affect: Experiments in Knowledge Design”	WARE: 3-04
● E2-3 Sun 2:30–3:30pm	Performance: Desiree Rowe, “Wave 11222” Respondent: Joshua Gunn	ZOETROPOLIS
● E2-4 Sun 2:30–3:30pm	Lab: Mathew Arthur, “Smellworlds”	WARE: 3-13
● E2-5 Sun 3:45–5pm	Performance: Walter S. Gershon, Sunniva Hovde, Reagan Mitchell, and Boni Wozolek, “Emergent Affective Sonics: A Freely Improvised ContraCounterFactual”	ZOETROPOLIS
● E2-6 Sun 3:45–5pm	Workshop: Sandra Huber, “Spirit Scripts”	WARE CENTER 3-05



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Evocative PITS (Ongoing)

● E1	Mathew Arthur, "Smellworlds"	WARE: LOBBY & HALLWAYS
● E2	Craig Campbell, "Greeting the Anthropocene"	WARE: LOBBY & HALLWAYS
● E3	Asilia Franklin-Phipps and Kay Gordon, "The Inefficient Library: Laziness, Slowness, and Non-Production—An Interactive Collaborative Encounter with Texts and Making"	WARE: LOBBY & HALLWAYS
● E4	Claire Fitch, "Cross-Contamination, Slowness, Friction"	WARE: LIBRARY (2nd floor)
● E5	Siren Sixxkiller and Meg Thompson, "Happy Hookers and the Slutty Mycelium of Community Crochet Circles"	WARE: LOBBY
● E6	Eva Steinitz, "Forms of Relation: Residue" (paintings)	WARE: MEZZANINE
● E7	Gustavo Valdivia, "Making a World Out of Climate, and a Climate Out of the World: A Sound Installation Project"	WARE: 2-03

NOTE: We will have a quiet (low-sensory) room on the Ware mezzanine and book sales room for Duke University Press books and more.



SCHEDULE

- Conference Check-In, Events, and Meals
- Spotlight Panel
- Concurrent Panel
- Evocative PITS: Workshops and Art Installations

Saturday, October 12

9:30–10:15am

● **Rolling Check-In**

Get your nametag, lanyard, and PITS fridge magnet.
Mingle and have coffee or tea, fruit, and little nibbles

TELLUS 360

(24 EAST KING ST.)

10:15–10:30am

● **Welcome from SSA!**

With Wendy, Greg, and Mathew

TELLUS 360: TEMPLE

10:30am–12:10pm

● **Opening Spotlight: Tarot/Occult**

S1 AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS
Chaired by Delphi Carstens

TELLUS 360: TEMPLE

Ann Cvetkovich	The High Priestess: Learning from Somatic Practices
Sandra Huber	On Bewitchment and Night Knowledge: Methodologies of Finding Out
Andie Shabbar	Becoming Magician: Tarot, Affect, and Alchemy in Virtual Space
Sydney Sheedy	The Queer Occult as Biopolitical Affect Regime

12:10–1:45pm

● **Conference Lunch Reception**

TELLUS 360: 2nd FLOOR

2:00–3:30pm

● **Concurrent Panels**

WARE CENTER

(42 NORTH PRINCE ST.)

S6 PROMISSORY NOTES, OR HOW THE BODY TRADES IN FUTURES

1-1 ● **Promises I: Potentialities**

Chaired by Karen Engle

WARE: SALON

Lindsey Freeman	Pushing the Genre into Something Interesting
Mallika Khanna	Self Help Technologies as Racializing Mechanism
Raunak Ghosh	Notes from the Neck: The Aggrieved Afterlives of Isadora Duncan's <i>Mother</i>
Reuben Jentink	When Running's a Bore

S3 PLANETARY DISPOSITIONS

1-2 Sensing Planetary Instability and Possible Futures/Worlds

WARE: BINNS

Chaired by Prince Cunningham

Gustavo Valdivia Vibrant Andes: Listening to Other Possible Futures in the Anthropocene

Prince Cunningham Let the Broken Place Be What Moves You: Centering the Affective Trauma Lands to Feel/Survive Planetary Catastrophe

Ceall Quinn Everyday Affective Ecologies: Experiments for Attuning to Involuntary Momentum

S15 THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

1-3 Percepts, Affects, Sensations

WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Anna Hickey-Moody

Katie Fuller Art Exhibitions as Affective Sites with Potential for Antiracist Practices

Kate Nankervis Affective Atmospheres in Romantic Literature and Landscape Painting

Anneli Groenewald When It Bleeds: Towards an Affective Reading Approach to South African News

Berma Uysal Affective Turn in Flamenco

S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES

1-4 Sonic Analyses: Past and Present

WARE: 3-05

Chaired by Bessie P. Dernikos, Asilia Franklin-Phipps, and Nancy Lesko

Trent Wintermeier Affective Edges of Hearing and the Reception of Sonic Responsibility

Ilayda Altuntas Sounding Art Practice as Research (SAPAR): Sound, Memory, and Place in Sensual Pedagogies

Walter Gershon Overlooking Sonic and Sensuous Pedagogies: Lessons on Educating Otherwise from Curriculum Studies and Educational Foundations

Larry Green Unprecedented

3:45–5:15pm

Concurrent Panels

WARE CENTER

S8 THEORY'S OTHERWISE TEXTURES

1-5 Textures and Technics: Holes, Containers, Stickiness, Knots

WARE: SALON

Chaired by Mathew Arthur and Alana Brekelmans

Hannah R. Hopkins After W/holeness: Digitality, Textuality, and Extraction

Margaret Schwartz A Technics of the Unobtrusive: Thinking Media Through Textures of Holding and Containment

Daryl Maude Stickiness: Future Textures in American Empire

Ruth Daly The Tongueliness of the Text: Knotty Entanglements of Desire, Body and Language in Yvonne Vera's Writing

S1 AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS

1-6 ● Worlding

WARE: BINNS

Chaired by Sydney Sheedy

Dylan McGarry	Sculpting invisible materials, through water.
Brenton Boyd	Conjuring Remains: Graveyard Dirt and the Black Feminist Ends of Root Work
Nathan Snaza	Multiversal Ceremony: On Tending Differential Being
Victoria Papa	"A Body Plus": Gender, Illness, and the Otherworldly

S5 PHENOMENOLOGY/AFFECT/CRITIQUE

1-7 ● Temporality and Aesthesis

WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Gail Hamner

Carlos Ramírez-Arenas	The Coloniality of Time: Time, Orientation, and the "Indian Disposition"
Randall Johnson	Loving Art at Zero-Degree Flesh
Gail Hamner	What Poverty Feels Like: A Phenomenology

S15 THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

1-8 ● Sonics, Landscapes

WARE: 3-04

Chaired by Anna Hickey-Moody

Shaun Rosier	Problematizing the Sublime: Affective Archives within Landscape Design
Shannon Perry	Co-creating Affective Methods in a Sonic Posthuman Collaborative Inquiry
Dennis Rothermel	The Wandering Affect of the Bo Diddly Beat
Jonathan Eakle, Xiaoyue Zhang, X., and Evan Crump	Planning a Logic of Sensation with New Painting and New Music

S12 EROS IN THE END TIMES

1-9 ● Intimacy and Desire in Crisis

WARE: 3-05

Chaired by Maria Markiewicz and Emily Martin

Caroline Cunfer	(Gyneco)logical Phallacies: Vaginismus, Femininity, and the Penetrative Imperative
Sarah Sharp	Grief in Anne Carson's <i>Nox</i>
Ridita Mizan	Exploring Affective Networks: Communities of Feeling in Shafak's <i>The Island of Missing Trees</i> and Beyond
Amy Xiao, M. Chau, and Kaitlyn Mundy	Sex Machina: In/Visible Queer Entanglements and Human-AI* Cybersexual Intimacies

5:30–6:15pm

● Evocative PITS (Concurrent)

WARE CENTER

S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES

E1-1 ● Siren Sixxkiller and Meg Thompson, **WARE: LOBBY**
“Happy Hookers and the Slutty Mycelium of
Community Crochet Circles”

E1-2 ● Jonathan Eakle, Xiaoyue Zhang, X., and Evan Crump, **WARE: 3-14**
“Performing a Logic of Sensation with
New Painting and New Music”

E1-3 ● Craig Campbell, “Greeting the Anthropocene” **WARE: LOBBY**

E1-4 ● Mac Kelsey, “Affective Circuits” **WARE: 3-15**

6:15–7:30pm

● Dinner on your own

7:30–9:00pm

● Concurrent Panels

WARE CENTER

S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES

1-10 ● Pedagogies **WARE: SALON**
Chaired by Bessie P. Dernikos, Asilia Franklin-Phipps, and Nancy Lesko

Erica Colmenares and Scott Jarvie Pedagogy of School Shootings

Rebecca Moody Teaching in a Time of Sorrow: My Pedagogy in the Midst of a Mental Health Crisis

Isabella Bartels Landscapes of Becoming: Rethinking Curriculum Through Pedagogies of Desire, Discomfort, and Relationality

Mackayla Kelsey “Our Skin is the Most Sensitive Interface”: Cultivating Haptic Pedagogies, Enfleshed Literacies, and Affective Materialities within Computational Media Education

S13 AFFECTIVE WITHDRAWAL

1-11 ● The Political Potential of Disaffection **WARE: BINNS**
Chaired by Zoe Fuad

Margaret Schwartz Divesting from Denial: Autotheoretical Reflections on Affective Withdrawal and Social Reproduction

Zoe Fuad Slowing Down the Political Movement: Centering Affective Debility in Our Work for Social Change

Holly Parker “I can’t even feel myself anymore”: “Systems” of Self-Defence in Miranda July’s *The First Bad Man*

Orlaith Darling Affecting Malaise: The “Sad Girl Novel”

S15 THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

1-12 Sacred + Profane

WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Donovan Schaefer

Meghan Dunn Using Rhetorical Field Methods in Studying Affective Dimensions of the Divine

Anna Hickey-Moody Empathy and Religious Identities

Hickey-Moody

Rebekah Aycock On Burglary and the Tangling of Affect and Legal Studies

S4 AFFECTIVE SPACES OF OPACITY

1-13 Narrativizing Political Mediums,
from Film to Probability

WARE: 3-04

Chaired by Pavel Savgira and Saumya Lal

Pavel Savgira Traversing Opacity: Late Soviet Comedy and the Affective Capturer

Saumya Lal Empathic Anxiety and the Opacities of Political Turmoil: A Reading of Hisham Matar's *In the Country of Men*

Ashmita Chatterjee Area A, Area B, Area C: Alternate Affective Geographies in Adania Shibli's *Minor Detail*

Simone Pellegrino Toxicus Amor Fati: Politics of Chance in the Age of Contingency

S7 IS THERE GEOPOLITICAL DIVERSITY IN AFFECT THEORY?

1-14 Precarity, Poetics, Promises...

WARE: 3-05

Chaired by Ana Pais

Irene Depetris-Chauvin Affective Materialities: Intercultural Memory in Brazilian Film

Depetris-Chauvin

Meha Gupta The Poetics of Familiarity: The Sensory Mode of Reading South Asian Poetry

Saran Mahasupap Queering the Promises and Identities in Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

Esther O. Ohito The Dream Trip

9:00-11:00pm
Onward

Dance Party!

**TELLUS 360 SECOND
FLOOR & ROOFTOP**

Join us for a dance party on the second floor of TELLUS 360 or mingle at the rooftop bar (weather permitting)

Sunday, October 13

8:00 Onward

● Rolling Check-In

WARE CENTER LOBBY

Mingle downstairs and have coffee or tea, fruit, and little nibbles

8:45–10:15am

● Concurrent Panels

WARE CENTER

S2 POLITICAL PITS

2-1 ● The Affective Circuits of Publics and Power

WARE: SALON

Chaired by Jennifer Lin LeMesurier

Jennifer Lin LeMesurier Sonic Tropes of Asians in America

Alexander Cho Condition: Asian American Labor in *Beef* and *Everything Everywhere All at Once*

Meg Thompson Tunneling through the Microfascist Pits of the “American Nuclear Family”: Gender Failure, Queer Desire, and Other Intimate Threats

Walter Lucken IV Refusing 1968

S11 ENTERING THE HAUNTED ARCHIVES/HAUNTING THE ARCHIVES

2-2 ● “I Am Haunted by Visions of Racist AI”: Navigating Digital Identities, Embodiments and Affects of Inhabiting AI-Mediated Spaces

WARE: BINNS

Chaired by Ping Yang

E. Chebrolu The Vigilant Disposition: Anxiety, Crisis, and the Digital Technics of Raciality

Michael Tristano Jr. Minoritarian Hauntings

Annika Haas My Body, My Data, My Choice: Data Bodies in the Uncanny Archive

Ping Yang Entanglements, Hauntology, and Affect Theory: Slowness in Social Media at the Digital Age

S12 EROS IN THE END TIMES

2-3 ● Eros After the Human: Posthuman Affects and Impersonal Desire

WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Maria Markiewicz and Sarah Sharp

Emily Martin The End of Eros: Impersonal Desire in the Age of Algorithms and Apocalypse

James Belflower Scavenging the Ecobody: Making Oddkin in *Scavengers Reign*

Alice Barnaby Learning from Blobs

S15 THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

2-4 ● Futures, Worldings, Assemblages

WARE: 3-04

Chaired by Michael Lechuga

Jerry Rosiek, Openness, Affect, and Futurity: 3 Dimensions of a Postfoundational Politics of Inquiry
MaryJohn Adkins
Cartee, Kevin
Donley, and
Alex Pratt

Michael Lechuga Slipstream Methods for Critical Inquiry: Demystifying Settler Imaginations of Futurity

Tiina Lempinen Exploring Adverse Childhood Experiences with Affective Methodology

S5 PHENOMENOLOGY/AFFECT/CRITIQUE

2-5 ● Aliens, Bodies, Fears, and their Unsettling

WARE: 3-05

Chaired by Gail Hamner

Ayoung Kim Alien Affects and the (Potential) Becoming Alien to Oneself

Halie White Distorted Boundaries of the Body: A Critical Phenomenology of Fatphobia

Chris Wilson Conspiracy and the Politics of Fear: The Case of QAnon

Zara Richter Unsettling as an Affective Materialist Methodology of Engaging with Social Scientific Certainties

10:30–12:00pm

● **Concurrent Panels**

WARE CENTER

S15 THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

2-6 ● Vectors, Worlds, Platforms

WARE: SALON

Chaired by Joe Deville

Joe Deville Affects of Open Access: Platform Building as Affective Method in Scholarly Publishing

Phillip Grayson Affect In/As/Through Annotation

Lea Baro Setting the Zine: Making Zines to Research Affects and Embodiments of Representation

S10 BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

2-7 ● Sedimenting Histories Through Watery
Settling/Settler Colonial Encounters

WARE: BINNS

Hann Scurlock Chickasaw–Crawfish Kin and River Resistance

Briana Meier Sonic, Psychic, Visceral Solidarities of the Salish Sea

Sarah Sharp Stepping onto Solaris: Fluidity and the Possibility of Contact in Alien Encounters

S1 AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS

2-8 ● Crossing

WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Sandra Huber

Delphi Carstens	Fugitive Esoterisms and Ritual Dissolution
Zoe Fuad	Affective Resonance as Spiritual Possession
Omar Kasmani	Once Upon a Queer Dream
Michelle Mo and Garry Meng	Zhuangzi and the Untended Space of Affective Transference

S4 AFFECTIVE SPACES OF OPACITY

2-9 ● Are You Afraid? Navigating Affects of Horror, Fear, and the Body

WARE: 3-04

Chaired by Hannah R. Bacon

Hannah R. Bacon	The Woods Imagined: Black Bear, Brown Man, White Woman
Talha Issevenler	Temporal Opacity: An Analysis of Politics of Ambiguity, Repetition, and Diffraction Through <i>Twin Peaks: Return</i>
Irene Valenti	The Opaque Aesthetics of "Gyno-Psychiatry": Body Horror and Affective Tensions in Joyce Carol Oates's <i>Butcher</i>

S17 NO FIT? DIG YOUR OWN PIT

2-10 ● Whither Intelligence? Affect, Artificiality, Appeal

WARE: 3-05

Chaired by Greg Seigworth

Richard McDaniel	The Role of Affect in Andrew Tate's Appeal
Ahmet Aktas	Was Spinoza a Deleuzian? Rethinking the Politics of Emotions and Affects
J. Blake Huggins	Sticking with Ghosts: Entanglement, Agency, and AI
Tim Elmo Feiten	How the Linguistic Landscape of Artificial Intelligence Shapes its Affective Affordances

12:00–1:15pm

● **Lunch on your own**

1:15–2:15pm

● **Evocative PITS (Concurrent)**

E2-1 ● Film: Dominic Pettman, "Sad Planets"

**ZOETROPOLIS
(112 NORTH WATER ST.)**

E2-2 ● Workshop: Sarah Gerth van den Berg and Raquel Vigil, "Practicing Affect: Experiments in Knowledge Design"

WARE: 3-04

2:30–3:30pm

Evocative PITS (Concurrent)

E2-3 ● Performance: Desiree Rowe, “Wave 11222” **ZOETROPOLIS**
Respondent: Joshua Gunn

E2-4 ● Lab: Mathew Arthur, “Smellworlds” **WARE: 3-13**

3:45–5:00pm

Evocative PITS (Concurrent)

E2-5 ● Performance: Walter S. Gershon, Sunniva Hovde, Reagan Mitchell, and Boni Wozolek, “Emergent Affective Sonics: A Freely Improvised ContraCounterFactual” **ZOETROPOLIS**

E2-6 ● Workshop: Sandra Huber, “Spirit Scripts” **WARE CENTER 3-05**

5:30–7:15pm

● **Spotlight: Unruly Writing: Decomposition, Figuration, Out-of-Sync Ethnography** **HUB 450 (450 NORTH PRINCE ST.)**

S8 THEORY’S OTHERWISE TEXTURES

Chaired by Mathew Arthur and Alana Brekelmans

Asilia Franklin-Phipps and Bretton Varga (Be)Coming Undone: Undoing Genre, Undoing the Self

Alana Brekelmans All That We Make (Together We Compose and Decompose)

Mathew Arthur Smellworlds: Vibes, Regionality, Synaesthetic Writing

Claire Fitch Lineament

denielle elliot Out of Sync Mindbodies, Unruly Writing

7:15–9:00pm

● **Conference Dinner** **HUB 450**

Dinner and a chat about SSA futures

Monday, October 14

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE’S DAY

8:00 Onward

● **Rolling Check-In** **WARE CENTER**

Mingle downstairs and have coffee or tea, fruit, and little nibbles

 S3 PLANETARY DISPOSITIONS

3-1  **Affective Regimes of Disposability and Planetary Biopolitics**
WARE: SALON

Chaired by Aurora Fredriksen

Maria Prieto	The Ecology of Affective Research: Re-assembling Communitas by Design
Kaitlin Rothberger	You Will See Burning Trees
Aurora Fredriksen	Planetary Soundings: Affective Atmospheres of "Non-Native" Birdsong and Global Regimes of Disposability

S12 EROS IN THE END TIMES

3-2  **Mediating Desires and Transitional Intimacies**
WARE: BINNS

Chaired by Sarah Sharp and Emily Martin

Maria Markiewicz	Dating in the End Times: The Rise and Fall of the Dating App
Emma Leigh Waldron	Mediated Intimacy: Negotiating Closeness, Embodiment, and Power
Patrick Kindig	Grindr's Prosthetic Pleasures

S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES

3-3  **Affective Reworkings**
WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Bessie P. Dernikos, Asilia Franklin-Phipps, and Nancy Lesko

Bessie P. Dernikos	The "Ordinary" Violence of National Fantasy: Otherwise, "Out of Time" Political Imaginaries for Posthuman Literacies and Book Banning
Mike Rifino	Decolonization in Psychology through Sensual Pedagogies of Shame: An Affective Exploration in a Psychology of Shame Course
Jerry Rosiek	When is Post-Foundationalism White Escapism? Engaging Tiffany Lethabo King's Refusal of Subjectless Social Analysis

S4 AFFECTIVE SPACES OF OPACITY

3-4  **Aesthetics of Opacity in Experimental Forms**
WARE: 3-05

Chaired by Edoardo Pelligra

Edoardo Pelligra	Losing Mastery over the Image: Vika Kirchenbauer and the Opacity of Thermal Imaging
Iwase Masayuki	PlantMurmurs: Aesthetic Instances of Presenting Affective Spaces of Opacity
Manuel Vogelsang	The Blue Opacity of John Dugdale's Photography
Angus Jackson	Sonic Opacity, Black Performativity, and the Politics of UK Drill Music

S7 IS THERE GEOPOLITICAL DIVERSITY IN AFFECT THEORY?**3-5** ● **Bias, Angles, and Strategies: How to Cope with Neoconservatism Through Situated Affect?****WARE: SALON**

Chaired by Ana Pais

Cecilia Macon	Affect, Radical Right, and Anti-Gender Movements in Latin American: Our Bias
Daniel Tércio	The Brazilian National Flag as Trigger for Political Emotions
Tatiana Rabinovich	Feeling with Animals: Muslim Women and Precarity in Postsocialist Russia
Ana Pais	Notes on Affective Literacy

S2 POLITICAL PITS**3-6** ● **Affective Un/Makings of Political Subjects****WARE: BINNS**

Chaired by Chad Shomura

Betsy Bolton	Rapture As a Cure for Erotic and Political Despair: Mary Robinson Shows Us How to Get Unstuck from Bad Love
Clara Chin	Disappearing Acts: Nugent's Smoke, Lilies, and Jade and Ling Ma's "G"
Chad Shomura	On the Inconvenience of Myself
Hayun Cho	Political Disappointment and the Feminist Intellectual

S9 SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES**3-7** ● **Space and Pedagogy****WARE: CHORAL**

Chaired by Bessie P. Dernikos, Asilia Franklin-Phipps, and Nancy Lesko

Rob Helfenbein	Spacio Affectio
Nike Romano	Aesthetic Wit(h)nessing and Care-carrance in the Reparation of South African Art History Pedagogies
Alyssa Niccolini and Bessie P. Dernikos	Inconvenient Pedagogies: Getting in the Way with The Handmaid's Tale

S8 THEORY'S OTHERWISE TEXTURES**3-8** ● **Impulses and Intimacies: Raves, Poetry, Punk Rock, Playlists****WARE: 3-04**

Chaired by Mathew Arthur and Alana Brekelmans

Dan Smith	Punk Rock Changed My Life and So Did Ordinary Affects: Connecting Affect Theory to the Work of Art Education in Public Schools
Helis Sikk	Sapphic Affects: Feeling Soft, Going Slow
Elizabeth Farnsworth	Performative Autotheory and the "Citational Self" in Grief Writing
Sofia Di Gironimo	Missed Connections: Affective Anatomy of a Night Out

12:00–1:15pm

 **Lunch on your own**

1:15–3:00pm

 **Spotlight: Slow Upwelling Flows Providing Alternatives for Scholarly Practices in Academia**

WARE: SALON

S10 BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

Chaired by Jayne Osgood

Nike Romano, Moistening Academic Scholarship Through Slow
Vivienne Bozalek, Swimming-Thinking-Reading-Writing Practices
and Tamara Shefer

Delphi Carstens Hydro-Pedagogies of Unbecoming

Jayne Osgood and "This Thing That We Do": In Pursuit of Hope-Full Renewals
Vivienne Bozalek Through Hydrofeminist Scholarly Praxis

3:15–4:45pm

 **Concurrent Panels**

WARE CENTER

S1 AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS

3-9  **Genealogies of the Esoteric**

WARE: SALON

Chaired by C. Libby

Grant Bollmer Materialism and the Occult

Leon Hilton Genealogies of Queer Performance and the American "Visionary" Tradition

Rebekah Sheldon An Esoteric History of Vibration

C. Libby Fascinating Bodies: Trans Bodies, Esotericism, and Apotheosis

S16 WORKING WITH AFFECT

3-10  **The Use and Uselessness of Affect**

WARE: BINNS

Chaired by Donovan Schaefer

Lea Baro We Can All Feel: Unveiling Affect Just Takes More than Words

Joy Bracewell Writing Center Emotions Unleashed: Affective Labor Amidst Institutional Change

Kai Moore Power in Suffering: Aaron Bushnell and the Uses of Uselessness

Donovan Schaefer The Work of Bad Writing

S14 (UN)SETTLING TENSIONS IN THE RELATIONAL FIELD

3-11  **Tangled Relations: Threats of Culture and Context**

WARE: CHORAL

Chaired by Jennifer Woody Collins

Debbie Brubaker Hopeless Disorientation and the Unimaginable Future of Whiteness

Mazalit Haim "Hope Must be a Minefield:" Hope and the Lachrymose Conception in
Modern Jewish Culture

Kathryn "The Students Want to See a Manager:" Luxury Branding as a Pathway to
Gindlesparger Progressive Change

Jacqueline Righetti Silence as Vibrant Matter with/in Affective Disciplinary Encounters

S13 AFFECTIVE WITHDRAWAL

3-12 ● De-Pathologizing Disaffection: Theorizing Affective Numbness as a Healing Strategy **WARE: 3-05**

Chaired by Zoe Fuad

valley weadick We Are Quantum in Our Longings: Trans Affects and Astral Projection

Deanna Holroyd "TikTok Told Me I Had ADHD": The Pathologization of Disaffection on Social Media

Jordan Etherington A Case for Autistic Affective Withdrawal as Praxis

5:00–6:30pm

● **Concurrent Panels**

WARE CENTER

S10 BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

3-13 ● Watery Attunements for Developing Multisensorial Response-Abilities in a Changing World **WARE: SALON**

Chaired by Vivienne Bozalek

Dylan McGarry, Growing a "Lateral Line" Organ for Slow Environmental Humanities
Vivienne Bozalek,
and Aaniyah Martin

Prince Cunningham "I Swim Shirtless Through a Waveless Cobalt at the End of Time": Poetics of Gender Creative Hydrofeminisms

Jelena Aleksic Ocean Futures in the Anthropocene

S6 PROMISSORY NOTES, OR HOW THE BODY TRADES IN FUTURES

3-14 ● Promises II: Temporalities **WARE: BINNS**

Chaired by Lindsey Freeman

Karen Engle Swimming, Reading, and Chronic Promising

Carrie Rentschler Feeling Diabetic: Technological Promises for Living a Chronic Life

Max Schnepf Rhythms, Refrains, and the Less of Care: Choreographies of PrEP in Berlin

Max Thornton Trans Stuckness: Affect, Speed, and Waiting in Transition

S14 (UN)SETTLING TENSIONS IN THE RELATIONAL FIELD

3-15 ● Love, But Not Like That: Conflict and Ambivalence in the Relational Field **WARE: CHORAL**

Chaired by Jennifer Woody Collins

Gary Lee Pelletier Honing Our Devils

Ayoung Kim Love Enough

Jennifer Woody I do not Understand why Everyone is not Devastated by Palestine: Incommensurate Affects in the Relational Field

Kim Davies Feeling Normal, Fracturing Schooling

3-16 ● Challenging the Institutions,
From Universities to Elections

WARE: 3-04

Chaired by Lea Baro

Alessandro Caruana and Federica Sollecito	La voce del padrone: A Psycho-Linguistic Analysis of Semantic Opacity in Politics
Lea Baro	Diversity Policy as Opacity—As Histories are Hidden, Affects Appear
Gabriel Matthews	Opacities of the Classroom: Self-Care and Survival Under the University
Morgan Legal and Sybil Willoughby	By-Places: Affective Entanglements with More-Than-Human Resistance

6:30–8:00pm

● **Dinner on your own**

8:00pm–Infinity

● **Wrap Gathering**

TELLUS 360 ROOFTOP

It's a wrap! Join us for a gathering on the Tellus rooftop (Tellus 2nd floor if the weather is lousy).

Evocative PITS

KIOSKS

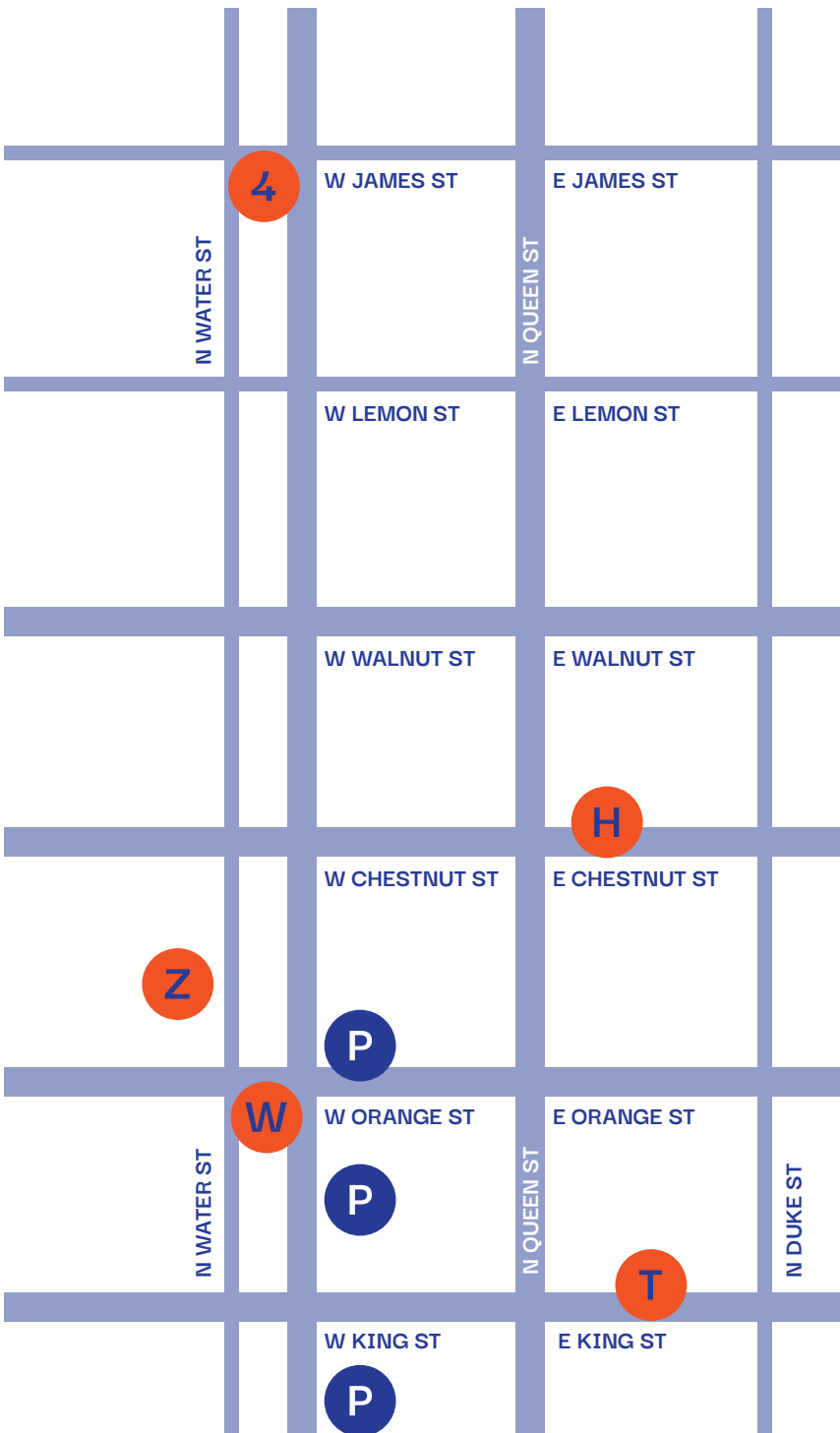
WARE: LOBBY & HALLWAYS

- E1** ● Mathew Arthur, "Smellworlds"
- E2** ● Craig Campbell, "Greeting the Anthropocene"
- E3** ● Asilia Franklin-Phipps and Kay Gordon, "The Inefficient Library: Laziness, Slowness, and Non-Production—An Interactive Collaborative Encounter with Texts and Making"

INSTALLATIONS

- E4** ● Claire Fitch, "Cross-Contamination, Slowness, Friction" **WARE: LIBRARY (2nd floor)**
- E5** ● Siren Sixxkiller and Meg Thompson, "Happy Hookers and the Slutty Mycelium of Community Crochet Circles" **WARE: LOBBY**
- E6** ● Eva Steinitz, "Forms of Relation: Residue" (paintings) **WARE: MEZZANINE**
- E7** ● Gustavo Valdivia, "Making a World Out of Climate, and a Climate Out of the World: A Sound Installation Project" **WARE: 2-03**

MAPS

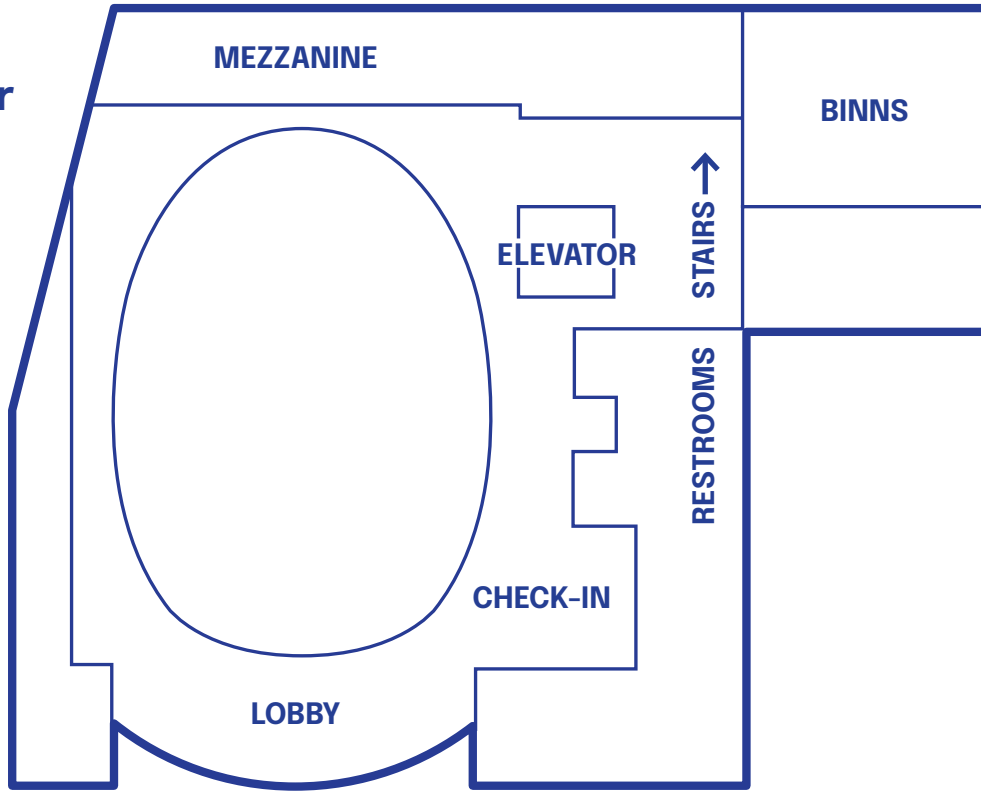


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- W WARE CENTER**
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- 4 HUB 450**
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- H HOLIDAY INN**
26 E CHESTNUT ST
- P PARKING**

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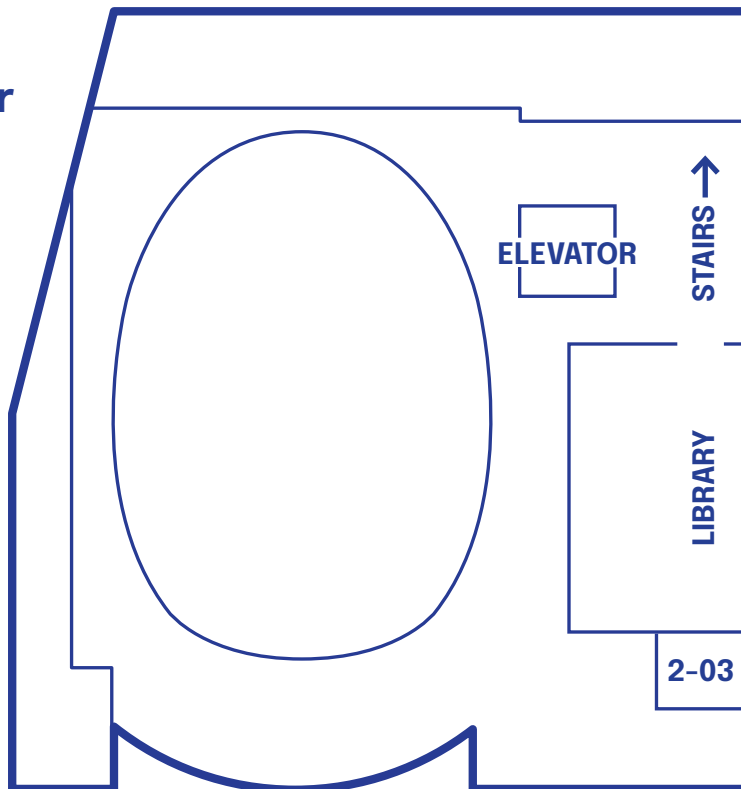
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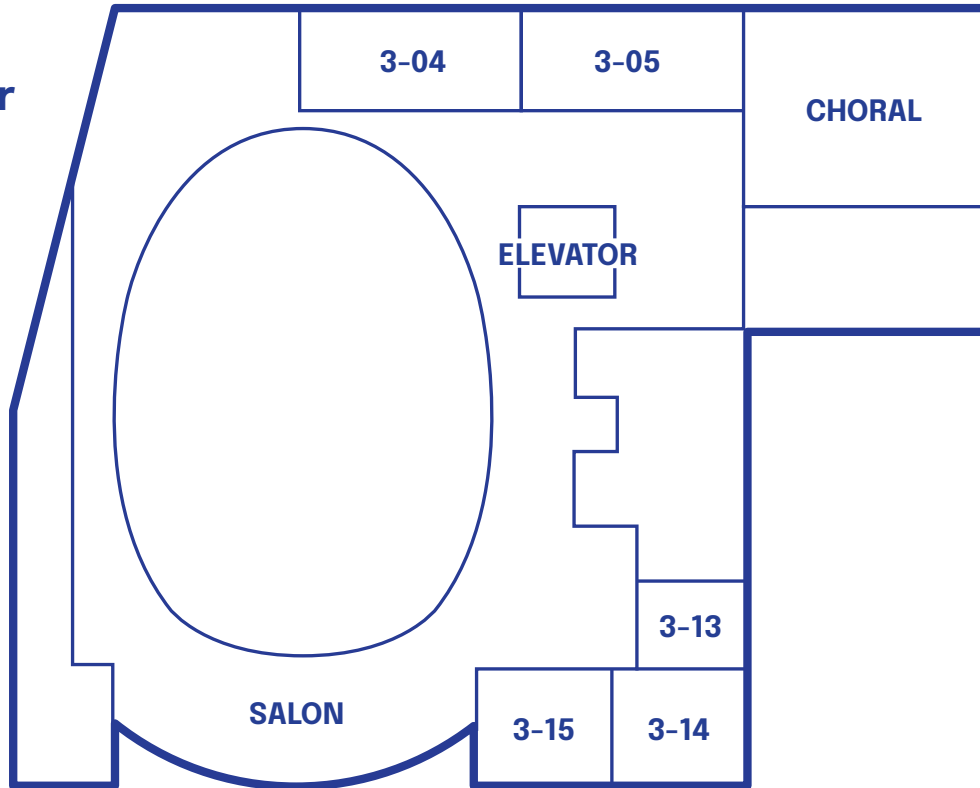
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MAPS

Floor

3



M MEZZANINE LEVEL

We will have a quiet (low-sensory) room on the Ware mezzanine and book sales room for Duke University Press, Imbricate! Press, and more.



BOOK TABLES

DUKE

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Duke University Press will offer selected affect theory titles on the Mezzanine level of Ware Center. Save 30% on Duke titles with the promo code SSA24.

See pages 26–27 for details

IMBRICATE!

SSA's open access affect studies imprint Imbricate! Press will have a selection of titles available for purchase on the Mezzanine level of Ware Center. Recent and back copies of *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* will also be available.

Books and journal issues \$30.00 USD

- *Affects, Interfaces, Events*
- *Everything is a Lab: Doing Ordinary Science*
- *Capacious* Vol. 1 No. 1
- *Capacious* Vol. 1 No. 2
- *Capacious* Vol. 1 No. 3
- *Capacious* Vol. 1 No. 4
- *Capacious* Vol. 2 Nos. 1–2
- *Capacious* Vol. 2 No. 3
- *Capacious* Vol. 2 No. 4
- *Capacious* Vol. 3 No. 1
- *Capacious* Vol. 3 No. 2



MERCH

Make sure to pick up your presale order at the registration desk. A limited stock of merch will be available to buy in-person at the conference. All profits fund SSA initiatives.



Maroon Tote
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White Cap
\$35.00 USD



Royal Cap
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Forest Tote
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Melt Tee Black
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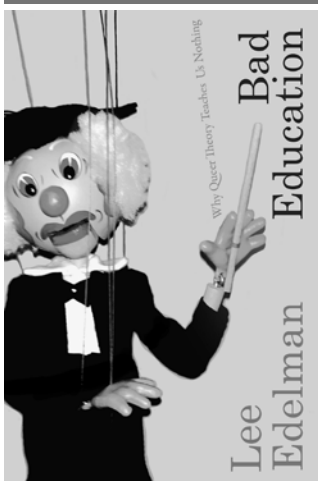
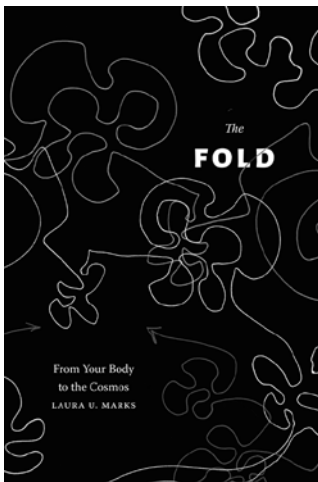
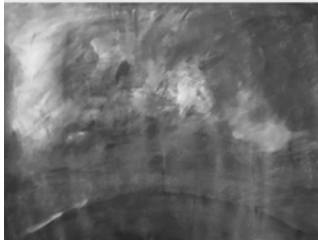
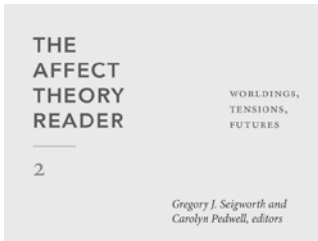
PITS Tee Orchid
\$30.00 USD



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Colors and artwork position may vary

Selected Affect Theory Titles from **Duke University Press**



The Affect Theory Reader 2

Worldings, Tensions, Futures
GREGORY J. SEIGWORTH and
CAROLYN PEDWELL, editors
ANIMA: Critical Race Studies Otherwise

The Promise of Beauty

MIMI THI NGUYEN

Tendings

Feminist Esoterisms and
the Abolition of Man
NATHAN SNAZA

Social Bonds and Catastrophic Acts

ELIZABETH STEWART, issue editor
An issue of *differences* (34:3)

On the Inconvenience of Other People

LAUREN BERLANT
Writing Matters!

Bad Education

Why Queer Theory
Teaches Us Nothing
LEE EDELMAN
Theory Q

The Terrible We

Thinking with Trans Maladjustment
CAMERON AWKWARD-RICH
ASTERISK

Running

LINDSEY A. FREEMAN
Practices

Raving

MCKENZIE WARK
Practices

Kids on the Street

Queer Kinship and Religion in
San Francisco's Tenderloin
JOSEPH PLASTER

Ordinariness

ANNABEL BARRY, issue editor
An issue of *Qui Parle* (33:1)

The Fold

From Your Body to the Cosmos
LAURA U. MARKS

Left Turns in Brown Study

SANDRA RUIZ
Writing Matters!

The Other Side of Empathy

JADE E. DAVIS

Shadow of My Shadow

JENNIFER DOYLE

Everything Must Go

Abolition, Anti-Imperialism, Anarchism
CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH LEE, ERIC A.
STANLEY, JEMMA DECRISTO, and
REN-YO HWANG, issue editors
An issue of *TSQ* (11:1)

SARS Stories

Affect and Archive of the 2003 Pandemic
BELINDA KONG
Sinotheory

Being Dead Otherwise

ANNE ALLISON

Public Culture

ARJUN APPADURAI, VYJAYANTHI RAO,
and ERICA ROBLES-ANDERSON, editors
A peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal of
cultural studies

Cultural Politics

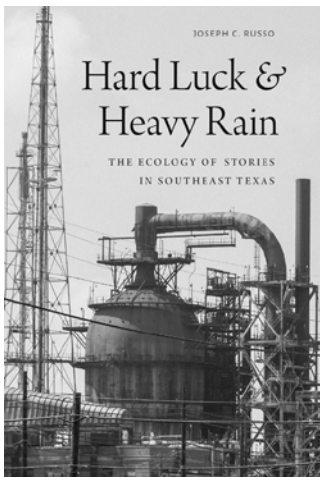
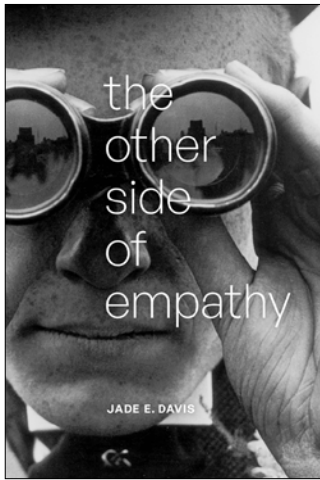
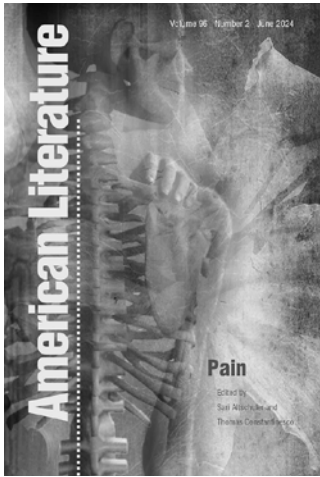
RYAN BISHOP, MARK FEATHERSTONE,
EVA HAIFA GIRAUD, and DOUGLAS
KELLNER, editors
Examines the political ramifications of global
cultural productions across artistic and
academic disciplines



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How the Earth Feels

Geological Fantasy in the
Nineteenth-Century United States
DANA LUCIANO
ANIMA: Critical Race Studies Otherwise

Intoxicated

Race, Disability, and Chemical
Intimacy across Empire
MEL Y. CHEN
ANIMA: Critical Race Studies Otherwise

Crisis Theory

EUGENE BRENNAN, issue editor
An issue of *SAQ* (123:2)

Data Worlds

KATHERINE BODE and **LAUREN
M.E. GOODLAD**, issue editors
An issue of *Critical AI* (1:1-2)

Wild Experiment

Feeling Science and
Secularism after Darwin
DONOVAN O. SCHAEFER

Hard Luck and Heavy Rain

The Ecology of Stories in
Southeast Texas
JOSEPH C. RUSSO

Habit's Pathways

Repetition, Power, Conduct
TONY BENNETT

Stay Black and Die

On Melancholy and Genius
I. AUGUSTUS DURHAM

Riotous Deathscapes

HUGO KA CANHAM

Politics of Kinship

Race, Family, Governance
MARK RIFKIN

Pain

SARI ALTSCHULER and **THOMAS
CONSTANTINESCO**, issue editors
An issue of *American Literature* (96:2)

Couplets

Travels in Speculative Pragmatism
BRIAN MASSUMI
Thought in the Act

Around the Day in Eighty Worlds

Politics of the Pluriverse
MARTIN SAVRANSKY
Thought in the Act

Listening in the Afterlife of Data

Aesthetics, Pragmatics, and
Incommunication
DAVID CECCHETTO
Thought in the Act

Earworm and Event

Music, Daydreams, and
Other Imaginary Refrains
ELDRITCH PRIEST
Thought in the Act

Together, Somehow

Music, Affect, and Intimacy
on the Dancefloor
LUIS MANUEL GARCIA-MISPIRETA

Primitivism Now, Primitivism Again

BEN ETHERINGTON and
SAMUEL J. SPINNER, issue editors
An issue of *Comparative Literature* (76:2)

Expanding Black and Indigenous Ecologies

DELALI KUMAVIE and **BONNIE
ETHERINGTON**, issue editors
An issue of *English Language Notes* (62:1)



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STREAM DESCRIPTIONS



#PITS

S1

AFFECT AND ESOTERIC INHUMANISMS

Rebekah Sheldon
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Tess Given
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Nathan Snaza
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This stream will focus on the overlaps between theories of affect and esoteric practices. Both affect and magic concern the open-ended becoming of the world as a process of bodily, sensory, and emotional attunement beyond persuasion and demonstration. Where affect denotes the ability to affect or be affected, magic offers techniques for producing changes in the world; where affect signals the production of feeling, magic subsists in the residual feeling of something-happening. Like affect, magic is often denigrated for its alleged anti-intentionalist irrationalism and sparks worries about the erosion of discernment in public discourse. This stream asks how affect and magic map onto and illuminate each other; how we might understand ritual magic as a form of affect theory *avant-la-lettre* and what the return of magic as popular culture tells us about the place of affect in the contemporary, a place that spans the range signaled by "PITS."

Panelists will pursue the meeting of affect and magic through a range of esoteric practices and knowledges: occultism, tarot, haunting, witchcraft and *bruja* feminism, mysticism, and weird speculativisms. Often, when these come up within contemporary humanist and social scientific research, they end up being interpreted as displacement, metaphorization, and allegory. Against this interpretive move, we want to take the esoteric seriously as a vector of material practice, knowledge production, and emergent, queer collectivity in the shadow of Enlightenment epistemes. At a moment when many theoretical currents are turning to advanced technoscience to ground their materialisms, we want to linger on those forms of knowing-doing that exist in fugitive relation to Enlightenment mechanisms of "primitive" accumulation. This includes thinking through queer temporalities that

exceed both the normalizing fictions of state and family, and the forms of affective perception indexed as “haunting” that play such a crucial role in literatures arising from the trans-Atlantic slave trade and settler colonialism in the Americas. Unlike the universalist (read: colonialist) impulse hard-baked into Enlightenment rationality, the esotericisms we seek to explore are linked with inhumanist collectivities.

In this stream, we want to read various forms of esoteric practice through and against affect theory as a way of attuning to alternatives to Enlightenment subjectivity and humanist politics. And we wonder, collectively, how these practices may hold the capacity to animate inhumanist futures detached from modes of colonial, capitalist, heterosexist, and anthropocentric capture. We invite papers that take up questions such as:

- What affects attend (our) investments in esoteric practice in academic spaces?
- How do we understand and work through/with the ways we may be made to feel shame and embarrassment for believing in, practicing, or just taking seriously esoteric knowledges?
- How might making public our esoteric commitments reconfigure how we practice academic labor?
- What kinds of methods are required to think through contemporary esoteric knowledges in relation to earlier forms of witchcraft, sorcery, magic, etc.?
- How do we think shifting relations between politics and esoterisms?
- How might discourses of queer temporalities help us understand the ways such historical engagement is saturated and motivated by affect?



S2

POLITICAL PITS

Chad Shomura
chad.shomura@ucdenver.edu

This stream on politics and affect explores the pits as zones of affective pitfall and of orchestrating otherworldly noise. Pits evoke stuckness and despair, but also hiding places and refuge. They can entrap or relieve. How might pits shape understandings of affect and politics?

Sociopolitical pits fill the air with hopelessness, dread, and resignation. They call for prompt, forceful action and raise dire questions about how to sustain political projects and movements. Affect studies have generally explored the politics of slower, subtler activities, from sharpening the senses to experimenting with processes of becoming (Bennett 2020). How might these and other affective practices engage urgent political issues? What are their pitfalls? How does affect inform oppositional, activist, and militant politics? What affective tones dominate politics, and are they energizing or enervating? What feelings might invigorate the political?

Although political, economic, and ecological fragilities might break social promises of the good life, perhaps the historical present remains oriented by the promissory. White supremacy, fascism, transphobias, militarism, and settler violence have sought to jumpstart the good life. What is the affective relationship of the promissory to political imagination? Could political value be found in the unpromising and, if so, what might it be?

Impasses emerge, as when antagonisms hit a head, or they can be instituted to halt business as usual and open other paths. What are the politics of impasses and their conventional qualities like stuckness, blockage, and incommensurability? What lines of flight are smoldering in impasses, and how might they be detected and channeled? How might “transitional infrastructure” (Berlant 2022) to uncertain futures be built?

Alongside threats to bodily autonomy, democracy, and earthy life, certain humans and nonhumans are framed as threats to comfort, social norms, and national

futures. What are the biocultural registers of threat, and how are they modulated to reproduce sociopolitical orders (Wynter 1984)? What becomes possible through disidentification as a threat and being threatening otherwise? Can the threat be playfully reclaimed?

As the sociopolitical and planetary here and now is increasingly unsettled, we might ask: what affects have been dampened in order to consolidate that here and now? How might their traces be sensed, activated, or amplified? How do settlements—of sensoria, images, matter, spaces, borders, discursive practices—depend on dispossession of potentialities of unsettlement?

With much falling apart and uncertainty darkening the future, what is there to affirm? What might an affirmative politics look and feel like from within the pits? Papers in this stream may explore the provocations above, below, and many topics besides:

- Political qualities of pits/the pits: worstness, lowness, wretchedness, darkness, loneliness, solitude
- Racial and colonial politics of sunken places (Peele 2017).
- Political atmospheres of pits: dark, dank, stinky
- Minimalist performances of affect: unfeeling (Yao 2021), inscrutability (Huang 2022), inexpression (Post 2023)
- Joy: sparking it (Kondo 2010), killing it (Ahmed 2023)
- Political sensoria: *la facultad* (Anzaldúa 1987), watching and waiting (Stewart 2007), arts of noticing (Tsing 2015)
- Impasses as political technologies: blockades, strikes, liberated zones, refusals (Coulthard 2014; Simpson 2014; Moten 2018; Honig 2021)
- Theorizing systems of power through/as process (Connolly 2011; Massumi 2015; Manning 2016; Snaza 2024)



S3

PLANETARY DISPOSITIONS: AFFECTIVE (UN)SETTLING IN CATASTROPHIC TIMES

Claire Blencowe
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How do affective dispositions come to settle and unsettle planetary regimes of disposability? Through what affective sediments and atmospheres of feeling has the catastrophe of capitalist and colonial world-making geomorphed into planetary instability? And what might it take to unsettle and refuse the toxic dynamics of redemptive optimism and despondent pessimism that now suffuse the air?

This stream welcomes papers that explore and experiment with a host of planetary dispositions— those that have sedimented through the strata of modern terraforming, and those that might yet unsettle and confound the hopes, promises, dreams and fears through which social lives are made through climate wreckage and planetary change. A collective exploration of what it might take to eke out a life amidst catastrophe, we welcome papers and propositions that bite down hard as they examine the affective infrastructures of the many histories, cosmologies, and political architectures that subtend catastrophe, as well as ideas and provocations for unsettling our sedimented dispositions and affective responses to an earth forever unstable and unsafe. We invite papers that explore:

Planetary dispositions as sediments of modern terraformation, extractivism and colonial and capitalist catastrophes

- Affective regimes of disposability, planetary biopolitics, or metaphysics of race
- Affective sediments and atmospheres of feeling that emerge from colonial and capitalist terraformation and catastrophies
- Affective infrastructures and aesthetics subtending catastrophe

- Transformations and relations between the affects of catastrophic colonial and capitalist world-making and exacerbations planetary instability—including, but not limited to toxic atmospheres of pessimistic resignation and redemptive optimism

Planetary dispositions that might yet unsettle and confound the hopes, promises, dreams and fears through which social lives are made through climate wreckage and planetary change.

- Affective dispositions that unsettle planetary regimes of disposability
- Refusals of toxic dynamics of redemptive optimism and/or despondent pessimism
- Provocations for unsettling our sedimented dispositions and affective responses to an earth forever unstable and unsafe.

Planetary instability in the compositions of dispositions, affective infrastructures and aesthetic regimes.

- Geological instability as generative of atmospheres of feeling, dispositions, aesthetics and affective infrastructure
- Planetary affects, metaphysics, and cultures



S4

AFFECTIVE SPACES OF OPACITY

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Pussy Riot's *Punk Prayer* (2012) disrupted the space of the Moscow Cathedral and caused a national sensation in a matter of minutes. It proved enigmatic and permeated the public imagination. Why couldn't the state and church displace four young women in ski-masks from the center of national discourse? "Mad", "hysterical", "sensationalist", and many other labels were deployed, but none of them managed to grasp the affective charge of the event. Within an otherwise sacred site, *Punk Prayer* introduced a space of opacity, bringing into question the unshaken pillars of society—patriarchy, religion, and the state apparatus.

This stream calls attention to such spaces of opacity across theoretical, historical, activist, and political discourses. We see spaces of opacity as inherently unstable; they remain in permanent tension, refusing interpretations. Opacity reveals and conceals, allowing us to experience, beyond sight, what was previously hidden and obscuring what appeared obvious or straightforward. While this instability delimits a space of possibility, promising some potential liberation from set forms and ways of seeing, it also threatens to create further modes of exclusion and oppression. Instances of opacity proliferate all around us and throughout history; they include revolutions and periods of socioeconomic transition, social and protest movements, discourses that destabilize the legibility of sexual and racial identities, and an aesthetic that plays on sensation rather than cognition. Resonating with Eve Sedgwick's "sites of productive opacity", Martine Beugnet's "aesthetics of blur", and Édouard Glissant's "the right to opacity for everyone", spaces of opacity are necessarily affective (Sedgwick 2003, Beugnet 2017, Glissant 1997). They invite multiplicity and error, and resist reason and rationality. They are vague and therefore constitute impasses, in which "strong" theoretical models are pushed to their limit (those of affect studies included) and the need for new or reworked ones becomes especially acute (Ashtor 2021).

Opacity is historical and political, but disturbs historical linearity, codified structures, or mimetic representations of reality. In instances of opacity, affects come to the forefront; they are intensified and their interplay is surfaced. It is here that it becomes increasingly clear that emotions, as Sara Ahmed puts it, “do” things and determine the future because reason ceases to reason (2004). The vision of the future proves inherently partial and identities incomplete, necessitating change and adjustment but providing no clues for how to move forward. It is thus not only a theoretical impasse, but also a literal, embodied one. Opacity simultaneously promises and threatens. Life modalities are altered and “cruel optimisms” amplified, mobilizing not only hope for change, but also pain of detachment and anxiety before the future (Berlant 2011).

Spaces of opacity encompass feelings that are “emergent” (Deleuze 1986) and are always “embryonic” (Williams 1977). The present thus serves as opaque, it functions as a “pastness opening directly into the future”; it is incipient, a realm of potential that is not yet rationalized (Massumi 2002). Within an instance of opacity the center necessarily pivots, giving way to feminist and alternative black epistemologies, radical manifestations of queerness and sexuality, and new uses of the erotic and poetic (Jaggar 1989, Hill Collins 1990, Muñoz 2009, Lorde 1978 & 1979). The changes are rapid and settling is incipient, but its shape is not yet clear. Sites of opacity thus demand urgent and expansive analyses, given that they form the futures we will all live in. Learning from the opacity of the past can help us traverse the future, and identifying its present manifestations is crucial to envisioning and most importantly enacting liberatory futures.

We seek proposals that locate, problematize, theorize, and propose new ways of navigating spaces of opacity. Possible topics include but are not limited to:

Politics, Revolution, Transition, Activism, Protest

- Opacity of historical transitions and its impasses
- Modalities of physical or digital protest that resist legible practices and strategies
- History as multiplicity and/or polyvocality that elude linear accounts
- Rhizomatic intersections of art and activism that challenge institutional formations and codified expressions
- Spaces of opacity that emerge amidst circulation and distribution of information or as an effect of the disruption of the continuous flow

Race, Sexuality, Desire

- Ambiguity, invisibility, and opacity against a reduction to identitarian taxonomies
- Rethinking otherness (race, queerness or any other abject identities) as a resistance to language, meaning, and interpretation
- Extreme, unprecedented, or other-than-human configurations of desire and intimacy beyond conventional categories
- Showing and/or concealing identity in cinema and screen media
- Invisibility/hypervisibility in digital media, networks, or environments

The Decolonial, the Anticolonial

- The opacity introduced by oppositional geographies and alternative cartographies
- The poetics of landscape and the poetics of questioning (Glissant 1997), the disruption of authority and reason underpinning charts, figures, maps, and/or official records
- Diasporas and nomadic patterns, rethinking space as opaque and unfinished
- The “demonic”, the uncertain, the non-linear, the un-predictable as a departure from determinism and positivism (McKittrick 2006)



S5

PHENOMENOLOGY/AFFECT/CRITIQUE

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Understood broadly, phenomenology is the effort to characterize how phenomena manifest, how they appear, contrasted to a more empiricist or realist effort to determine the truth or falsehood of an already assumed real. While many post-structuralists critiqued phenomenology as remaining wedded to a substantialized notion of Subject, phenomenologists themselves often characterized their own thinking as an effort to escape the Cartesian divide and to understand phenomena outside of the subject/object constraints of consciousness. Since much of affect studies has traditionally been aligned with post-structuralist thinking in its philosophical formations, phenomenology early on seemed to be ignored, if not dismissed, as an approach to think the affective dimension.

This dismissal has shifted in the last few decades. What was once viewed as almost an impasse between critique and phenomenology has become more of a cross-fertilization of thought. In appeals for social justice and climate activism, critique needs a way to express why there should be a valuation of one politics over another, and some have looked to phenomenological thinkers to do so. And in phenomenology, particularly in feminist phenomenology, there has been an increasing focus on the need for critique of extant reality, along with a focus on how it is manifest. In the last few years, this ongoing reassessment of phenomenology has taken on the designation of *critical phenomenology* (see Weiss, Salamon, Murphy, editors, *50 Concepts for a Critical Phenomenology*; and contributors to *Puncta: Journal of Critical Phenomenology*).

In the years since the publication of Gregg and Seigworth's *Affect Theory Reader* (2010), affect theory, too, continues to shift and morph its orientations and concerns. The essays in Seigworth and Pedwell, editors, *The Affect Theory Reader 2* (2023) express a full range of reassessments of both affect(s) and affect theory, a range the editors evoke through terms such as "provocations," "reinterpretations,"

“dishabitations,” “occlusions,” “omissions,” and “ossifications” (4). In conceptual parallel with critical phenomenology (which suggests not a negation of phenomenology but the ongoing need to translate earlier texts to new times, spaces, and practices), we might call this a *Reader in critical affect theory*.

This stream seeks the promises and threats posed by the confluences or divergences of critical phenomenology and critical affect theory. Submissions may pursue any thematic within this confluence or divergence. Some possibilities include:

- Affective interpretations of Merleau-Ponty’s notions of atmosphere, institutionality, expressivity, or dimension.
- Critical affective and phenomenological interpretations of intercorporeality. What hinders intercorporeality? How is intercorporeality felt (lived) as threat?
- What roles do specific institutions or specific social habits/practices play in promising, marshaling, threatening, or hindering particular affective modalities?
- What lived experiences of *disaffection* are crucial for us to think, deploy, or resist today? (e.g., Xine Yao and Simone de Beauvoir; Claudia Rankine and Frantz Fanon)
- Phenomenology and affect theory have each maintained ambivalent but productive relations with Marxian thought. How might critical affect theory and critical phenomenology contribute to newer folds in theorizing global capitalism, suggested by the recent and more desperate labels of, e.g., brutality (Mbembe), remaindered life (Tadiar), disaster capitalism (Klein).



S6

PROMISSORY NOTES, OR HOW THE BODY TRADES IN FUTURES

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In the Nietzschean cast, to promise is to guarantee a kind of stability within the subject: to remain identical to oneself in all the tenses—to be accountable, responsible, predictable so that a promise made in the past can be fulfilled in the future. Memory takes centre stage here—one must remember oneself through time—as does the movement of time. While his analysis highlights certain essential elements to making promises, our interests shift away from questions of sovereignty and bad conscience to explorations of bodily potentialities. We think of promises as time travelers with uncertain futures, as promissory notes that may or may not be legal tender but that carry us through goals, hopes, injuries lasting and passing, broken dreams and unanticipated wins. Promises move, and it is the quality of this movement that captivates us.

With this panel, we want to look at the kinds of promises that our bodies in movement can bring. What happens as we simply attempt to keep going, whether that's freestyling in a lane next to Ann Cvetkovich by continuing to get ourselves to the swimming pool in times of public depression, or lacing up for our long runs "because it make[s] [us] think so good that [we] learn things even better than when [we're] on [our] bed[s] at night," following Alan Sillitoe, or if we simply give ourselves over to "dogpaddling around in the meanwhile," a la Lauren Berlant? We want to think about how bodies in movement can promise futures, and we want to think about how these promises are kept, how they are broken, and how they sometimes fail to materialize. Bodily promises can set you up to feel like a protagonist, have you dreaming of winning, or imagining something that feels like a cousin of redemption, but they can just as easily leave you with a pulled ego, a stress reaction, or a fracture in your relationship or your day. When our bodies write promissory notes, we can never be sure they'll make good on them. Or, if we'll even want to cash those

checks when they come. Still what choice do we have? Movement is in part an agreement to get going, to fuck around and find out what happens next.

This stream seeks proposals that write and think with the promises, annoyances, and weirdnesses of moving bodies. We are interested in thinking with people across disciplines and various scholarly dispositions.

Possible topics and themes include but are not limited to:

- Affect, memory, and the body
- Queer bodies in motion
- Moving while trans
- Crip theories of movement
- Race, affect, and bodies on the move
- Running or swimming along in queer time
- Affects of injury or flow states
- Visual culture or material culture and the body



S7

IS THERE GEOPOLITICAL DIVERSITY IN AFFECT THEORY?

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At the first affect conference (“Affect: Worlding, Tensions, Futures,” 2015, Millersville), it felt like most speakers quoted the same authors, which could have been a sign of the field’s lack of vitality in contrast with its fairly recent institutionalization (Gregg & Seigworth 2010; Clough 2007). Interestingly, in the same year, affect theory started to emerge in Latin American aiming at coping with right-wing turns in countries like Argentina and Brazil (Macon, Solana, Vacarezza 2021; Safatle 2015). While Latin American’s publications and translations increased, affect theory continued to expand in the Anglo-Saxon academy (Seigworth & Pedwell, 2023), introducing new authors and fueling new concepts. Yet, South and North academies do not often seem to intersect or dialogue. This fact deserves serious consideration: if affect theory is truly engaged with thinking and performing inclusive and plural affect worlds in contemporary global societies, how can geopolitical diversity be overlooked?

Affect theory develops in diverse geopolitical territories at different speeds (Pais 2021). In part, the reason for this lies in language segregation and unequal labor conditions in peripheral and southern contexts. Affect is also always situated, thus, knowledge on affect is necessarily historical and culturally specific. Finally, one of the biggest challenges of research on affect is to find adequate tools and methodologies to approach specific objects considering embodied knowledge that is, nonetheless, culturally shaped as well. In other words, embodied/affective knowledge can be pivotal to advance knowledge on affect, namely diverse conceptual frameworks, but it requires cultural awareness or openness to affective accents. Such practice echoes what Bolivian scholar and activist Silvia Cusicanqui names “corazonar” (2018: 92): a mode of thinking with the heart, in a situated context.

Recalling an important debate in the field of performance studies that questioned the imperialist effects of Anglo-Saxon narrative and epistemological dominance in

the field—initiated by Jon Mackenzie with the essay “Is PS imperialist?” (2006)—perhaps it is time to ask a similar question to affect theory: is there geopolitical diversity in affect theory? How can we counter geographically isolated research? Can we listen through other geopolitical affective knowings and bring forth stronger and more inclusive epistemologies to a paradoxical world of felt disconnections and endless connectedness?

This stream wishes to create space for geopolitical diversity in dialogue (not as a ghetto), welcoming proposals from all disciplines and angles that engage with the promises, impasses, threats and settlings of imperialist effects of affective epistemologies.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Modes of (uneven) production and distribution of knowledge
- Alternative genealogies of affect theory
- Imperialist effects vs. epistemological affects
- Knowledge on affect vs embodied/affective knowledge
- Methodologies for the study of embodied knowledge
- Peripheral and south conceptual landscapes for knowledge on affect
- Cultural multiverses of affective experience
- Affect, performance and memory
- Cross-temporalities and cross-spatiality in affective experience
- Culturally aware forms of “corazonar”
- Theorizing situated affect
- performativity of affect
- The role of affect in a global world
- Far-right political affects, mobilization and manipulation
- Disconnections vs. connections



S8

THEORY'S OTHERWISE TEXTURES

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This stream is an invitation to follow the pits, hollows, scars, depressions, perforations, and other uneven surfaces of the ordinary through writing, and in doing so explore textures of theory as a method for thinking with affect. Like any old pit, words can be a place to bury or store. We mine words in our attempts to momentarily render comprehensible the events, affects, or contingencies of worlds experienced in the ongoingness of throwing together and falling apart (Stewart 2015). But words, like worlds, can also be pitted and pustular, an incitement or pitting-against, a generative futility: “it’s the pits!” Writing bumps up against moods and material vicissitudes, proliferating ruin and toxicity, waves of impasse and upheaval, moments of joy or giving a damn.

Writing alongside small intimacies, breakups, and bad hair days or in the visceral wake (Sharpe 2016) of colonization, slavery, police brutality, and genocide, razor-sharp definitions often seem irrelevant. Besides, our objects are reeling: deepfakes, doomscrolling, New Ageisms, the postcolonial frictions of coordinating between scientific or indigenous empirics. When affect sediments into either jargon or the too-personal, its textures collapse inward. Instead, we might write sideways: mapping adjacencies and blurs, kneading, iterating, genre flailing (Berlant 2018) as a means to hone capacities of noticing, get a rise, and grow wider affiliations.

Affect’s methods might be murky, but across fields and fads writing is a common denominator in feeling out worldly forces—a “phenomenal method of attending and composing” (Stewart 2015, 29). This stream invites papers that wrestle the animating power of words as they bind subjectivities and affectivities with life and death racial and multispecies stakes (Chen 2012). It favors anticolonial and more-than-human forms of attention, witness, and storytelling (Bird Rose & Van Dooren 2017; Million 2009; McKittrick 2021; Simpson 2011; Tsing et al 2020; Verran 2001), insists that style matters (Anzaldúa 2015), and takes compositionality not

only as a matter of affect's writing, but how the world works: material-semiotic things patched together or teased apart (Haraway 1997; Dumit 2014). In this spirit, 'theory's otherwise textures' explores potentials for writing to forge spaces of promise amid prevailing impasses and threats, by attending to, tracing, or resisting the settling of events, encounters, flights, and ordinaries. The stream asks participants to write with the textures of theory, the materiality of the discursive, and the tactility of composition. Papers in this panel will write through and alongside experimental modes attuned to the promises, impasses, threats, and settlings-in of writing as a method for affect:

- How do autoethnographic, autotheoretical, or fictocritical practices burnish otherwise ways of noticing, shift public feelings, or generatively deform (Muecke 2002) the canonical?
- Can science studies methods like implosion (Dumit 2014) or figuration (eg. Neimanis 2013) help to historicize affect studies or amp up its politics?
- What can formal constraints do? Hundreds (Berlant & Stewart 2019), surveys (Law 2009), speculative archives (Gumbs 2018), etc.
- Is atmospheric attunement (Stewart 2011) a method? How?
- What affectivities are harnessed by "speaking in tongues" (Anzaldúa 1987)?
- How might genres of "felt theory" (Million 2009) unsettle genres of life?



S9

SENSUAL PEDAGOGIES

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This stream explores pedagogies as an affective entanglement of “sensual” relations, rather than a stable set of curricular moves. Within pedagogical spaces, such relations un/expectedly emerge to highlight affect as an embodied sense-making experience: a feeling that reverberates, resonates, wavers (Duggan & García Zarranz, 2022), produces—potentially “undoing” us at every turn (Berlant, 2011). According to Berlant, our potential undoing by (negative) forces is a “sensual, historical experience” in that it invites us to become curious about those pedagogies that sense and refuse the rhetoric, ideologies, and norms of the dominant public sphere (Anderson et al., 2022).

These threats from the dominant public sphere have become heightened in the aftermath of the global pandemic. Everyday media headlines continue to be peppered with racist, homophobic, anti-trans, and anti-abortion agendas. Education bills have been effectively introduced and signed into law that strictly limit what can be taught and discussed in pre-K–12 schools regarding race, sexuality, and gender. These incidents are not isolated to the US and have manifested in similar iterations across Canada and the UK. In fact, the past few years have seen a steady, precipitous rise of “anti-woke” discourses, text censorship rhetoric, and “science of reading war” debates (Dernikos et al., 2023).

Educational scholars have noted concerns that the cultural, political, and racial evasiveness of narrow views of pedagogy both ignore the sociocultural factors involved in learning and reinforce homogenizing, one size fits all approaches to

instruction that do not account for children’s creativity and “breathtaking diversity” (Genishi & Dyson, 2009). As Patel (2023) reminds us, “binaries kill nuance” and cannot account for the affects that such threats re/produce. An attention to affect and pedagogy as sensual relations is thus necessary to examine the “politics of feeling ” within educational spaces: how feelings not only become markers of subjectivity/humanity, but also technologies of domination (Yao, 2021). For instance, in recent years, educational critiques (see e.g. Dernikos et al., 2023) of #AffectSoWhite have highlighted how the assumption of “universal” affect in classroom spaces is racialized—affectively aligned with white, cis-hetero feelings and representative of the “ideal humanist subject” or “Man” (Snaza, 2019; Wynter, 2003).

Sensual pedagogies resist master accounts of knowing/being/doing/feeling while embracing “messiness,” that is, a commitment to become curious, worried, and suspicious of academic practices, methodologies, and theories that refuse relational thinking/feeling as well as all forms of life (McKittrick, 2021). Sensual pedagogies, however, do not deny joy. They approach normativity as “a scene of negotiated sustenance”—where educators become, think, and feel anchorless amid a shifting sociopolitical landscape that is all at once ambiguous, turbulent, hopeful (Berlant, 2011; cf. Anderson et al., 2021).

This stream invites papers that explore affect’s possibilities and promises, but also its limitations and threats, so that pedagogies may be felt, imagined, and *sensed* otherwise. Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Race, gender, sexuality, class, and education
- Anxiety, paranoia, pessimism, resistance, and/or refusal
- Art, music, film, literature
- Ordinary and extraordinary violence in educational spaces
- Fatigue, fear, and fatalism
- AI: technological foreclosures and advancements
- Pedagogy under threat
- Childhood and youth as aesthetic and affective states
- Sonic technologies
- Trauma and affective hauntings



S10

BOTTOMLESS PITS, UPWELLING FLOWS

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This panel thinks through the Promises, Impasses, Threats and Settlements (PITS) themes from a hydrofeminist praxis. *Bodies of water* (Neimanis, 2012) is a figuration that encourages generative ways of thinking about how conference participants may respond to (the) PITS. In this stream we invite proposals that swim-think-read-write-make with the praxis of hydrofeminism conveying the fluidity of watery bodies, which challenge Cartesian notions of discrete, atomised, self-sufficient landlocked human and more-than-human individuals, aligned with affect theory.

Promises

Oceans, ponds, rivers, dams and lakes cannot be used as human dumping grounds or mined for further human greed and consumption, without serious consequences for the dying planet. Rather than be seen as bottomless pits, we invite responses that explore how slow upwelling flows from the pits in bodies of water—octopus and shark dens, feeding pits, blue holes, pockmarks from methane gas—might give rise to capacious nutrient-rich potentialities for un/settling impasses and threats. Some questions that panelists may wish to pursue include:

- How might slow methodologies performed in bodies of water provide alternative moistenings for scholarly practices and doing academia differently?
- What might we learn from water and the creatures living in water?

- How might affect studies flow—with processes of swimming—thinking—reading—writing?
- How might we think differently about human and more-than human care-carriage practices that are fluid rather than contained?

Impasses

Watery bodies, in their vibrant buoyancy, support and carry a potential for uncanny sensibilities that lure towards new speculative imaginaries. Panelists may wish to pursue the following:

- How might we take advantage of the impasses of Berlant’s “dog paddling in the meanwhile”?
- How do watery attunements and encounters with sea creatures that sense the not-yet help develop multisensorial response-abilities for a changing world?

Threats

Human violences to other humans, animals, plants, and land pose threats to all life on the blue planet. With increasing pollution (chemical, sewage, plastic), oceanic acidification, rising sea temperatures, mining and seismic surveys, overfishing by big corporations, we wit(h)ness a reduction of algae and watery species. Not only are marine algae the main producers of oxygen, they are also nurturant habitats of diverse species.

Some questions that panelists may wish to pursue:

- How might we think with algae as nurturing spaces that encourage diversity and flourishing in the midst of the threat of their demise?
- What role might affect play in making such threats visible?
- What implications do these threats have for how we do higher education pedagogy and scholarship?

Un/Settlings

The hydrocommons is not a conducive space for feeling settled and yet the ocean has been the conduit for haunting hydro-settler-colonialism—the movement from north to south and the appropriation of land and resources including slave trade.

Panelists may wish to ponder:

- How do watery bodies sediment histories settling/settler colonial encounters?
- How might exploring the aphotic zone—the dark region of the ocean and inland water bodies lying beneath the surface sunlit waters—un/do and un/settle taken for granted notions of that which is un/knowable?



S11

ENTERING THE HAUNTED ARCHIVES/ HAUNTING THE ARCHIVES: THREATS AND/OR CRITICAL POTENTIALITIES OF VULNERABILITIES

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In an era where we are increasingly vulnerable and simultaneously released and encased into and within closed black boxed yet algorithm-driven social media, machine learning and artificial intelligence platforms, how might we unravel what we see to reveal both threats and potentialities? For instance, subaltern and counterhegemonic actors gain access, voice, and visibility—whether through #metoo, #sayhername and many others from global south contexts—in these networks. Yet this visibility also puts them at risk—subject to state surveillance and retaliation for any “wrong” kind of visibility.

Carolyn Pedwell (2019) notes, “we become increasingly algorithmically mediated by digital capital at the micro-level of affect, gesture and habit” (p. 3). Such mediation at the micro-level makes individuals vulnerable in both predictable and unpredictable ways, leading us to think both in terms of the threats and potentialities that come from dwelling and lingering in these spaces (Weins and Macdonald, 2024). These spaces both haunt and are haunted by past and continuing hierarchies and oppressions. They visibly and invisibly shape futures through seemingly disjointed “displaced and submerged narratives, actors, agents, and entities that primarily exist as an absent presence” (Blackman, p. 685). Data archives thus stain and resist the movement of data futures but also promise different imaginaries of futures—utopic, ambiguous, and dystopic. The horror of the everyday tentacles of hate within social media is as prolific as the optimism of protest. Yet affective intensities and forces bring strangers together in uncanny encounters within and across platforms to create political groupings that may

sometimes have sociopolitical impacts—whether through elections, through the forging and re-forging of solidarities, (re)construction of subjectivities, building of social movements and so on. Each of these in turn seem to construct and mobilize various forms of affective excesses.

For this stream, we are interested in work that attempts to open up ways to understand the affective shaping and tacking together of media assemblages whether through what Rey Chow refers to as “*scenes of entanglement*” or through what Blackman refers to as “hauntology.” We are open to proposals that approach generative AI tools and social media presences through the lenses of automaticity, hauntology, or affective, speculative, and intuitive modes of engagement with cultural texts and their production.

We would like this stream to be a space that engages affect theory in relation to marginalized identities—whether a thinking-through of protest movements, assemblages of hate or the (im)possibilities of machine-learning and generative AI. We are not looking for arguments regarding the authenticity of representation and identity bias—rather we would like an emphasis on affective assemblages while critically engaging race theory, queer and feminist theory, and postcolonial theory for instance.

Some suggested themes for exploration include looking at threats and vulnerabilities in relation to:

- Homophilic hate groups, automaticity and affect
- Hauntology and imaging/imagining scenes of entanglement
- Protest assemblages and networks of queer time and place
- Affective “stickiness” in generative AI storytelling around marginal identities
- Spectral geographies, everyday and colonial spatialities
- Regimes and counter-regimes of affective visibility; spectres and spectacles in archives



S12

EROS IN THE END TIMES: DESIRE AND AFFECT BEYOND THE HUMAN

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Georges Bataille's notion that eroticism is "assenting to life even in death" takes on new urgency in the Anthropocene, an era marked by ecological catastrophe, capitalist excess, and the "always-looming threat of extinction" (Thacker). This stream invites explorations of the role of 'Eros' during our seemingly endless 'End Times.' Currently, we exist at a libidinal and existential impasse. As ecological crises render the planet unrecognizable, our once familiar world becomes 'unhomely,' estranging us from our environment and ourselves. This disorientation is particularly manifest in our libidinal desires, which vacillate between the extremes of capitalistic overindulgence and existential withdrawal, distancing us from the tangible, sensual pleasures we once embraced.

How, then, does Eros evolve? The dwindling of our libidinal energies (Pettman) inevitably reshapes our interpersonal connections, sexualities, subjectivities, and intimacies. The question arises whether our desires are shifting toward non-human or non-sexual forms. No one is immune to the negative affects permeating our present apocalyptic moment—even though sex today has been fully incorporated into the logic of capitalism: "We are too overworked to be deeply, collectively horny" (Lewis). We thus explore this question from dual perspectives: how might we conceive of an Eros without 'us' (the human) or alternatively an 'us' without Eros? We recognize that these stances are not mutually exclusive. This inquiry sets the stage for a deeper examination of emerging forms of desire, 'sex,' and connection, prompting a reevaluation of intimacy and eroticism in an era defined by collapse.

"Sex, like man, or like the category of the social, may only last for a while," wrote Baudrillard. If psychoanalysis helped to bring sex to the forefront in the second part of the twentieth century, perhaps it also orchestrated its demise. In the past ten

years, we have witnessed what some would call an ‘anti-sex panic,’ with a notable rise in asexuality as a sexual identity, an exploration of desires beyond traditional human-centric and heterosexual norms, and frequent reports of declining sexual activity among young people globally (Willingham). How should we interpret these shifts? Rather than viewing them with concern, this might be an opportunity to rethink the role of Eros—or its absence—in our current era. If we once had sex without sexuality, are we now moving towards sexuality without sex? (Giddens) Amidst looming human extinction and planetary catastrophe, is it possible to reconceptualize our relationship with Eros to transcend the anthropocentric perspective, thereby ‘assenting to life’ even as we confront our possible end?

Building upon critical posthumanities and queer negativity, we seek proposals that address affects at the interstices of Eros and discourses surrounding the Anthropocene and existential risk, such as the current debates around ‘peak libido’ and libidinal exhaustion, to think differently about intimacies and pleasures ‘in the end times.’ Various fields are invited to contribute, including posthumanism, eco-studies, indigenous studies, queer theory, feminist theory, critical animal and plant studies, psychoanalysis, and philosophy.

Possible approaches include but are not limited to:

- Insights from posthuman, queer, Indigenous, ecocritical, (xeno)feminist (Cuboniks) perspectives
- Alternative theories of desire: post-Eros and/or post-sexuality (Markiewicz), including critical and speculative posthumanities, various ‘posts’ (postmodernism, poststructuralism etc.)
- Life, matter, and biopolitics: how biopolitics, new materialism (Bennett), and new animism (Descola) shape our understanding of desire
- Art, nature, and aesthetics: examine how nonhuman elements, sensation, and artifice influence our feelings and attractions (Lingis)
- Digital and artificial desires: desire for nonhumans, such as AI, avatars, and digital objects (Konior), as well as speculative concepts like ‘post-planetary’ desire or ‘xenoeroticism’ (Roden)
- Erotic temporalities (Cerankowski)
- Desire for collapse (Servigne), planetary dysphoria (Apter), antinatalism (Edelman), existential risk (Moynihan)
- Negative and ambivalent affects: negativity, resignation, and passivity toward sex, desire, and love (Bersani)
- The absence of Eros: asexuality, autoeroticism, asexual reproduction (Przybylo) and non-sexual pleasures
- Sexuality as a modern construct (Giddens), anti-capitalist critiques of sexuality (McGowan)

S13

AFFECTIVE WITHDRAWAL:

GOING NUMB AS SURVIVAL AND RESISTANCE

Zoe Fuad

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We're going numb. In this era of hypervisible violence and tragedy, we seem increasingly unmoved by daily images of death, destruction, and despair. Besides, many of us are weary of the constant expectation to perform empathy and grief, especially when that demand often comes from and serves those with far greater privilege than ourselves. For too long, the labor of caring (as in, "taking care" of others, but also just "caring about" their problems) has disproportionately fallen on women, immigrants, refugees, poor people, queer people, and people of color to provide (Berlant 2015). Disenfranchised subjects have long been expected to display sympathy (Yao 2021), hyperempathy (Leong 2016), gratitude (Nguyen 2023), and a whole range of other emotions (arousal, awe, fear, etc.) in order to be allowed the privileges of "humanization" (Schuller 2018). Against these conditions of viral trauma-porn and demands for emotional labor, going-numb feels like both a means of survival and political refusal.

This stream invites us to sit in the impasse of disaffection—of being unable, or unwilling, to be affected—and to find what sort of politics this makes available. This might entail deliberately curating where and how we spend our emotional energies, so as to center on those who most need it (Malatino 2021; Yao 2021). Or, it might look like turning away from human sociality entirely and toward our non-human kin as sites of restoration, whether in the form of plant relatives (Jacobs & Narvaez, 2022), ecological landscapes (Luciano & Chen 2015), animals and pets (Han 2022), cyber-relations (Hayles 2010), spiritual entities (Pérez 2007), or even inanimate objects (Chen 2012).

Furthermore, it invites scholars to rethink what change-making looks like when we can't rely upon the mobilization of mass empathy. Our traditional models for social movements, which depend on the "transmission of affect" and shared feeling (Brennan 2014)—on its members "moving" and "being moved by" one another

(Ahmed 2015)—seem insufficient to today’s affective insularity. In its wake, we need new frameworks for what justice looks like, ideally detached from the ableist privileging of “movement” and “mobility.”

This stream invites work that rethinks what it means to be unfeeling. It hopes to weave together theory from critical race studies (African American, Indigenous, Latine, Asian studies, etc.), disability studies (mad studies, deaf studies, and critical autism studies, etc.), performance studies, and gender, queer and trans studies to examine how demands for emotionality fall across racialized, gendered, and ableist lines. It also prompts thinking with and through the fields of intimate labor (Boris & Parreñas, 2010), posthumanism, theology, critical animal and plant studies, philosophy, political theory, new materialisms, and eco-feminism to imagine alternatives ways of being in-relation. Further possible subtopics include:

- Tarrying between self-care, self-preservation, selfishness, self-soothing and communal care as political
- Making kin (Haraway 2018), multispecies relationality, or other forms of non-normative solidarity
- Emotional consent and boundaries
- The politics of racialized trauma
- Ontological objecthood (Cheng 2021) or fugitive ontologies
- Flat affect (Berlant 2015) and affective opacity
- Rethinking moral goodness, as disassociated from empathy
- Infrapolitics and racial interiority
- Post-activism (Akomolafe, 2020)
- Animism and animacy (Chen 2021)
- Biopolitics of emotion



S14

(UN)SETTLING TENSIONS IN THE RELATIONAL FIELD

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This stream is about the relational extra arising when you commit to nonseparation between practice and theory. Once you find your “visceral literacy” (Seigworth & Pedwell, 2023) feet, you cannot set them down. This leads, often, to the situation of an affect alien— feeling the right thing at the wrong time or the wrong thing at the right time (Ahmed, 2010). It is continuously unsettling. The unsettledness prompts speaking and acting, but interactions with the viscerally ignorant often lead to impasse. This is about how the sensations of the world saturate experience but articulating or engaging them is to repeatedly hit brick walls (Ahmed, 2019).

I know we can get to otherwise in the relational field (Manning, 2023), yet the settled horrors continually mediate the potentials of relating. Shaking things up (naming, for instance, whiteness) can send sedimented feelings swirling into solution. But too often shakeups resettle into even more unshakeable impasses.

In this stream, the hope is to articulate the nuances and details of the feelings of impasse that occur when pointing out connections, say, to whiteness and the need for affirmative action programs. This stream grapples with how making connections often leads to disconnection--to impasse. In this stream, commiserating about the impasses arising in what was hoped to be a fruitful relational field is welcome. This stream swells with the weariness of nonrecognition and clings to the hope that (right?) relating can produce fruit. This stream is not certain of encountering promise, but it is not going to stop trying.

The ideas in this stream foreground affect theory as relational practice. Situations in this stream sense the tension between connectedness and living as-if autonomous. It is the feeling of getting a student eval that the class is an “easy A,” after a semester of practicing radical empathy in the classroom. It is deciding to stop flying on airplanes and your mother-in-law getting mad because she wants the family to go to Hawaii. It is about arguing that it is fine to go to Hawaii while Hawaiians beg us not to. It is going to work sick. It is having to argue with your partner about why you must side with Palestinians, despite the looming threat of a Trump reelection. It is knowing that we can get to otherwise through the relational field but having to

navigate unending, unsettling relational impasses. This stream recognizes these tensions and asks how affective praxis can navigate them.

This stream will sparkle with ideas that engage:

- Conflicting and competing affective worlds
- Tensions between the individual and collective
- Struggles arising from the perceived non-relation of the human and non-human
- Relational failures, hope, and starting over
- Impasses between knowing and doing
- Shaking up the settled and its resettling into something worse than before



S15

THE PROMISES AND IMPASSES OF AFFECT AS METHOD

Anna Hickey-Moody
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This stream will consider the promises and impasses of affect as method. Everything has an affect. As the atmospheric, porous, embodied, and alive ‘this-ness,’ or haecceity of moments, places, and people, affect is by definition unable to be captured. But what if we look at what affect does? At the changes it creates? The margins of performance that are adjusted? This line of inquiry holds great methodological promise for site specific work and research that is attune to atmospheres and orientations. However, there are also impasses presented by specific readings of affect as a concept and orthodox approaches to empirical qualitative research methods. Paper submitters are invited to consider the role that affect plays in making research, and, in this capacity, consider affect as part of their methods.

Affect theory, which delves into the pre-/non-conscious experiences shaped by bodily responses, is increasingly seen as a significant methodological approach in humanities and social sciences research. Deleuze’s separation of affect from emotion has been taken up widely—while emotion is a subjective content, affect is an intensity, a moment of unformed and unstructured potential. This perspective challenges the traditional dominance of representational thinking and textual analysis in cultural studies and invites researchers to consider the vibrations and resonances that precede and exceed cognitive capture.

In exploring affect as a research method, this seminar series will investigate how affective intensities navigate the space between the body and its environment, between the individual and the collective. The methodological implications here are vast. Engaging with affect prompts a rethinking of how data is collected, analyzed, and presented. It calls for methodologies that are not only reactive but also proactive in tracing and responding to the transient, ephemeral, and often elusive atmospheres and energies of social environments.

Presentations might explore, for example, how urban spaces generate specific affective responses that could inform urban planning and public policy. Research might be drawn

from theories of the lived/built worlds, where authors like Jane Bennett and Nigel Thrift discuss the vibrancy of matter and non-human agencies in shaping human affective states. This could extend to environmental psychology and how physical settings contribute to emotional well-being.

Another suggested area for exploration is the affective impact of digital media. With the rise of virtual reality and interactive media, researchers could examine how these technologies engineer affective experiences and shape user engagement, drawing on work from media studies and communication theory. The educational field is yet another area where affect as a method can yield significant insights. The emotional geographies of classroom settings, the affective dimensions of pedagogy, and the non-cognitive aspects of learning could all be examined. This approach aligns with the work of educational theorists like Megan Boler, who advocates for an "affective pedagogy" that recognizes the role of emotions in learning processes.

In calling for presentations, I encourage potential contributors to consider how methodologies rooted in affect can disrupt traditional research paradigms. Proposals might address questions such as:

- How can affective methodologies help us understand societal shifts and cultural movements?
- What tools or techniques are best suited to capture and interpret affective data?
- How can researchers remain attuned to their own affective responses without overshadowing the phenomena under study?

Potential topics and questions for presentations might include:

- The role of affect in social or religious movements and how it influences collective behavior
- Affective economies in consumer culture, examining how desires and anxieties drive market trends
- The impact of architectural and urban design on the emotional and affective experiences of space users
- Methodological challenges in studying non-verbal and pre-conscious affective interactions
- The interplay between affect, technology, and user experience in the design of digital interfaces
- The work of feeling in global political landscapes

The seminars aim to be interdisciplinary and inclusive. I invite contributions from sociology, anthropology, religious studies, literature, cultural studies, media studies, and other related fields. Each presentation should ideally combine theoretical explorations with practical examples or case studies, illustrating the application of affect theory in

concrete research settings. This call for presentations is an invitation to rethink traditional research approaches and explore the dynamic, if intangible, terrain of affect. It is an opportunity for scholars, practitioners, and researchers to engage with a vibrant field of study that bridges the gap between empirical analysis and the nuanced, often unpredictable realm of human feeling and response.



S16

WORKING WITH AFFECT

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Against the backdrop of a relentless assault on the humanities, a consensus has emerged that the humanities should not be assessed based on utility. Usefulness alone misses too much of what makes humanistic study valuable. The same is said of affect theory. At the same time, as intertwined environmental, economic, and political crises unfold, we have to ask: is affect theory useful? Should it be? Put another way: does affect theory work?

Does affect theory give us insight into the workings of power? Does it shed light on how certain political factions, leaders, ideologies, and systems gain and hold power? What does it tell us about the nature of both bottom-up and top-down political processes? Can it help us explain contemporary dynamics around misinformation and disinformation? What does affect theory contribute to the making and unmaking of activists, critics, citizens, and educators?

In *Poor Queer Studies*, Matt Brim writes that “mainstream Queer Studies likes to pretend that its job is not to prepare students to be workers or part of the working class.” Can affect theory make workers? What does affect theory imagine (or pretend) is its job? Since affect theory is multiple, do different affect theories correspond to different domains of utility? Or are these the wrong questions to be asking? Is affect theory fundamentally inutile? And is its uselessness necessary?

Finally, affect theory’s reception in different academic disciplines—humanistic, social scientific, and scientific—has been uneven. What should we understand about affect theory’s varying levels of success and failure across different academic contexts? Is there an affective approach to archives, to fieldsites, to laboratories, to classrooms, to libraries, to administration, to mentoring? Is there something in the orientation of affect study that determines its degree of play within different ensembles of intellectual concerns?

The papers and panels in this stream will stage this conversation. All participants (speakers and audience members) will bring their own ideas, perspectives, and questions on the relationship between affect and its laborings (its utility?) into dialogue to work toward an increased self-reflexivity in affect theory spaces.

Proposals are invited for short papers that directly respond to the questions of how we can work with affect. Unlike the standard panel session, these short papers will be presented roundtable-style at the beginning of the session in order to set the stage for a full-participation conversation among presenters and the audience to follow. Final papers should be 5-7 minutes long and consider specific thinkers, situations, and/or case studies illustrating affect at work. Proposals should reflect the limited duration that will be made available to speakers along these lines.



S17

NO FIT? DIG YOUR OWN PIT

Core Conference Committee
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Does your paper abstract not really fit within any of the sixteen other conference streams? Does your proposal's affective terrain somehow manage to fall into the cracks or outside of their content areas? If so, then you can submit your paper abstract to S17.

We (the core conference committee) will directly serve as evaluators of this catch-all stream. A couple of quick details: 1) we will still try to see if there is some way that your proposal does fit within the purview of one of the accepted streams (they will have priority in conference programming) 2) because of the vastness of affective territories yet uncovered, the papers/panels in this stream will likely make for interesting but disjointed intra-/inter-panel flow. But then who knows?

All this is to say, don't make 'No Fit? Dig Your Own Pit' 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 sixteen streams. Discuss your fit (or lack thereof) with the stream organizer that comes closest to matching your own work, and see what they recommend. Fit or not a fit? If not a fit, then, yes, by all means: apply to S17.



ABSTRACTS

Alphabetized by last name



Affective-Emotional Pedagogies and the Risks of Sentimentalism

Ana Abramowski, FLACSO, Argentina

In recent years, there has been a proliferation of what could be called "affective-emotional pedagogies". From this notion, I intend to bring together dissimilar perspectives ranging from the development of social-emotional learning (SEL) to critical education approaches that place affect at the center. Although the differences in the theoretical frameworks and political positions of these pedagogies should not be overlooked, I am interested in reflecting on what they have in common. In particular, their proactive and normative character (hence, the name "pedagogies"), that is, their claim to provide guidelines for educational action that address the affective-emotional issue, given that these approaches propose that school actors "do something" with their own and/or others' feelings, trusting in their favorable repercussion on teaching, learning, etc. But, above all, I consider that affective-emotional pedagogies deserve to be thought as a whole because their theoretical differences seem to be vanished when, in their circulation and appropriation, they are reached by a strongly rooted romantic-sentimental narrative, which acts as a matrix of meaning of everything that, in school, falls under the orbit of feeling. Therefore, in this presentation I propose to reflect on the current problems of romanticism and sentimentalism in education, what happens when pedagogies propose to act in the name of love (Ahmed, 2004) and when equivalences are established between feelings, truth and "the good" (Berlant, 2011).

Was Spinoza a Deleuzian? Rethinking the Politics of Emotions and Affects

Ahmet Aktas, Purdue University

A salient tradition in contemporary affect theory heavily relies on distinguishing between emotions and affects. The former refers to structured categories of socially coded affective states, while the latter denotes the pre-social libidinal flow underlying emotions. This distinction is commonly attributed to Spinoza and thought to be further developed by Deleuze. In this article, I argue that this overall historical picture is misleading and inaccurate. Deleuze radically transforms Spinoza's theory of affect for the ends of his own ethical-political philosophy. Moreover, within the Deleuzian framework, the political and ethical promises associated with the distinction between emotions and affects are subverted by two fundamental problems. In the last section, I show that a unified notion of emotion inspired by Spinoza, which does not create a sharp rift between emotions and affect, can perform the same explanatory function intended by the emotion-affect distinction while allowing us to circumvent these problems.

Ocean Futures in the Anthropocene

Jelena Aleksic, RMIT University School of Media and Communication

This paper stems from the creative interventions around the coastline in Port Phillip Bay in Naarm (Melbourne) that I have been developing as part of my PhD research degree. The research investigates ocean dwellers' material and affective connections in site-specific watery places. I think

and co-create with the affective connections and interlinks between coastlines, people, and other watery bodies residing in Melbourne and propose multiple creative approaches alongside traditional ethnographic methods. Working from a posthuman feminist understanding of bodies of water, I explore how capitalist and colonial extractions have altered the affective watery traces between bodies, coastlines, and the ocean atmosphere in Bay areas in the age of climate change. By co-creating stories and visual language of the watery traces with my participants, I propose futures of the coastlines envisioned by people's attachments and affective connections to the ocean and ways we could manage to cope with destabilising times in the climate crisis. My idea of water footprint and ocean literacies oppose the positivist and behavioural know-how to approach the ocean, favouring instead the sensory and embodied attachment to the ocean and ways of transmission and translation into multispecies stories. Creative interventions contribute to envisioning the creative potential of everyday tacit and affective attachments of people to the ocean, to creating multispecies urban futures by the ocean in the age of the Anthropocene.

**Sounding Art Practice as Research (SAPAR):
Sound, Memory, and Place in Sensual Pedagogies**

Ilayda Altuntas Nott, University of Arizona

Sounding Art Practice as Research (SAPAR) is not just a method; it is a journey of listening, understanding, and giving meaning to the sounds of our surroundings. This methodology is grounded in my own childhood experiences and the concept of soundscapes, exemplified by the "Orange Table Effect"—an art practice inspired by the sounds of my childhood home in Izmir, Turkey. SAPAR provides a critical framework for understanding the environmental and cultural significance of sound (Schafer, 1977), and encourages a heightened awareness and appreciation of the auditory environment, fostering a deeper connection between students and their sonic surroundings (Oliveros, 2005). SAPAR encompasses various forms of sounding art, including sound art, music, soundscape composition, context-based art, and sound theories and practices. The core of SAPAR lies in its three pillars: teaching, research, and art practice. This synergy creates a critical pedagogy that engages students in meaningful ways, complementing SAPAR's focus on creating a dynamic and inclusive learning environment where students can experiment with sound and visual art. SAPAR empowers students to explore and express their identities and socio-cultural backgrounds through sound, fostering a sense of freedom and agency through transformative pedagogical practices (hooks, 1994). In practice, SAPAR has been applied in diverse educational settings, from K-12 programs to undergraduate courses. At Pratt Institute, high school students engaged with sound art to transform their thoughts and surroundings into artistic expressions. Similarly, in the West South-Central region, undergraduates used SAPAR to explore a socio-cultural relationship with their surroundings, creating soundscapes that reflected their diverse backgrounds. These experiences highlighted the importance of deep listening and mindful engagement with one's environment (Oliveros, 2005). Through these practices, students developed ways of knowing how sound can convey complex socio-cultural and personal narratives. SAPAR provides theoretical, curricular, and practical dimensions of sound as an artistic practice, utilizing sound as a medium for artistic and

educational exploration, and intertwining teaching, research, and art practice through the medium of sound (Cobussen, 2017). Currently, at a research institution in the Midwest, the "Art & Soundscapes: Collective Senses" seminar introduces first-year freshman students to the fusion of visual and auditory arts. Through soundwalks, visual art experimentation, and theoretical exploration, students gain an understanding of multi-sensory art forms and their broader cultural implications. By presenting examples of student work and analyzing the outcomes achieved through this curricular methodology, this research demonstrates how SAPAR facilitates ways of knowing one's relationship between the self and their surroundings. Delving into the subtle, often unnoticed feelings, sensations, and atmospheres that shape daily life, SAPAR is influenced by larger social, cultural, and political forces (Stewart, 2007); and is attentive to the nuances of how students experience and navigate their worlds, emphasizing the embodied and relational aspects of affect. Through theoretical explorations and detailed examples of student projects; students become creators of sonic art and critical thinkers (Stewart, 2007).

Smellworlds: Vibes, Regionality, Synaesthetic Writing

Mathew Arthur, Capilano University

The initiating proposition of Smellworlds is compositional: that scent (or its absence) assembles, pulling things into consistency. A crush's sweatshirt. A bleached-out hospital corridor. Bubblegum. Chlorine. The censer clutched in a priest's smoke-shrouded hand. Rain on concrete. Old books or new cars. Scents are vibes: danger, sex, sickness, status, industry. They harness bodies into movement—luring and repelling. They are feral and highly regulated, tangled up in appetites, toxicities, and regulatory apparatuses. It is no surprise that imperial histories are tales of deodorization. What smells good is as much about pleasure as it is a bodily pedagogy of good-life fantasies. The colonial project is a toning of sense: how anthropocentrism, whiteness, and settler nationalism come with cultivated habits of smell and predictable smellscape. New car, the spa, smog, BO, paper money, laundry. Smellworlds is an ongoing project to work with and develop sensory methods through DIY perfumery and shared smell practices. My paper offers brief provocations around smell's regionality—the way scent cues up shared or emergent specificities and vibes, how it "jumps between landscapes and bodies of all kinds" (Stewart 2013, 275). It explores (via scenes of smelling) how olfactory knowing is both proximate and indeterminate, amenable to neurodiverse and more-than-human subjectivities. After all, smell is synaesthetic: filtered through taste, colour, analogy, poetry. One only has to look to the perfumer to know scent's multisensory recursion and wide affectivity, how its formulae and descriptions are distributed across vast and messy assemblages of matter, meaning, and power. Smellworlds thus explores how scent textures theory as a method for thinking broadly with affect.

On Burglary and the Tangling of Affect and Legal Studies

Rebekah Aycock, University of Kansas

This paper considers the methodological implications of the application of affect studies to legal studies. I share some of my research on burglary to demonstrate the opportunities and challenges of affect as research method. Though often conflated with theft or breaking and entering, burglary is a distinct crime that has historically been a capital felony because of its association with rape and home trespass. It was unique because it produced “peculiar fears” and a distinctly evil “sense of trespass.” In the years following the Civil War, something happened to burglary’s legal definition. Burglary, once sharply defined by the walls of a dwelling house, expanded into the yard. In the 1880 Senate investigation into the causes of “The Removal of the Negroes” from the South, a line of questioning described the expansion of burglary to include “outhouses” like barns and storehouses, as well as the area up to a fence. This was a response to the increased number of “Negroes tramping about.” Burglary’s expansion allowed for the criminalization of more behaviors and turned petty crimes into capital felonies. Taking up Schuller’s concept of a “biopolitics of feeling,” I propose that the wielding of burglary in legal and popular discourse is part of the biopolitical project of the U.S. state and white supremacy. Looking at burglary’s affective life allows me to consider this biopolitics as something that saturates not just everyday interactions, but a legal system overwhelmingly dedicated to managing property crime while simultaneously loosening itself from the historical baggage of enclosure and colonialism. Further, it demonstrates the potential of affect studies to understanding not just burglary law, but legal culture and history broadly.

The Woods Imagined: Black Bear, Brown Man, White Woman

Hannah R. Bacon, Louisiana State University

I am interested in the imagined place that ‘the woods’ holds in the shared imaginary, and the way in which, as a “site of productive opacity” it may act as a dark mirror to the collective and individual psyche and thus unsettle entrenched narratives of utopic spaces and imagined threat. This is rooted in an inherited imaginary of the woods, the wilderness, and the racially coded ‘jungle’ alongside contemporary romanticizing in cottage core and the wellness industrial complex. Yet, I am more interested in considering the affective imaginary of the woods and its possibility in unsettling the vexed present and uprooting shared psychic impasses. A utopic view of the woods can provide a false notion of escape from oneself and society. This is contaminated by an imagined threat and unconscious horror (its shadow trope). Here I am thinking of the recent online discussion of whether a woman would rather find herself in the woods alone with a bear or male stranger (the former being the overwhelming preference). This imagined threat is evident in the incident where a white woman attempted to call the police on a Black birdwatcher (Christian Cooper). Would a Black man alone in the woods feel safer with a bear or a white woman with her phone? In the dissonance between the imagined threat and ideal, the woods contains the possibility of being a fertile (and feral) seedbed for a future outside this play of repetition.

Learning from Blobs

Alice Barnaby, Swansea University

This paper's premise is that if you're interested in affect then you're also likely to be interested in blobs. And here's why: On the one hand, blobs are affect-rich forms that tend to have particularly vital material and cultural agencies. From the 1958 sci-fi film *Attack of the Blob* (dir. Yeaworth) to Cho Yeeun's body horror novel *The New Seoul Park Jelly Massacre* (2019), blobs can disgust, intimidate, and frustrate. Equally, blobs can also fascinate, relax, and inspire. For example, the lava lamp's mesmeric globules and the body-hugging informality of the bean bag chair, both designed in the 1960s, imaginatively embrace the sensual potential of blob formations. On the other hand, affect and Affect Theory has blob-like qualities. As a perceptual and atmospheric dynamic, affect emerges both within and beyond the human sensorium challenging bounded distinctions between subject and object. And, as a theory it moves between and across academic disciplines. Indeed, the general CFP for this conference invokes qualities of the blob noting how Affect Theory's presence slips between and across subject areas in varying thicknesses that stick, cling or settle. Perhaps then to understand our cultural attitude towards blobs is also to help us think through theorizations of affect and vice versa? Through a series of case studies from popular entertainment, youth culture, and political metaphor, this paper wonders if there is methodological merit in exploring what can be learned from affective blobs and blobby affects.

We Can All Feel: Unveiling Affect Just Takes More Than Words

Lea Baro, German Center for Integration and Migration Research & Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

We can sense if something is off, we have an intuition, affects lingering, an emotional reaction - the difficulty lies in expressing it. If talked about in an accessible way, or not talked about at all but expressed differently, affect can be a useful way to conceptualize systemic consequences, power imbalances or relationalities. Thus, to make affect useful for us and the people we work with we need to create spaces are safe to feel in and alternative ways of expression. Drawing from a collaborative creative research project with queer migrants in Berlin that centered around what it feels like to be represented, I will make a case for visual and narrative methodologies in researching affect to give people the ability to express themselves differently. Participants used words, images, sounds, maps, and drawings to clarify and vocalize their feelings. This multimodal approach revealed why certain representations feel like misrepresentations and unraveled the layers of individual and collective representation. It highlighted how the feeling of representation changes depending on whether it involves a person, place, or process. Affect operates in the margins, often obscured and hidden beneath words and to harness its potential, so we must embrace alternative forms of expression. Visual and narrative methodologies provide powerful tools for people to articulate and disentangle affects collectively. Making affect accessible within and beyond academia thus requires us to move beyond traditional verbal expressions. By adopting diverse, creative methodologies, we can better understand and convey the complex, layered nature of affect.

Diversity Policy as Opacity: As Histories are Hidden, Affects Appear

Lea Baro, German Center for Integration and Migration Research & Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Representation within public institutions, especially those claiming to uphold democratic values, often remains opaque—obscured by unclear decision-making processes. In German public institutions, there is a significant underrepresentation of individuals with experiences of racism, discrimination, migration. The institutional response to these issues is often framed through diversity policies. However, these policies can obscure the underlying power dynamics and historical structures of oppression within the institutions, while ironically clarifying some people's feelings about these very institutions. In this paper, I contrast the German federal diversity strategy with the lived experiences of queer women, trans, and non-binary people with experiences of racism, discrimination, and migration. Diversity policy, while purportedly addressing inclusivity, often shifts focus away from critical anti-racist discourse in favor of a more palatable "happy diversity" narrative. This shift can mask the ongoing issues rooted in integration policies that precede the diversity strategies and highlight how diversity is wielded as an affective tool. By examining these dynamics, this paper reveals how the opacity of diversity policies actually brought clarity to the participants' feelings. It shows how policies and institutional spaces shape participants' perceptions by demonstrating that obscuring certain realities can illuminate others. This exploration is grounded in theories of affect and institutional practices to show where they intersect with individual and collective affective frames to reveal new insights about representation and inclusion. Through this analysis, I aim to contribute to the understanding of how spaces of opacity within institutional frameworks can conceal and reveal, thus shaping and eliciting collective affective responses.

Setting the Zine: Making Zines to Research Affects and Embodiments of Representation

Lea Baro, German Center for Integration and Migration Research & Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

This research contributes to the growing adoption of Zines as a research method (Biagioli, Pässilä & Owens, 2021), highlighting their multifaceted role in community engagement, exploration of feelings, attunement to affects, narrative control and as a form of resistance to mainstream representations. Focused on a creative research project with queer women, trans and non-binary people with migration experiences in Berlin, this contribution elucidates how participants crafted Zines using materials from earlier project phases, including a Photovoice phase and distributed them among members of their communities. Through collaborative Zine making and Riso printing, participants forged connections rooted in shared experiences of (mis)representation. Being able to use their own materials and representing themselves how they would like to be represented, this method allowed for participants to deepen emotional exploration, interpersonal understanding, and collective resistance to popular discourse. By seizing control of Zine (and followingly also research outputs) dissemination, participants transformed their narratives into a result that was in affective alignment with them, allowing others in their communities to feel represented as well, reclaiming agency in the face of misrepresentation. This study underscores Zines' potential for community building, embodiment, participant-driven dissemination, and affective outputs. Disseminating research results

via Zines enables easy integration into interventions, shifting the focus away from overtheorizing feelings and towards making shared affects accessible for participants communities. The study underscores Zines' potential for community building, embodiment, participant-driven dissemination, and different forms of working with affects being felt, embodied, negotiated, narrated, and put on paper as a method and a result.

Landscapes of Becoming: Rethinking Curriculum through Pedagogies of Desire, Discomfort, and Relationality

Isabella Bartels, Teachers College, Columbia University

The proposed paper presentation is a conceptual exploration of two affective intensities which offer a lens through which to reimagine possibilities of pedagogy and curriculum: first, desire, crafted and applied to education by Michalinos Zembylas in his 2007 article "Risks and Pleasures: A Deleuzo-Guattarian Pedagogy of Desire in Education;" and the second, discomfort, initially written by Megan Boler in *Feeling Power* (1999) and further developed by Boler and Zembylas (2002; 2003; Zembylas, 2017). Though numerous affective intensities shape the wide network of relationality present in educational landscapes, I choose to focus on desire and discomfort in order to refigure curriculum as *becoming*, particularly powerful when these intensities interact with one another. A pedagogy of desire (Zembylas, 2007) acknowledges and centers that education necessarily involves transgressing social or political norms established by white supremacy, colonialism, or capitalism. Discomfort then works within and around desire to introduce a sense of true empathy for the difficult work of transforming emotional investments (Boler, 1999), steeped in historical and political norms. Exploring relationalities among affect (e.g. Massumi, 2002; Berlant, 2011; Snaza, 2023), emotion (Ahmed, 2014; Zembylas, 2005), and pedagogy (Snaza, 2020; Dernikos et al., 2020), the presentation takes up five potential and necessary shifts which throw open the floodgates for what pedagogy can look like when we reach for desire and discomfort: acknowledging the embodied dimensions of learning, attuning to material objects, developing curriculum as becoming rather than plan, rethinking hierarchical relations of learning, and problematizing linear temporality. Overall, I argue a pedagogy of desire and of discomfort creates extensive possibilities for an educational landscape of becoming that acknowledges history while imagining something new.

Scavenging the Ecobody: Making Oddkin in *Scavengers Reign*

James Belflower, Siena College

Scavengers Reign (2023) is an animated eco/body-horror series created by Charles Huettner and Joseph Bennet that follows five stranded astronauts as they negotiate the speculative flora and fauna of the planet Vesta-1 to find a way to contact their ship, Demeter 227, and return to their home planet. While scavenging archetypes abound in film and television, scavenging is typically portrayed as a parasitic activity, a one-way relationship characterized by the search for and collection of anything usable from discarded waste. However, I argue that in *Scavengers Reign*, scavenging is an affective and material collaborative relationship with one's environment that employs the minor

intimacies associated with the use of fine motor skills (as in surgery, writing, instrumental performance) to extract, combine, and implement life supporting strategies. Character interactions with holes, incisions, perforations, tentacles, wires, and tongues abound on Vesta-1, suggesting that a scavenging lifestyle is not fundamentally parasitic, but sensuously, intimately, and viscerally interdependent. In fact, scavenging throughout the series increasingly relies on the recognition of a growing permeability between technology, human, plant, and animal life to such a degree that each survives only by embodying the process of entering, exiting, and repurposing portions of each other's bodies. Although the body horror of *Scavengers Reign* can be read as a speculative future of our Anthropocene—when our planet tires of humanities generally parasitic relationship to its resources and returns the treatment—it is much more productively considered through the way in which it poses scavenging as a complex mode of “staying with the trouble,” of making life sustaining “oddkin,” to evoke Donna Haraway. In this sense, survival on Vesta-1 unsettles current plant, human, tech, and animal boundaries in an effort to learn new methods of coexistence.

Materialism and the Occult

Grant Bollmer, University of Maryland, College Park

Affect theory has often deferred to the history of psychology and neuroscience to defend what may otherwise appear to be “irrational” or anti-Enlightenment arguments, drawing on empiricist and positivist claims about the body and its capacities. This tendency is particularly ironic because, as I've argued previously, the positivist experimental techniques of psychology and neuroscience can never completely exclude the occult and the metaphysical—tendencies most obvious when it comes to mid-century figures like Wilhelm Reich, Carl Jung, and L. Ron Hubbard, all of whom combined psychoanalysis with new age therapeutic techniques. In this talk, I'm interested in thinking through the problems and potentials of a “materialist” understanding of affect and the body in affect studies—in which claims about the body and its affective capacities are defined in relation to a psychologically “scientific” and experimental understanding of cognition as physical—that does not or cannot exclude that which is beyond the physical materiality of the body. To do this, this talk draws on several cases in which the boundaries between science and the occult are blurred. Specifically, I'll discuss Reich and his theorization of “orgone” along with the dissident Russian Marxist Alexander Bogdanov, a scientist influenced by Ernst Mach whose research into blood transfusions was inspired, in part, by an attempt to achieve immortality. Drawing on these examples, this talk will argue that the occult haunts Western science and drives many of the scientific arguments appropriated in theories of embodied affect.

Rapture As a Cure for Erotic and Political Despair:

Mary Robinson Shows Us How to Get Unstuck from Bad Love

Betsy Bolton, Swarthmore College

*What affective tones dominate politics, and are they energizing or enervating? What feelings might invigorate the political? See also *Joy: sparking it* (Kondo 2010), *killing it* (Ahmed 2023). Given the*

present and future focus of this conference, the distant past of American and French revolutionary days may seem among the worst of pits (see: worstness, wretchedness, racial and colonial politics of sunken places, dark, dank, stinky atmospheres). I have no idea whether there's space here for a consideration of political and poetic affect (within the then-current framing of passion) from long ago. But just in case...

Rapture as a cure for erotic and political despair:

Mary Robinson shows us how to get unstuck from bad love

Romantic-era poet Mary Robinson was probably best known as a famous mistress to a series of famous men, including the Prince of Wales, opposition leader Charles James Fox, and Banastre Tarleton, British war hero, member of Parliament, and inconstant lover. In 1796, she published a sonnet sequence *Sappho and Phaon*, retelling the story of Sappho throwing herself off a cliff after her beloved (Phaon) leaves her for another woman. The retelling was admired for its command of poetic form but it was read most commonly, with all the frisson of scandal, as the story of Robinson being left by Tarleton. I argue instead that Robinson (still spending time with Tarleton as she wrote), was retelling a famous tale of bad love in order to challenge what she calls the "tyranny of reason" and break the knot of narrative through a series of lyric effusions. In this challenge, Robinson disputes the political "ratiocracy" of famous anarchist philosopher William Godwin, with whom she was also spending a great deal of time. If passion is a moral and political problem, Robinson suggests the solution is not rational restraint, but rather rapture: in both formal and philosophical terms, Robinson argues that at a certain pitch of "more than mortal" intensity, moral reflection (refigured as sympathy) becomes indistinguishable from the raptures of lyric effusion. Robinson's Sappho gets over being stuck on her handsome loser by treating rapture as a homeopathic cure for excess affect—and she suggests that readers can do the same.

Conjuring Remains: Graveyard Dirt and The Black Feminist Ends of Rootwork

Brenton Boyd, University of Tampa

This paper explores the performative, ecological, and religious dimensions of graveyard dirt collection in Rootwork—an outgrowth of the African American Conjuring Tradition—as a black feminist enterprise of tending to earthly remains. Meditating on Toni Morrison's concept of "rootedness" and J. Kameron Carter's "excremental sacred," it traces dead and death-bound networks of (non)human organic life that thrive in dark places where light—as the realm of Western theological thinking—cannot proceed. Through a performance ethnography of collection rituals with my spiritual godmother, Madrina Dunning (Clarissa Williamson), at night in Stone Mountain Cemetery, I demonstrate how collaborations between black femmes, human remains, critters, dead plant matter, disembodied spirits, living creatures, and composted soil unthink linear eschatological and biological chronologies. If, for Christina Sharpe, "the ground lays out that, and perhaps how, we might begin to live in relation to this requirement for our death," then conjure women like Madrina Dunning collect graveyard dirt to wrestle with the terrains of their own death-shaped existence. That is, death is not a terminus or endpoint for black life but its very condition of possibility. This presentation begins with

an exploration of Madrina Durni's dirt collection techniques, ritual objects, and accompanying incantations before theorizing the interminable nature of black femme lifedeath. I will also use live graveyard dirt to create a talisman known as the gris-gris bag—a transubstantiation, through care and attention, of death into otherwise modes of life—and thereby perform a black feminist (e)scatological ceremony.

Writing Center Emotions Unleashed: Affective Labor Amidst Institutional Change

Joy Bracewell, Georgia College & State University

A recent email from our university's HR department regarding the second round in six months of a new system for approving all faculty, staff, and student training sparked apprehension, frustration, and distrust in me as a writing center administrator. This policy raises concerns about academic freedom and bureaucratic constraints across the state's twenty-six public institutions. The emotional punch packed by this not-so-simple request underscores the tenuous positioning of writing centers and similar programs. As Ahmed notes in *On Being Included*, "Although the significance of diversity can be described as international, the means by which diversity manifests itself will be local" (16). Writing centers aren't inherently radical but can create opportunities for liberating practices. Dedication to students' voices and writing processes may intentionally challenge biases or restrictive ideologies. Such policy changes symbolize barriers to ethical pedagogy, especially for educational entities operating across administrative and instructional spheres. Affect theory offers a unique lens to explore the emotional dimensions of institutional effects and how they are communicated, illuminating the extra labor of emotional regulation generated around such suppression. Using Sara Ahmed's concepts of disgust and sticky signs, I analyze this HR email and the affective undercurrents it generates. By focusing on the affective dimensions generated around educational work, we can better understand and address the silences and anxieties that circulate around them, in the hope that forums like writing centers persist as spaces for critical engagement.

All that We Make (Together We Compose and Decompose)

Alana Brekelmans, University of Queensland and Charles Darwin University

This paper explores practices of composition and decomposition across incommensurate worlds, contemplating the ordinary politics of future-building in the face of collapse. What does it mean to make and remake worlds from the ruins of previous dreams? How do we narrate our yesterdays and tomorrows in response to the ever-shifting constellations of promises, impasses, threats, and settlements? What do we make from the remains? How do we do this together? In focusing on composing and decomposing, I place work in Affect Theory, Science and Technology Studies, and the environmental humanities (Verran 2001; Stewart 2013; Stewart 2014; Harraway 2016; Puig de la Bellacasa 2017; Hamilton and Neimanis 2018) in dialogue with philosophies from Indigenous knowledge authorities in Northern Australia. I reflect on collaborative research I was a part of on the Tiwi Islands, and my attempts to understand what my Tiwi mentors were trying to teach me about

practices of composing and decomposing in Tiwi relational ontologies and governance structures. I linger with this atmosphere (Stewart 2011) of generative disconcertment (Verran 2001) as I contemplate the affective charge that followed me the year after I left the islands. Thinking with rings regifted in fast-moving cars, human blockades in global cities, chemical communication in flowers, and gametes in queer reproductive technologies, this paper uses compositional fragments from my notebooks to consider the vulnerabilities of creative fabulation and emplotment (Anderson 2010; Hastrup 2005) in a world where the reference points are always moving. In doing so, I take seriously affective processes in kin-making and transcorporeal becomings.

Hopeless Disorientation and the Unimaginable Future of Whiteness

Debbie Brubaker, Boston University

This paper interrogates the unsettling promise and potential of “disorientation” in relation to whiteness, wherein whiteness is an orientation that remains fused with and regenerated by Christian thought and practice in the United States. I question disorientation’s generative potential and inquire whether a posture of hopelessness offers a sustainable intervention that might refuse to imagine a future where whiteness finds its bearings. I begin by examining white Christian discourse about race through sermons by white pastors in the summer of 2020. I interrogate moments when whiteness appears temporarily disrupted and unsettled, tracing the affective registers of disorientation through disclosures of white distress, anxiety, and confusion. I then explore how white pastors face such disorientation and enact religious postures that work to diminish, refuse, and repair the disorientation of whiteness. I argue that whiteness is regenerated through everyday Christian theologies of hope, restoration, and salvation, showing how whiteness resettles and continues to mediate relations with violent intensity. Mindful of the dangers of viewing disorientation for its generative potential, I offer a reconsideration of this unsettling experience and explore whether a sustainable disorientation of whiteness requires a posture of white hopelessness. Here I aim to trouble the teleological assumptions that subtend our view of disorientation and its value in our efforts towards the relational otherwise. Is there an alternative experience of disorientation that refuses hope? An experience of disorientation that refuses to imagine a future (of whiteness)? What moody disorders might attend such disorientation, and what challenges remain in sustaining its duration?

Hydro-Pedagogies of Unbecoming

Delphi Carstens, University of the Western Cape

This paper considers my own affective learning engagements with the Cape Peninsula’s kelp forests and its creatures and how they have helped me craft watery attunements to multisensory affective pedagogical promises and possibilities in a rapidly changing world. At the same time, it explores the affective disenchantment of swimming in sewage-fed toxic blooms that threaten to change kelp forests into oceanic dead-zones. While this paper begins with affirmative pedagogical hydrofeminist sensory encounters on the continental verge, where land meets sea, it proceeds to speculatively explore darker anoxic and aphotic zones, where the possibilities of life and thought are made and

unmade in discomforting evolutionary processes of mass extinction. Using Peter Watt's uncanny fabulations of these zones in his *Rifters* trilogy (consisting of *Starfish*, 1999, *Maelstrom*, 2001 and *Behemoth*, 2004) as launching pads, I explore the pedagogical implications of healthy vs. polluted oceans, the pedagogical (im)possibilities of inhuman benthic and anoxic hydro-zones, as well as processes of hydrological (un)settling that speak to that which remains beyond knowability. Using affect-laden imagery from the ahuman hydrofeminist artist Mer Roberts as additional talking points, I explore affective impasses, threats and ruptures of unmaking that occur at the uncanny margins where creation clashes with destruction, strange evolutionary becomings beckon, and pedagogies of unthought begin to emerge.

Fugitive Esoterism and Ritual Dissolution

Delphi Carstens, University of the Western Cape

This paper explores a queer and inhuman ritualised meeting place between affect and magic in the context of 'rave' counterculture that speaks to its affective promises, impasses, threats and (un)settlements, whilst also addressing its esoteric inhuman potential. My aim is to explore this space from a sisygy (twinning) between my own vantage as a former esoteric psychedelic 'raver' and that of an artistic/academic collective - Orphan Drift (OD) - and their potentising of 'rave' in terms of inhuman countercultural rituals of affective and academic insurrection. My own investment in rave counterculture begun in 1989 when I was a young queer shamanic neophyte without the 'safe space' of a practicing/living tradition. Fast-forward to 1995 when I stumbled upon a copy of the OD's *Cyberpositive* - a powerful Deleuzoguattarian esoterrorist celebration of rave's inhuman affective undercurrents as well as its shamanic rituals of insurrection and unbecoming; an encounter that would come to define my future fugitive ritual practices as well as my undertaking of a pedagogy of (un)becoming. This paper will attempt to explore a queer sense of 'raving' as a both a Dionysian impulse that partakes of an apocalyptic haecceity while simultaneously attempting to ritually delineate and redirect the sense of what is being lived through to some radical elsewhere/when. In this exploration, the promises of ecstatic pedagogical/conceptual transformation clash, often violently, with material bodily limits, ruptures of social and political disaffiliation, the bleak intrusions of capitalist realism, as well as inevitable processes of sedimentation and reterritorialisation.

La Voce del Padrone: A Psycho-Linguistic Analysis of Semantic Opacity in Politics

Alessandro Caruana and Federica Sollecito

The recent dissolution of Macron's government following the EU elections creates an opportunity for the far-right French ideology to root in power, further unsettling Europe, which is currently navigating a complex political landscape. The lingua-politics are cruising the oppression materialised in Neo-Nazi parties in Germany, the tyranny over women's bodies in Poland and Hungary's imprisonment of Salis. Despite this Italian antifascist voice, Italy still elected Meloni as its president; in the years leading up to her election, Meloni developed a language to communicate with her supporters. Right-wing political battles were and are fought not just with words but for words themselves: the will to restrict

the use of words, to foster otherness, to defend conservative Italian values—the status quo. In this paper, we analyse the strong opposition we have observed when the Italian cultural individual is confronted with the semantic changes that the alienated other claims to build its own identity and be included. We propose a psychoanalytic approach to clear up the opaque words of the propaganda; coextended within it, a linguistic analysis to reveal how the semantic hostilities and etymological nuances have been mistakenly overlooked in the contemporary critique of the Fascist regimes' ascent in Europe. A pivotal instance in the discourse of oppression, as in the right-wing indoctrination language, is understood and used to determine the unconscious and the formation of identity. The capability to turn immaterial objects into a crisis of values inevitably leads to adopting an ultra-conservative weltanschauung—a psycho-lingo-political impasse.

Area A, Area B, Area C: Alternate Affective Geographies in Adania Shibli's *Minor Detail*

Ashmita Chatterjee, Brown University

Adania Shibli's *Minor Detail* (translated by Elisabeth Jaquette) presents a possible blueprint of affect as anticolonial methodology. Moving antithetically to Naomi Greyser's conceptualization of sympathy as a pivot of settler-colonial identity in *On Sympathetic Grounds*, *Minor Detail* generates the question of how 'minor' affects and intense affectlessness – Lauren Berlant's 'unsentimental' and Xine Yao's 'disaffected'—can in equal measure serve as a cartography of settler-colonial violence by creating alternative affective geographies. The two parts of Shibli's narrative mirror each other, an inlay of repetitions with differences, where the minor details shift association, and subject positions are blurred and recast based on shifting affective landscapes. While the first part maps the coordinates of settler-colonialism through the saturation of affect(lessness), the second part is suffused with a plethora of 'ugly feelings' (Sianne Ngai) like anxiety, paranoia and 'stuplimity'. In the attempt to create an alternative archive of (true) events through fiction, the affective focus on minor details excavates and preserves that version of events which does not exist in the official version of the Israeli narrative, thereby serving as an anticolonial method of historiography. This paper delves into these questions through the works of Greyser, Berlant, Ngai, Brian Massumi's theorization of fear as hyper-imminent reality, Kyla Schuller's *The Biopolitics of Feeling*, and Yao's conceptualization of the disaffected. In the landscape of Shibli's novel, the revenants of the silenced-colonized are resurrected through the silence and barrenness of the geographical terrain, the foundation for the affective constellation of the novel, resistant in its opacity.

The Vigilant Disposition: Anxiety, Crisis, and the Digital Technics of Raciality

E. Chebrolu, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Situated at the intersection of race, rhetoric, media, and affect, this essay elaborates on a theoretical concept for analysis of contemporary fascist and white nationalist rhetoric on digital platforms: the vigilant disposition. Disposition connotes both affective tendencies and the rhetorical canon of *dispositio* (arrangement). I situate dispositions as a key component in what Frantz Fanon, Sylvia Wynter, and David Marriott articulate as sociogeny, which names both the psycho-affective

internationalization of racialized socio-economic conditions and the development of such conditions through attachment to the figure of Man, or the white Western bourgeois subject.

The vigilant disposition is a cultivated anxious tendency to rhetorically organize, manage, order, and construct fantasies of racial crisis through an avowal/affirmation of racial violence. This concept arises from my research analyzing white nationalist rhetoric and various modes of racialization on the notorious imageboard platform 4chan. I argue that 4chan's news and politics boards (/n/, /new/, and /pol/) cultivate a technics of raciality, or a practiced set of skills regarding the placement and adaptation of racialized topoi (argumentative commonplaces/structure of argument that aid in the invention of argument) and tropes (figures of speech that turn and move meaning) in discussion of news media events through both digital text and visual media (images or GIFs) that narrate those events as crises that require control/sovereign intervention. I claim that vigilance is a form of *crisis management* that mobilizes what Denise Ferreira da Silva calls the analytics of raciality, a politico-symbolic arsenal of racial signifiers, to produce and generate racial anxiety. Disappearing Acts: Nugent's "Smoke, Lilies, and Jade" and Ling Ma's "G"

Disappearing Acts: Nugent's Smoke, Lilies, and Jade and Ling Ma's "G"

Clara Chin, University of California, Santa Barbara

In this paper, I unfurl an analysis of two literary disappearances in which queer of color narrators escape from New York city life and dissipate into a sensuous world of their own interiorities. In Bruce Nugent's 1926 short story "Smoke, Lilies, and Jade," the narrator figuratively disappears into what appears like an opium-induced dream through the smoke of his cigarettes, and in Ling Ma's short story 2022 "G," two girls take a drug that allows them to literally disappear and float through the city unnoticed. Bruce Nugent, a prominent Black queer writer at the height of the Harlem Renaissance was critiqued for overly indulgent work and a lack of completed publications. Ling Ma has been praised for her literary restraint. Stereotypes of Black excess and Asian inscrutability have informed interpretations of these texts and their authors, respectively. Despite these opposing tropes and the 100-year time span of publication, they share a similar use of disappearing as a specific literary trope. Nugent and Ma employ disappearance to ponder self-indulgence as a refusal of the expectation of racialized collectivity and of political responsibility cast upon racialized subjects. In both texts, disappearance contemplates self-indulgence as excess through literary formal choices of inscrutability and restraint. I argue that disappearance as a literary device offers a unique lens through which to put into conversation the historical contexts, legacies and formal constructions of Black excess and Asian inscrutability. By claiming and recovering these stereotypes through a kind of literary illegibility, Nugent and Ma offer a mode of being in which the pits of interiority and the ineffable sensorium mark the limits of respectability and visibility. This mode of being counterposes imperialized and essentialized racial logics, and offers a kind of relational solitude that, at any moment, could also become dangerously unrelational. I draw from Asian Americanist theories that recover inscrutability, such as in Vivian Huang's *Surface Relations*, Anne Cheng's *Ornamentalism*, and Sunny Xiang's *Tonal Intelligence*, as well as from African Americanist theories about inscrutability, such as Tina Post's *Deadpan* and Édouard Glissant's *Poetics of Relation*.

Condition: Asian American Labor in *Beef* and *Everything Everywhere All at Once*

Alexander Cho, University of California, Santa Barbara

How does it feel to be Asian American, now? How does this feeling both build upon and deviate from past histories of model minority and yellow peril, a false dichotomy that is built upon historical intertwinement with questions of labor and capital? And how can *affect* be an unexpectedly useful tool to help unpack this latter dynamic? This paper gently works through these questions by closely reading what are arguably the two most prominent Asian American media texts to emerge in the last several years: Emmy-winning Netflix TV show *Beef* and Oscar-winning A24 feature film *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. It argues that both of these texts, in their own ways, attempt to answer the questions above by offering us a critically ambivalent structure of feeling: the affect of *condition*, the lived embodiment of a minority that is not quite, the pressures of immigrant labor and capital, the schizoid duality of being celebrated (misleading statistics on high educational achievement/household income) and being alienated (virulent anti-Asian racism), simultaneously. “Condition” is defined by Merriam-Webster in its noun form as “a premise upon which the fulfillment of an agreement depends”; as a verb, “to agree by stipulating” and “to put into a proper state for work or use.” These could not be more succinct definitions of the vision and function of the Asian in the US, as literary historian Colleen Lye (2005) tracks regarding the historical relationship between labor and racialization. Both *Beef* and *EEAAO* are likewise profoundly concerned with questions of feeling, work, and race, and this paper pays attention to the affective space enveloping this strange political economic position. It posits that the affect of condition—how this feels, as traced in both of these texts—may help us unlock this relationship and possible resistances.

Political Disappointment and the Feminist Intellectual

Hayun Cho

University of Notre Dame

This paper examines the affectively and politically vexed figure of the feminist intellectual as a vital interlocutor of political disappointment, situating contemporary South Korean literature and film as its case study. If political disappointment can be defined as a longing for fundamental change that outlasts a historical moment when it might have been fulfilled (Marcus 2023), this paper argues that political disappointment facilitates critique and speculation through the former activist poet riddled with survivor’s guilt in Choe Young-mi’s poetry collection *Thirty, the Feast is Over* (Sörün chanch’inün kkünnatta, 1999) and the filmmaker grieving alongside and for former Korean “comfort women” in Byun Young-joo’s documentary film *Habitual Sadness* (Najün moksori 2, 1997). Produced in South Korea’s postcolonial aftermaths of the 1990s, these texts reckon with popular national sentiments of depression and loss after the 1980s anti-state, anticolonial democratization movement as well as the failure of redress after the Pacific War (Yoneyama 2016). Attending to details such as the voiceover of the filmmaker reflecting on the death of one of her subjects in relation to her practice, or the post-revolutionary confessions of the poet’s sex life, this paper asks how depressive, autotheoretical

writing and filmmaking connect despair, complicity, and the emergent emancipatory. The paper concludes with a discussion of the enmeshed critical vocabularies of South Korean feminist literature and film, the Public Feelings Project (Cvetkovich 2012, Muñoz 2020), postcolonial affect (Khanna 2023), and autotheory as means to illuminate bodily knowledge with attention to positionality and attachment (Musser 2024).

I Do Not Understand Why Everyone is not Devastated by Palestine: Incommensurate Affects in the Relational Field

Jennifer Woody Collins, Denison University

The feelings that currently saturate my daily life are strong, and different than past feeling. I have had before. Now, my quiet moments, distractions, and bolts from out of the blue are saturated with despair over Palestine. In this essay I consider the ways that interpersonal affective environments of tension and impasse are constituted through time, emotional residues, and the influence of external connections to the relation at hand. I feel out how arguments we mount for “our side” become perceived as rational, logical, emotionally potent, and right to us, but are perceived as something entirely different by others. The constitution of “right” ideas is examined through affective atmospheres—those sensorial spaces that can make ideas obviously right, or that serve as a forcefield that blocks ideas as (obviously) ridiculous. The situation I analyze is the tension roiling in the relational field between my partner and I regarding the genocide in Palestine. Various tendrils that touch this tension, (i.e., anti-Semitism, the 2024 US presidential election, my belief in mycorrhizal networks and interconnectedness) are considered. The impasse between my partner and I, a man I have been effortlessly politically aligned with for 15 years, has been confusing and surprising—a provocation to look at tensions arising in relationships that are usually easy and smooth. Our impasse sparks thinking around incommensurate affects in close relationships, the ways we do and do not engage them, why, and how affect spurs perpetual relational cycles of convergence and divergence.

Pedagogy of School Shootings

Erica Colmenares & Scott Jarvie, San Jose State University

Despite a short respite during the COVID-19 pandemic, school shootings continue to dominate headlines. As teacher educators, we are curious as to the ways bodies become re-positioned during these atrocious events and what they might teach us. Normally distanced, apart, separated, or alone, during school shootings, bodies come together in ways that are often *unintelligible*: they touch, they embrace, they huddle, they cover, they protect, they intertwine. Drawing from Jasbir Puar’s (2015) work, and her concept of “debility”—bodily injury and social exclusion brought on by economic and political factors—is there a pedagogy to school shootings that could allow us to reimagine bodies in schools and what they might do?

(Gyneco)logical Phallacies: Vaginismus, Femininity, and the Penetrative Imperative

Caroline Cunfer, Brown University

This paper takes interest in how the normative female sexual subject is constructed through medical and cultural discourse that equates femininity with penetrability. I take as my object medical responses to vulvovaginal ‘failure,’ most notably therapy aiming to cure vaginismus—a psychosomatic condition characterized by the involuntary clenching of pelvic floor muscles due to fear of penetration. I understand biocultural responses to vaginismus as part and parcel of a larger biopolitical project aimed at managing and enforcing sexuality by training the vagina to tolerate penetration—a project underwritten by interlocking regimes of whiteness and compulsory sexuality, able-bodiedness, and cisgender femininity. Fear of penetration, such discourses tell us, demands cure, which is the sole route to (sexual) empowerment and the attainment of normal, healthy womanhood. Thinking with what Eunjung Kim calls the curative imperative, and its embeddedness within hegemonic expectations for gender, (hetero)sexuality, reproduction, and desire, this paper asks: what would vaginismus mean when it is removed from the cultural backdrop of heterosexuality and compulsory penetration? Why must negative feelings towards sex require a medical diagnosis? And why is restoration to a state of penetrability, and the elimination of negative feelings regarding penetration, the clinical means to an end? I am particularly interested in the affective register of ‘coping’ and ‘tolerating’ that saturates clinical and testimonial literature on vulvovaginal dysfunction, especially when ‘overcoming’ vaginismus is consistently made synonymous with ‘sexual empowerment.’

Let the Broken Place Be What Moves You: Centering the Affective Trauma Lands to Feel/Survive Planetary Catastrophe

Prince Cunningham, SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology

This piece turns to the connection between collective traumatic affectivity and the potential of offsetting regimes for governing as a means of shifting the catastrophic planetary. In an onslaught and excess of traumatic affectivity and the promise of far more trauma to come in the future as climates and empires ignite, as lateral violence and ethnocide continue, what *promise* is possible when flowing and contagious traumatic affect comes to be seen not as a disposable byproduct but as a caldron of transformation? The forces of the neoliberal, the carceral, and the capitalist planetary logics position traumatic affect as arising in a “broken” individual self, an evolutionary defect that manifests in these times as a risk factor or impasse to capital’s unimpeded flow. In a drastic rerouting, this piece performs an experiment: what happens to planetary regimes when traumatic affectivity is thought and experienced not as what is against collective affective planetary survival but as a means to carve out a (collective) life amidst catastrophe? What if the bio-story viewed trauma as the means by which the planet rebuilds itself through affective/neuro destruction and the necessity of building something new. A new cosmology in which trauma is the central force in a society from which creativity flows and through which neither pessimistic resignation nor cruel optimism shifts, but a reckoning with the deeply grounded. In flowing with the features and

potentials of this trauma-centrality, this piece draws from Buddhist practices of metta/karuna, the mind-body healing practices of the Taino, the restorative practices of the First Nations people of the Yukon Territory and Peter Levine's practices of somatic experiencing psychotherapy to give specifics to what this reshaping can feel like and do.

“I Swim Shirtless Through a Waveless Cobalt at the End of Time”:

Poetics of Gender Creative Hydrofeminisms

Prince Cunningham, SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology

“When trapped, water makes a new path.”

–Asia Suller, *Mirrors of the Earth: Reflections on Self-Healing from the Living World*

The affects of genderfluidity—from the “drowning” sensation of gender invisibility and erasure to the well-documented euphoric affects of the “first swim after top surgery” —are deeply infused with a watery way of moving and feeling, hitting a break wall of gender binary regimes of control. Hydro-affectivity can salve a tired gender non conforming body in a sensual intimacy things that is not always a sensation easily available in rejecting culture. This intimacy is depicted and felt in and through this piece along with a reckoning with planetary vulnerability, colonial past-presents, and the Anthropocene that the very same sensual connection inevitably also brings. This intervention moves fluidly between three poems and prose auto-theory, a queer cosmic belonging in water, and through wave-like contingent genders. Notably, the hydro can manifest both as affective impasses of being pushed to two binary sides of a river's shore but also as promises of the beauty possible when complexity ceases to be a problem in the washing away of the conceptual possible in the temporality of the wave. Drawing from the work of Lauren Berlant, Hil Malatino, and Asia Suller's *Mirrors in The Earth*, this piece overflows the binary gendered imaginary, eroding the sturdiness of its break-walls, making a new path with the excess, toward a queer cosmology of belonging.

The High Priestess: Learning from Somatic Practice

Ann Cvetkovich, Carleton University/University of Texas at Austin

My title is a nod to the High Priestess card in the tarot deck, which I have been known to consult as a way to work through intellectual and institutional questions. I'm hoping to present from my current book in progress, a follow-up to *Depression: A Public Feeling*, whose point of departure is the “mental health crisis” in the university and beyond, and which “grapples with” (following Eli Clare) key words such as care, madness, trauma, and breath. The book turns to somatic practices, including kundalini yoga, Buddhist meditation, swimming, and breathing, as well as writing understood as somatic practice, in order to develop strategies for living and new conceptions of social justice. What I do will depend on where I am in my process and what's happening in the world but my primary focus will be on the “esoteric” practices that inform my sense of somatic practice/liberation.

The Tongueliness of the Text:

Knotty Entanglements of Desire, Body and Language in Yvonne Vera's Writing

Ruth Daly, University of Leeds

This paper stages an inquiry into desire for interpretation by texts, perceived here as hospitable gift (events), that gives primacy to the physical and psychical body within writing that calls to be read *with*. Approaching reading as an encounter --an event-- initiates a relation to language that reveals theory's otherwise textures. This facilitates the disentangling of literary criticism and theory from disciplining processes which are structured phallically and have a stake in upholding normative, hegemonic narratives that depend on forms of othering to retain sovereignty. Approaching reading as a mode of *response-ability* mobilizes the reader in affective, tactile and ethical relations with texts. To read *with* requires an ethical negotiation with and in the words of others--reading as a passion for resonance--that is, at the same time, an opening of the reader to the senses that the other embodies. One is read as one reads. In this paper I shall elaborate on what I name the *tongueliness*--the life force--of the text. In a moment of encounter with a text that exists in the beyond of language, we are offered a moment from which we can begin to situate ourselves inside a new kind of gift-event. It is from this position that trace elements of a co-becoming are ignited and it is from here that we can listen to the many tongues Yvonne Vera invokes as richly diverse cultural and theoretical embodiments of feminist, affective practices of reading.

Affecting Malaise: The "Sad Girl Novel"

Orlaith Darling, Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen

When the promises of another era--upward mobility, security, and affluence in return for work, merit, and educational attainment--fail to materialise, how do we mentally endure? I examine this question by reading "sad girl novels" as specifically gendered artifacts of the late capitalist historic present and its affective atmosphere. The eponymous "sad girl" refers to the highly-educated but generally disaffected millennial women who populate, write, and read a glut of contemporary fiction by the likes of Ottessa Moshfegh, Halle Butler, Raven Leilani, and Sally Rooney. In this paper, I read a set of "sad girl novels" as anti-*Bildungsromane* by analysing both their socio-cultural and affective-formal implications. Instead of pursuing personal (or other) "growth", these characters use disaffection as a transitional infrastructure and mode of contending with the political disappointment endemic to late capitalism. Thus, the very thing that should prevent them from carrying on--their inertia and disenfranchisement--is the very factor that enables narrative in the wake of plot "progression". By this central paradox, "sad girl novels" leverage stagnation against continuation, and thereby comprise a holding pattern or transitional infrastructure for the lateness of late capitalism, and therefore *also* signal to something outside of it. While such novels have too often been given short critical shrift, I argue that they perform significant cultural work in refiguring pathologized, ahistorical feelings -- melancholy, depression, inertia--as public, historical feelings.

Feeling Normal, Fracturing Schooling

Kim Davies, Deakin University

What is it like to feel your self fractured by institutional experiences, processes and places said to be 'normal', like 'going to school'? How can schooling, indeed inclusive education itself, be perceived as violent, as a fracturing experience, an existential crisis involving the active sacrifice, or less willing loss of self in order to be seen to 'belong'? What does being made 'to belong' feel like for those targeted for and harmed by these inclusive interventions and technologies? Inquiring with these "cascade questions" (Juelskar, 2024) we will immerse ourselves in a *sensational* experience analogous to 'inclusion' to approach how mundane inclusive schooling can make you feel and what you may need to do, response-ably, to being so affected. Working generatively with this dis/comfort, and perhaps re-assembled as "affect aliens" (Ahmed, 2010), we will re/consider the history of autism, schooling, inclusive education and survival through the findings of Australia's Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and a recent newspaper series reporting on how the rise of "autism and ADHD fractured Australia's schools" to explore McKittrick's (2020) claim that the common-sense human, as we are disciplined to know and practice it, is a floor, not a ceiling.

Affective Materialities. Intercultural Memory in Brazilian Film

Irene DePetris-Chauvan, Universidad de Buenos Aires

I want to contribute to a discussion about the links between affect and new materialism considering intercultural visual expressions. In Indigenous ontologies there is a peculiar coexistence of beings that allows to think not only about more-than-human entanglements but also to redefine the connections between, materiality, perception and affect. In this vein I will use as a case study "Apiyemiyekî?" ("Why?"), a multi-layered experimental documentary where Brazilian filmmaker Ana Vaz works with drawings made by amazonian indigenous people. I am interested in the peculiar sensible, affective, and material "dance" the director stages between the original drawings made in paper and the granny texture incorporated by the analogue film. I contend that Vaz's sophisticated visual arrangement allows an intercultural translation of indigenous materialism, (re)animating the matter inscribed in the drawings. The indigenous representations of animals and plants reflect a state of "arrested movement" that communicates an indigenous perspective on non-human agency (Viveiros de Castro). When the drawings became animated onto landscapes and sights the documentary reactivates the "vibrant matter" (Bennett) of the natural elements inscribed in both images: paper and film based. In addition, while the montage emphasizes continuity between bodies and environment to explore the possibilities of non-anthropocentric visual modes, the haptic quality of the individual frames creates a tactile connection with a past that is also ambiguously a present. In other words, the "skin of the film" (Marks), makes it possible to affectively acknowledge the multiple temporalities, scales, and processes of deep, stratified forms of violence, which operates by way of entangled forms of life-destruction -for humans and nonhumans alike-.

The 'Ordinary' Violence of National Fantasy: Otherwise, 'Out of Time' Political Imaginaries for Posthuman Literacies and Book Banning

Bessie P. Dernikos, Florida Atlantic University

Since 2020, the call to remove texts centering themes of sexuality, gender, and race has surged in the US, with similar censorship on the rise in the UK, Canada, and Australia. In this paper, I ask: How can thinking with (Jackson & Mazzei, 2011) posthuman theories of affect in literacy education enable us to trouble current book banning efforts that work to reassert the gender order, namely by aligning heterosexuality with the notion of a 'core national culture' (Berlant & Warner, 1998)? And how do postfeminisms, as more-than-human political practices, help us to embrace otherwise imaginaries for *literate-techno-bodies*? Here, I take an 'undisciplined' approach which involves playing with data, sitting with uncertainty, and engaging in any number of 'incoherent' practices that help form a 'mass of resonances' (Tomkinson, 2023). I begin from the premise that, as the forces of white supremacist hyper-capitalist cisheteropatriarchy have historically shaped Western aesthetic practices, gender and hetero-sexuality affectively extend into and entangle with texts, particularly 'classic' fairytales. I then weave in and out of spacetimes to map out how literacy events are more-than-human scenes of entanglement, wherein gender/sex/uality/desire do not reside within individuals or things, but rather emerge via complex, entangled, and mobile processes of attaching→relating. My hope is to redirect affective energies to otherwise worlds where gender, sexuality, and literacies are no longer bound to a stabilizing heteropatriarchal metanarrative that violently moves via subtle and not-so-subtle relational networks, including book censorship, US state/federal care, parental protesting, and even *happily ever after*.

Affects of Open Access: Platform Building as Affective Method in Scholarly Publishing

Joe Deville, Lancaster University

A key moment in the history of open access (OA) publishing was the 2002 Budapest declaration. Suffused with techno-utopianism, it invites its readers to collaborate in "building a future in which research and education in every part of the world are that much more free to flourish". Two decades on, Reggie Raju and Jill Claasen, librarians and OA publishers in South Africa, highlight the limits of such naivety. "The OA movement has betrayed Africa" (2022), they write, arguing that the rise of APCs, BPCs, transformative agreements, rights retention have combined to "burst the hope bubble" around OA amongst many African scholars, while reinforcing global scholarly inequalities. In this context, I make two suggestions. First, drawing examples from discussions about OA, I argue that understanding the affects and atmospheres within OA publishing, coalescing variously as hope, despair, optimism, disappointment, is vital for building scholarly publishing futures that take seriously such critiques. Second, that we need to understand the practical, ongoing work to build new digital platforms that support equitable, bibliodiverse OA publishing practices as themselves affective methods. I introduce my own work to build the Open Book Collective, a digital platform and charity that aims to rebalance structural inequalities in scholarly publishing. I situate this in context of other initiatives, including Raju and Claasen's African Platform for Open Scholarship. In such platforms, we

find hope for alternative OA publishing pathways becoming digitally materialised in interfaces through which pass not just scholarship and socio-economic relations, but also affects of mutual scholarly engagement. Stream: S8: Theory's Otherwise Textures

Missed Connections: Affective Anatomy of a Night Out

Sofia Di Gironimo, McGill University

“Missed Connections: Affective Anatomy of a Night Out” tells the story, hour-by-hour, of a night out at a techno rave, starting at 9:30pm the night of, staying up through the night with it until the sunrise, and riding home with a feeling of *something*. This project aims to retain the feeling of lostness that a loud room and a sea of—chemical, organic, energetic—bodies impart. In recounting the various encounters, starts, confusions, transfers, that make up the night, it explores the circulation of affect on the dance floor. The writing of this project is inspired by Kathleen Stewart’s attention to the circulation of public feelings, motions, shock, banalities, the ‘ordinary affects’ which constitute a life on a personal and collective level. Tracing the night through moments, both brief and durational, I account for the bodily, rhythmic, and interpersonal resonances that make up an affective environment, at once static and vibratory, rife with potentiality, the “charge of an unfolding.” (Stewart 2007) Following Anna Gibbs, this project sees writing as research in itself, shaping its objects into existence. The writing subject “risks itself, finds itself, loses itself, and remakes itself in its dialogic relations with the worlds to which it attunes” (Gibbs 2007). Anatomising affectively here means giving our attention to the small happenings that make up big happenings, tracing flows, movements, gazes, rhythms. We tune in to the track, the conversation, sitting with it, lining up our pulse and breath with it, only to draw out, and dive in anew.

Using Rhetorical Field Methods in Studying Affective Dimensions of the Divine

Meghan Dunn, St. John’s University

In Plato’s *Phaedrus*, Socrates asks: “Do you know how you can speak or act about rhetoric in a manner which will be acceptable to God?” (274b). To the extent that “God” may be (partially) understood through its affective “data,” dimensions, or phenomenological patterns, this paper offers a preliminary (but overdue) response to the question above by drawing upon the rhetorical field methods (McKinnon et al., 2016) employed as a participant-observer in the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement. To the extent that social movements (in general) or OWS (in particular) open(ed) up space for the emergence of new socio-political and affective realities, this paper addresses the role that affect, good faith, and “high fidelity” played in methodologically accounting for Occupy Rhetoric: the rhetoric of Occupy and an occupation driven by the Socratic question (or mission) above. Given this this stream’s proposal around “the promises and impasses of affect as method,” this paper also introduces and extends the research and writings of scholars (Mailloux, 2017; Lynch, 2024; Caussin, 1619) on *theorhetic*: “speaking to, for, and about God.” As a relatively-new area of rhetorical study, the theorhetical enterprise gives new “promise” around the methodological challenges of studying non-verbal or pre-conscious affective interactions. Given that rhetorical field

methods are used to “analyze situations in which meanings depend on places, physical structures, spatial delineations, interactive bodies, and in-the-moment decisions” (Middleton et al., 2011, p. 358), this paper attends to the rhetorical considerations made when attending to, speaking about, or acting upon encounters with the divine.

Planning a Logic of Sensation with New Painting and New Music

Jonathan Eakle, Xiaoyue Zhang, and Evan Crump, George Washington University

This proposal dives into the conference’s methodological stream to show the construction of an assemblage that will eventually land in an “evocative pit.” The assemblage begins with a plan involving complementarity between a double pincer of percepts as forces and becomings as affects (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991/1994, p. 182)—sensations. Its main constituents are comprised of overlapping territories of New Music and New Painting cramped into academic space (i.e., affective descriptions; see Museum of Modern Art, 1977; Schoenberg, 1975). The New Painting starts with an armature of vertical and horizontal, points closest to viewers, and yet-to-come points beyond the horizon (Masumi, 1980/1987, p. xvi). Within the armature, color bits are introduced to produce sensations. An actual oil painting made especially for, and during, the conference, inspired by Cezanne’s *Garden at Les Lauves*, an ocean of water lilies and winds creating waves in low marshes of the National Aquatic Gardens—vibrant “worldings” (Seigworth & Pedwell, 2023)—will be a principal component in our presentation, alongside details of how it is brought into existence. The New Music aspects of our presentation start with cuts from our ongoing academic project involving performances by Ning Yu of Aaron Einbond’s (2020) *Cosmologies*, among other new music compositions. Springing from MC Richards’ (1989) diagram of John Cage et al.’s (1952) *Untitled Event*, this music, along with the painting, spoken sounds, and digitalized sonic elements will be remixed in our assemblage, which will be put to “shimmering” movement during our evocative pit (c.f., Gregg & Seigworth, 2010).

Out of Sync Mindbodies, Unruly Writing

denielle elliott, York University

Mind and body appear unsynchronized; no words when she speaks, tremors in the hand when he wishes it to be still, misplaced memories, or sleep which eludes fatigue and exhaustion. Whether Parkinsons, epilepsy, or acquired brain injuries, living with neurological conditions results in experiences that are difficult to explain (a strange taste); they are hard to put into words (literally, when we stutter in speech); mindbody experiences so incorporeal, so ephemeral, that they appear to transcend language, even human experience. Building on Barad and Haraway I consider how knowing is inseparable from modes of being (also Schrader 2010). In this way, I approach the study of neurological conditions as a type of *situated neurology*, where the embodied experiences of neurological conditions matter to practices of knowing. The challenge for the ethnographer is how to write about these modes of being (injured/healing/repared/dying) in a way which accounts for their affective intensities and, simultaneously, their evanescence. This paper, drawing from three years of ethnographic research on neurological conditions across three clinic sites, considers the possibilities

of new forms of ethnographic writing for knowing injured minds. Writing that reflects the EEG waveforms with its spikes, sharps, and waves, to make sense of mindbodies out of sync. Such writing must make space for coming-apart, an undoing, for grief, and silence. Such writing must be undisciplined, writing *with* the unruly/disordered/incapacitated mindbody; as well as reimagining the subject(s) as neither patient nor survivor, but collaborators in a choreography. This paper will be an experiment in such writing.

Swimming, Reading, and Chronic Promising

Karen Engle, University of Windsor

It always starts with a plan that resembles a promise or a vow: to swim like I used to. To slide into water and extend arms, beat legs, in an ongoing rhythm that puts my brain into another register. To sink into the zone. It always starts with a plan that resembles a promise or a vow: to sharpen my brain up so it works like it used to. To feel those neurons firing with hunger, electric and fast. To return to my peak. Swimming and reading are mainstays in my life; they help me think and move through the world. Yet, each time I make these vows, I fail. So many reasons account for these failures: decades of chronic pain, the stress fractures from academic life, and misogyny dressed up as imposter syndrome. I can list these reasons easily but what lives in my body is a harder philosophy: Nietzsche's genealogy of breeding an animal with the right to make a promise. As a student, the *Genealogy* possessed me such that decades later, I hear certain keywords and travel immediately back to his words. Reflecting on decades of failures to make good on my own promises, I become one of Nietzsche's "febrile whippets." If I attune to rather than reject this nervy whippet, water and books look different. They become bodies to explore with paws, noses, eyes, and skin. As whippet, I can just paddle around without promising or mastering anything. I swim, I read just to stay afloat. Abstract: A Case for Autistic Affective Withdrawal as Praxis As an autistic person, emotional dysregulation is a key challenge of the autistic experience (Dell 'Oso, Massoni, Battaglini, et al., 2023), a part of life that requires careful curation of affective experiences and investment. However, this need for relief conflicts with our hyper-connected world, one wherein participation in the social world (both offline and online) also requires constant vulnerability to emotionally exhausting signifiers of trauma, pain, despair, violence, and fear, particularly in the attention-driven online world. This places autistic people in a catch-22, where we may feel the need to engage with potentially harmful, or even traumatic affective content to appear 'normal'. However, that very engagement in the practice of masking can lead to traumatic instances of anxiety, depression, and emotional burnout (Miller, Rees, and Pearson, 2021). After experiencing a series of such traumatic experiences, often triggered by affective engagement in social media posts about world events, my response has been to more mindfully curate what I allow myself to become affectively invested in, with less attention paid to maintaining an expected 'masking' regime of social camouflage, particularly with

regards to online content. Although I still feel some pangs of unease when politely refusing to engage with political discussions among friends, this change has allowed me to more effectively engage with socio-political issues that I can help with. In this paper I will further discuss how masking/social camouflage practices can lead to physically and mentally unhealthy outcomes, and how deliberate withdrawal may be needed in this time of information overload.

A Case for Autistic Affective Withdrawal as Praxis

Jordan Etherington, Trent University

As an autistic person, emotional dysregulation is a key challenge of the autistic experience (Dell 'Oso, Massoni, Battaglini, et al., 2023), a part of life that requires careful curation of affective experiences and investment. However, this need for relief conflicts with our hyper-connected world, one wherein participation in the social world (both offline and online) also requires constant vulnerability to emotionally exhausting signifiers of trauma, pain, despair, violence, and fear, particularly in the attention-driven online world. This places autistic people in a catch-22, where we may feel the need to engage with potentially harmful, or even traumatic affective content to appear 'normal'. However, that very engagement in the practice of masking can lead to traumatic instances of anxiety, depression, and emotional burnout (Miller, Rees, and Pearson, 2021). After experiencing a series of such traumatic experiences, often triggered by affective engagement in social media posts about world events, my response has been to more mindfully curate what I allow myself to become affectively invested in, with less attention paid to maintaining an expected 'masking' regime of social camouflage, particularly with regards to online content. Although I still feel some pangs of unease when politely refusing to engage with political discussions among friends, this change has allowed me to more effectively engage with socio-political issues that I can help with. In this paper I will further discuss how masking/social camouflage practices can lead to physically and mentally unhealthy outcomes, and how deliberate withdrawal may be needed in this time of information overload.

Performative Autotheory and the "Citational Self" in Grief Writing

Elizabeth Farnsworth, Temple University

Through the use of Sandra Faulkner's research methodology of "poetry as inquiry," this paper performs an experimental composition (and concurrent analysis) of autotheoretical poetry in which I examine my own citational practices and the development of what I will call a 'citational self' as I read texts exploring sadness and grieving such as *Mourning Diary* by Roland Barthes, "I measure every Grief I meet" by Emily Dickinson, *Precarious Life* by Judith Butler, and *Bluets* by Maggie Nelson.

Dickinson writes,
I measure every Grief I meet
With narrow, probing, eyes -
I wonder if It weighs like Mine -
Or has an Easier size.

I was the girl crying in the corner of the playground every day of elementary school. I often comforted others, and I was drawn to moments of sadness displayed, as if questioning whether if I could fix their sadness maybe I could fix mine too. My childhood curiosity remains and I as I read about another person's pain, I find myself writing in return as if to say, this is where I meet you—

In this paper I show how attention to understanding one's own sadness can be a gesture at connection to others, through and *with* that experience of sadness. In this work I hope to join a conversation about collaborative and reactive thinking and feeling with texts that surrounds works that call explicit attention to the personal process of negotiating one's life with one's world. I (hesitantly) join the conversation that argues for this process as theory making.

Lineament

Claire Fitch, UT Austin

I've grown a habit of only writing in ridiculously short spats, mostly through pads of the thumb to the phone's notes app, so that sentences are always jarred from their context and belly up. This way I can mix the words in among other material practices, other insolvencies, urging a thought to phase-shift into a wiping of surfaces, a sculpture, a way of putting the pillowcases on. The sculptures are the real enablers of this habit—heavy things so far from writing, all form and dimension, nothing but presence—they lure me in with the promise of non-narrative time. With a spool of greenyellow string I've been tying knots around pieces of stuff and hanging them from a scaffold of metals I've collected on my walks, years of rocks and rusts I've decided were mine. While working I've been touching things in new ways, getting sensitive to weight in my palms, getting choked up around the fingernail by thin string and wire. Going looped. Pulling tight around all these things I've wanted, stitching them together, letting them fall. Each strand is a sentence-like thing on the vertical, hung together like the way words I've held in my neck for many years sometimes get expelled into my present as I adhere them to one another or a page. Snared in the mechanics of the knot, lines turn long and conjunctive. In writing or in sculpting, form is imposed by some mash of a method, some way built of propensities and whims, impulses towards movement and relation. I take a sentence in my mouth and spit its body out and string it together through my fingers and release. The things I wanted (beautiful rocks, beautiful words) had been stuck deep in my throat and the creases of my room, congealed still into the pure and stagnant desire-forms of 'stuff' and 'idea'. Accumulating dust and giving me a cough. A real slog, really heavy in the body. It's taken this tearing apart of writing and context to wear a thought into something thin and transparent, something bared in its simplicity, creased into clarity by effort and certain pulls. A lace of inky swags, a delicate stitch. A precarity held up by working knuckles. With this new method of expulsion I'm getting it out through the hands, through the nails, which knock back and forth between a sticky keyboard and this lot of stringy stuff. It's a transversal method, a gesture sustained between media, spraining a chapter into a perfect harmless fragment and a string into a hooped spine. It's a method happening through the hands, which have taken on new crooks and calluses, unfit now for long planar tasks. It's a method of prying stuff out of the world and sitting it into stuttering ligatures. Of coping with abundance, with

bad arrangements. Of being hell bent things need agitating. Of sifting out a form from the tangled and crowded tenderness of a collector or a writer. Composed of doubt and urge strapped together into enduring pulls, these patchwork lines hum of process and pinch. It's a thing you could almost dance to, the stilted buzz of it on the psyche.

How the Linguistic Landscape of Artificial Intelligence shapes its Affective Affordances

Tim Elmo Feiten, University of Cincinnati

The staff of New York City's mayor Eric Adams has created an "expert AI" that tells New Yorkers it is legal to withhold tips from workers and discriminate against renters based on income source. The Israeli government uses 'targeting AI' in its military campaigns to select civilian targets for bombing. AI systems like these, which are becoming more and more common, allow humans to launder their responsibility through a feigned and fake AI agency. This only seems plausible because we misleadingly use anthropomorphic and psychologistic vocabulary and because we understand AI technologies in terms of scientific models and artifacts. Although these technologies change the landscape of affordances in unexpected ways, they always rely on human practices of meaning-making for their material efficacy. In this talk, we propose a Deleuzian replacement vocabulary to change the landscape of affective affordances in AI discourse. This intervention is grounded in the insight that AI is neither a human (or pseudo-human) nor an animal (or pseudo-animal), and that the language we use matters because it can enable and obscure, or potentially highlight and warn about, real and ongoing AI harms. On their own AI technologies are empty husks whose outputs are literally meaningless. It is only in affective interaction with humans (or groups of humans) that AI systems can mean anything at all. What is required is an understanding of the bio-techno-social assemblages that can affect change in the world.S9

(Be)Coming Undone: Undoing Genre, Undoing the Self

Asilia Franklin-Phipps, SUNY New Paltz and Bretton Varga, California State University, Chico

Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* was celebrated for its creative approach to knowing and unknowing the self alongside and through theory. Inspired to think about this creative (often feminist) impulse (Fournier, 2021), particularly from those who labor in and are adjacent to institutions, we wonder *what does an undoing do?* (Hartman, 2020). Of interest is the impulse to create, construct, and recover the self through writing—particularly from spaces of dispossession and ongoing disaster. Christina Sharpe's *On Beauty*, Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* and *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, Theresa Hak Kyung Cha *Dictée*, Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands*, Katherine McKittrick's *Dear Science*, Billy-Ray Belcourt's *A History of My Brief Bod* and Kara Walker's *After the Deluge* are, to varying degrees and in different ways, texts that we consider to be *undone*. That is, autotheoretical, autobiographical, and autoethnographic intellectual proliferations that seek to situate a range of subjects in interstitial and imbricated contexts. As we frame these texts as encounters which *undo* genres, how might they in turn *undo* those encountering them? These texts are also political in that they attempt to create meaning with writing and images in a way that makes words one of many aspects of dialog and

knowledge. We might argue that such texts refuse mastery (Singh, 2017) by transgressing/undoing boundaries of both writing and art, producing an undoing of genre, reading, and knowing. These moves include the poetic, reimagining relationships between words and images, and/or rupturing conventions most often found in published work, undoing both the writer and the reader.

Planetary Soundings:

Affective Atmospheres of ‘Non-Native’ Birdsong and Global Regimes of Disposability

Aurora Fredriksen, The University of Manchester

Sixty years ago, Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* figured the silencing of birdsong as a powerful affective register for sensing the catastrophic unravelling of ecological relations. While the quietening of avian soundscapes continues to draw forth powerful affective atmospheres of ecological loss on ever expanding scales, an emergent sub-genre of environmental discourse has reversed the well-established ecological semiotics of birdsong, positioning the *amplification* of avian soundscapes by birds labelled as ‘non-native’ as an unwelcome signal of planetary disorder. This paper explores the affective atmospheres associated with changing avian soundscapes through the case of naturalised ring-necked parakeets and red-billed leiothrixes in England. Brought to Europe from Asia as living commodities for the pet trade through the circuits of imperial-capitalism and released into the wild through its attendant affective regimes of disposability, parakeets and leiothrixes are adding new sonic layers to England’s avian soundscape, eliciting (amongst an array of ambivalent affects) reactionary reiterations of their disposability, this time figured through the global biopolitics of biodiversity conservation. Through the specificity of these birds’ entanglements with England’s avian soundscapes, this paper traces wider affective regimes of disregard for more-than-human lives sedimented in the planetary dispositions of ongoing imperial-/colonial-capitalism. Against such ecologically catastrophic dispositions, this paper calls for cultivating new affective attunements to the more-than-human world, ones that invite more curious modes of listening and relating across difference, staying open to the ambivalent possibilities of recombinant ecologies in the planetary present.

Pushing the Genre into Something Interesting

Lindsey A. Freeman, Simon Fraser University

In the summer of 2023, the artist Malcolm Peacock set up two parallel treadmills in a gallery in Tribeca in Lower Manhattan. For two weeks, he ran with someone next to him at 5AM. The promise was that he would go with them for as long as they wanted, at the pace they wanted. One morning he ran next to an Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker who told him to close his eyes. When I visited him at the Artist’s Space gallery a couple of days later, he told me how he hesitated at this, and how his first thought was: “Am I going to let this white lady kill me?” Then he relayed that he decided to do it, he closed his eyes, kept running. Of course, he did. Afterall, this is what he created this setup for, to see what people would do, to see what they wanted, to be there for it, and to go there with them. Maybe the director wanted to find an edge and to keep going past it to feel what

would happen. She definitely wanted Peacock to go with her. In this paper, I'll tell you what happened next to Peacock and the director, and I'll do some theorizing about hapticity, treadmills, and what Jean-Luc Nancy calls "a double suspension of sense."

Slowing Down the Political Movement:

Centering Affective Debility in Our Work for Social Change

Zoe Fuad, Brown University

This paper examines the limitations of affective transmission as a force for social change. Building from three years of ethnographic research, it begins by arguing that contemporary movement work demands and requires an affective capaciousness of its members; an ability to "move" and be "moved by" one another. It then unpacks and examines the ableism implicit to such demands, suggesting that the reification of emotional mobility tends to reflect and further entrench colonial views about the value of human bodies: as determined by their potential for productivity and change. Within this view, capaciousness is aligned with progress, transgressiveness, and futurity, while debility (and the debilitated body) is cast as being stuck in or belonging to the past. Far from undoing normative structures of oppression, this framework reifies existing animacy hierarchies and marginalizes those that feel numbed, overwhelmed or depressed by structures of everyday injustice. This paper then utilizes a disability justice framework to explore alternative forms of organizing, wherein debility is centered and even privileged; it seeks models of social change that do not rely upon the ignition of shared feeling, but rather allows for participants to dwell (and wallow) in negative affect. Working at the overlap of affect and crip studies, it explores the potential insights gleaned through states of negative affect, and offers alternative strategies to organizing work; for movements that either travel at lower affective speeds, or which abscond the metaphor of "movement" entirely, in favor of models that center rest, slowness, and collective stillness.

Affective Resonance as Spiritual Possession

Zoe Fuad, Brown University

This paper draws from affect and crip studies to theorize "possession" as a way of knowing. It begins by tracing out the way this term has historically been used to capture and pathologize practices seen as deviant or strange (Cohen, 2000), and to punish the people who experienced them. It argues that anxieties about "possession" have emerged at sites where the ontological boundedness of man (as rational, whole, and "self-possessed") are most under siege; the term has been deployed as a catch-all to homogenize and disqualify experiences of interconnection with entities or forces beyond the "self". It then turns to examine how such experiences have been both reclaimed and simultaneously disavowed within affect studies: while scholars have depathologized and uplifted many of those "possessive" experiences once deemed demonic, they have done so largely through recourse to neuroscientific, rationalist, and "non-occultish explanation[s]" (Brennan, 2004), in which ties to the spiritual are either expressly or implicitly severed; in their attempt to authorize the field, many have relied upon the same Enlightenment

episteme that they claim to reject (c.f. Blackman, 2012). Writing against such spiritual shyness, this paper seeks to demonstrate that much of what we understand as possession might be otherwise viewed as affective transmission (and vice versa), and to explore the ontological implications of such an overlap. It makes this claim by demonstrating how many of affect studies' key theories can be alternatively and equally explained through pre-existing work in the field of spiritual and theological studies. It parses out unrecognized affinities between works of affect theory canon (e.g. Brennan, 2004; Ngai, 2007; Massumi, 2002) and those of the self-proclaimed occult (e.g. Farrow, 2023; Beyer et. al, 2023), so as to show how affect theories' key tenants might be retheorized as forms of possession, and how such a retheorization helps to dissolve the boundaries of man-as-individual.

Art Exhibitions as Affective Sites with Potential for Antiracist Practices

Katie Fuller, Florida State University

How does affect theory help us understand the impact of art exhibition spaces? This research follows an affective throughway found in the collaborative, community-focused exhibition *Promise Witness Remembrance*, on view at the Speed Museum in Louisville, Kentucky in 2022. The artworks in the exhibition disrupted a traditional museum. The collaborative committees inverted the departmental siloing that can happen in museums, and visitors from the Louisville community saw their images and likenesses posted on the gallery walls in a display of local Black Lives Matter protest photos. Deleuze (1968, 1994) writes about affect and difference, Massumi (1995) and Matsuda (2008) write about affect as internalized sensations; Ahmed (2004) shows us how repetition of ideas, words, or imagery can resemble fact, causing race to stick to bodies, especially races who have historically been criminalized. Zembylas (2014, 2015) connects affect to antiracism in institutions, which I am applying to museums through the writings of Witcomb (2013) and (Tolia-Kelley, 2016). Affect in the art exhibitions might be a framework for teaching issues around race and racism in the United States. An art exhibition's narrative allows time and opportunity for affective intensities to move through the body. Art grounds these affective experiences, teaching us about the self and other. Affect and art are of the body, making the body a landscape of new ways of knowing and previously unimagined possibilities.

Overlooking Sonic and Sensuous Pedagogies:

Lessons on Educating Otherwise from Curriculum Studies and Educational Foundations

Walter S. Gershon, Rowan University

This proposed paper addresses how overlooking the fields of Curriculum Studies and Educational Foundations can miss significant possibilities for sonic and sensuous pedagogies. Scholarship in Curriculum Studies is often unaddressed through a reduction to studies curriculum and instruction, followed by a dismissal of such curricula along ethical lines (see for example, Gershon & Helfenbein, 2023). While rejection of testing paradigms and their associated curricula that are harmful to children in classrooms (e.g., Au, 2008; Tabuman, 2009), such reduction often results in missing key

discussions of how sounds and the sensible affect everyday education. Along similar lines, Educational Foundations has long attended to the very questions and concerns this strand posits (e.g., McCarthy, et al., 1999; Gershon, 2019). For example, Greg Dimitriadis (2001), Bettina Love (2012), and Christopher Emdin (2019), all address how hip-hop, pedagogies, and culture can move us towards forms of educational justice. Further, just as pedagogies can create room for joy and possibilities, there is a continuing, long history of harmful pedagogies in the United States (e.g., hooks, 1993; Love, 2019). In short, both pedagogies and forms of curricula are as likely to harm as liberate students (e.g., Gershon, 2017; Wozolek, 2023). Utilizing attentions to questions of the sonic and sensuous, this paper argues that recent discussions of the sonic and sensory in the field of Curriculum Studies and Educational Foundations provide potential pathways for educating otherwise—pathways that are distinctly pedagogical whether named as such (e.g., Gershon, 2020) or not.

Notes from the Neck: The Aggrieved Afterlives of Isadora Duncan's *Mother* (1921)

Raunak Ghosh, Northwestern University

After the death of her children in 1913, the body of Isadora Duncan—the ‘Mother of Modern American Dance’—i.e., form plasticized, started exhibiting the affective weight of death not as an issue of interiority, but of exteriority consuming a female bodily form that took its measure. My paper, in that regard, is an attempt to affectively historiograph Duncan’s 1921 choreographic performance of *Scriabin’s Piano Etude op. 2, no. 1 (Mother)*. Using Rudolf Laban’s technique of analyzing movement – Labanalysis, I argue that for Duncan the affectivity of grief was akin to the body’s expressive feeling of an unstable promise being fractured by the tides of time. Her body did not trade in a dialectical praxis of futurity but was rather temporalized multi-directionally through a process of anatomizing the body through dance. The body did not only perform the promise of Duncan’s individual motherhood through dance, but also broke it – fomenting a messy performative afterlife of female maternal grief. Among others, Anabelle Gamson performed it in 1988. Agathe Bonitzer reconstructed it in 2019. The body became synonymous with a state of feeling that operated beyond the coordinates of space and time. Movement, I contend, was not about fucking around and finding out. It was about choreographing the body to dance the death of the only promise that *felt* finite – that of motherhood. Drawing upon Eugenie Brinkema’s formalisms of grief and putting Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s thesis on phenomenology in contact with Domietta Torlasco’s work on rhythm – my paper shows how Duncan’s *Mother* transforms affect into something that is not just felt. Through the anomalous rhythms of Duncan’s aggrieved movements, I attempt to theorize the maternal body itself *as* an affect, that is perennially enmeshed in a processual state that, in the words of Roland Barthes, “oscillates between irreducible individuality and endless differentiation.”

“The Students Want To See A Manager”:

Luxury Branding As a Pathway To Progressive Change

Kathryn Gindlesparger, Thomas Jefferson University

This presentation uses the luxury branding of higher education to understand how material expectation (“keeping up with the Joneses”) both demands individual participation in institutional orthodoxy but also invites critique of exclusionary campus practices. High Point University in North Carolina has emerged as the model for “resort education,” a system wherein customers—students—pay for an education that caters to their material preferences. High Point’s approach is noted for its maximalist capital and branding projects: dorms like five star hotels; heated swimming pools; free water bottles handed out by uniformed staff; complimentary teddy bears for all entering students; everyone gets an iPad! The university’s white glove service has spawned a Yelp-reminiscent social media environment where students publicly review every element of their college experience. At first glance, the reviews seem to enable a privileged worldview where (mostly white, affluent) students and their families get what they want and feel that they deserve. On closer inspection, the public reviews may be a pathway for minoritized students to complain and be heard. Sara Ahmed famously notes that the person who complains becomes the problem. But could campus luxury—a pit of corporate greed—accelerate listening and even progressive change? My analysis relies on the framework of epideictic rhetoric: rhetoric that addresses praise and blame. I am interested in the use of luxury material goods as props because I suspect these goods accelerate messages about race, disability, gender and economic power that can ultimately be repurposed to correct damaging narratives on campus.

Pedagogy with a Heartbeat: Citizen Science and Sense/ual Learning

Jacqueline Goldin, University of the Western Cape

Over the past few years, we have worked together in a citizen science project called ‘Diamonds on the Soles of our Feet’ (see also Goldin et al. 2021, Goldin, Suransky and Kanyerere, 2023). In this project we engaged with 420 young learners in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. We came to see participating schools as collaborative ecosystems where young citizens become entangled with water through experiential encounters that make science alive and relevant. Through our engagement with citizen science we experienced the transformative power of affect and the relevance of emotions in education as a social and political project. In our pedagogy we depart from the idea that human beings are separate from the biosphere, thus recognizing the interdependency of all life forms on earth. We believe that keeping science education in laboratories and libraries affirms what Bozalek and Zemblyas (2023) call ‘privileged irresponsibility’. We propose that citizen science and its transformative potential can be one way to redress such irresponsibility. Through impactful encounters with human – non-human entanglement and the emotions which are evoked in this process, citizen science can create opportunities for response-ability (Bozalek and Zemblyas, 2023), through teaching and learning with the heart. Such entanglement also resonates with relationality as the currency of care theorists. In the context of our citizen science work, caring for

unfamiliar others is a form of non-human centered care with unfamiliar water bodies in which the binary of inside-outside learning becomes porous as the geographies of water penetrate the classroom walls. In *Diamonds on the Soles of our Feet*, we noted how watery spaces and images move back and forth caring-with and through human bodies – waterbodies to school, school to waterbodies. The entanglement with the non-human resonates with Massumi’s notion of becoming where there is an unrolling of an event that is a becoming of two together.

Affect In/As/Through Annotation

Philip Grayson, Penn State

In a number of social scientific fields, one major method for measuring affect is “annotation:” the continuous reporting of arousal and its negative or positive valences during interaction with media or interfaces (Girard 2014, Sharma et al. 2019). This method dovetails with some scholarship in book history that sees marginalia as evidence of affect prompted by texts—surges of readerly feeling so strong that they spill onto the page (Jackson 2002). Accordingly, researchers in education might be tempted to use student annotations as sources of affective data. Yet this premise is complicated by multiple factors, including the disciplinary origins of the urge to annotate (Narter 2013), the many non-textual sources of affect within literacy events (Leander and Boldt 2013), and the varying social pressures on identity that students negotiate in their marginal comments (Attenborough 2011), to say nothing of affect’s pre-verbal nature. Given these factors, this presentation will argue, it is more appropriate to view textual annotation as a mechanism for managing or reconciling the various affective forces that thrum through the process of reading. Drawing on my own textual annotations as evidence, I will detail the implications of this claim for how we both practice and teach annotation, showing how the recognition and textualization of affective pulses in marginal comments, when understood as such, can ease impasses in reading and gesture, however opaquely, towards regions of affective conflict within the spaces of literacy.

Unprecedented

Larry Green, Independent

The day after Trump was found guilty of 34 felonies, I tuned into the news channels to see what the “experts” were saying. Gary Hart’s presidential campaign had collapsed when his extramarital affair was disclosed. Would that happen to Trump? No. The pundits weighed in as follows, “During normal times, his campaign would be finished...but we’re not in normal times – who knows what will happen.” The pundits were acknowledging that Trump’s support might collapse, go sideways or even increase as a result of the collision between his support base and the court’s guilty verdict. Unprecedented. This names our political situation. Same word for the pandemic and for climate change. The past is no longer a reliable guide for the future. How might this relate to affect theory? Concepts are inevitably derived from the past. They are built on precedents. When we repeat an experience often enough, we can form a schema that will help us navigate in similar circumstances. However, for the unprecedented there are no concepts. When this is the case, it seems that the

best course of action is to attend to the emergent and eschew conclusions. Affect and our senses are designed to register the emergent. “Lose your mind and come to your senses.” They give us news from reality—not to mention news about our dated assumptions. “You should be grateful when you’re frustrated or disappointed because it means you’re getting news from reality.” This pithy Buddhist aphorism offers a way through. It correctly points to affects as signals that can alert us to the fact that our action logic is generated by assumptions that have passed their “best before date.” Those assumptions consist of concepts that seem so fundamental that we experience them as eternal verities. That is, until we’re frustrated or disappointed. Those affects tell us that our cognitive schemas don’t fit the occasion. Apparently, those eternal verities are not eternal. Could it be those assumptions have been conflated with reality? To have their inadequacies revealed is like having the ground fall away – profoundly disturbing. I suggest that is the dilemma besetting many in Trump’s base. Their beliefs must be defended at all costs...it’s a matter of life and death. This accounts for much of the passion that drives our polarizing discourse.

When it Bleeds... Towards an Affective Reading Approach of Present-Day South African News Coverage

Anneli Groenewald, Stellenbosch University

As a notoriously violent country, the portrayal of violence, abuse and human suffering forms a central part of daily coverage in the South African mainstream media. It is, however, in the narrative form of journalism that these real-life experiences of fellow humans become visceral reading experiences. Against this backdrop, this paper will apply an affective lens in the reading of the narrative-form coverage of significant news events in recent South African history. Through such a reading of the texts, the presentation will use textual clues and themes from within these narrative articles to identify potential writing patterns that seem to contribute to a particular affective tone in narrative-form news coverage in South Africa. Such patterns might help to inform further study of writing techniques that could enhance the affective potential of both narrative fiction and non-fiction.

The Poetics of Familiarity: The Sensory Mode of Reading South Asian Poetry

Meha Gupta, CUNY

Drawing from the specific geopolitical terrain of South Asian poetry, the study explores how sensory engagement with poetic texts offers a unique avenue for reading through the senses. By centering familiarity as a non-human concept, the paper demonstrates how poetry can serve as a site for theorizing situated affect and cultivating culturally sensitive forms of sensation. Through an analysis of poems by Eunice de Souza and Bhanu Kapil, the study illustrates how the poetics of familiarity not only enriches our understanding of affective experience but also invites readers to engage with the cultural multiverses of affective expression. Suggesting a poetics of familiarity, I propose a sensory mode of reading that prioritizes the experiential process over the explication of rational meaning. Examining the concept of familiarity through juxtaposition, I argue that poetic objects within a poem create connections that evoke a sense of proximity akin to familial relations, thereby illuminating the

intricate sensory landscape of poetry. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader conversation on postcolonial aesthetics by proposing a holistic approach to reading poetry—one that embraces both rational and irrational interpretations, fostering a deeper engagement with the complexities of the postcolonial poetic realm. By reading contemporary South Asian poetry specifically, this paper aims to take a sharp turn by advocating for reading with sensitivities to affective movement and sensory relationships within a poem as a “hearty” contribution to the heavily rational discourse on postcolonial affect.

My Body, My Data, My Choice? Data Bodies in the Uncanny Archive

Annika Haas, University of Hildesheim

Ordinary life has become intertwined with digitally networked infrastructures, though the degree of interconnectedness varies from region to region. The tech-activist collective Our Data Bodies engages with resulting inequities and discriminations through the term “data bodies,” meaning the “discrete parts of our whole selves that are collected and stored in databases. In the age of “surveillance capitalism” (Shoshana Zuboff), data bodies are created primarily through the tracking, analysis, and archiving of user data for both commercial and policing purposes. Is “data body” a useful metaphor to understand the impact of material conditions, economic logics and desires in networked infrastructures on their so-called ‘users’? What do (bad) feelings around our data bodies tell us about the (body) politics of the opaque infrastructures and dispersed archives that facilitate the uncanny excess and growth of data bodies? With Lauren Berlant’s notions of infrastructure and “glitchfrastructure,” it becomes clear that the affects and feelings around our data bodies and their dispersed archives need to be examined from within the tractions that hold bodies and networked infrastructures together—including techno-capitalist desire—as a mutually created force. Activist and artistic practices can support the investigation of these relationships. Inspired by the Digital Defense Playbook, Ann Cvetkovich’s *The Alphabet of Feeling Bad* (w. Karin Michalski, 2012), and together with artworks by Joana Moll and Tabita Rezaire, I revisit bad feelings and affects around racist glitches (Ruha Benjamin), electronic colonialism or digital lethargy (Tung-Hui Hu), and other dimensions of our non-sovereign data bodies.

“Hope Must be a Minefield:” Hope and the Lachrymose Conception in Modern Jewish Culture

Mazalit Haim, Vanderbilt University

Since the historian Salo Baron proposed his rejection of the “lachrymose concept in Jewish history,” presenting Jewish history, especially the Middle Ages, as more than a “constant vale of tears,” we have acquired other views of Jewish life in the Diaspora that portray Jewish history as “not to be merely a tale of horror.” However, the question remains whether it is possible at all to envision this history without resorting to the vocabulary of trauma and grief. Collective emotions of despair and hope have always resided at the core of the Jewish experience and have played a role not only in centuries of religious life, but also in the modern reclamation of a national political identity. A national ideology, however, always holds its own preconceptions of hope and

mourning—how to mourn, what kind of hope is permissible, for whom hope is meant and to whom it is denied. This talk will engage with manifestations of hope and despair in Modern Israeli culture as culturally mediated phenomena that interrelate with socio-political forces. I will explore the ways in which the circulation of emotions such as despair and hope, and the communal attachments they proffer, have transformed from a timeless, sacred realm into the secular world of the nation-state. My main question is what this transformation of emotions from a sacred context into the secular entails, and what kind of politics is asserted through the mobilization of such emotions. I focus on the ways in which Israeli artists, such as Yael Bartana, and Sigalit Landau, challenge, test, and recast commonly held Jewish notions of hope and despair and how their works mobilize these emotions to offer a new set of ethical and political perspectives premised on emotions.

What Does Poverty Feel Like? A Phenomenology

M. Gail Hamner, Syracuse University

This paper attempts to sketch an incipient phenomenology of poverty. Using Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, I aim to describe and interrogate the corporeal schemas and lived dynamics of economic precarity, especially the urban homeless and serving poor. I offer two interrelated structures of poverty's lived experience and attempt to indicate how they are shaped by pre-existing social norms that vary according to institutional sedimentations of racism and sexism. The first proposed structure of the experience of poverty is openness to a world that is at once seen, felt, and foreclosed, a double bind that I theorize as living a forced distance within felt proximity. The second proposed structure of the experience of poverty, ontologically linked with the first, inverts what Shannon Sullivan terms "the ontological expansiveness of (white)privilege." Where Merleau-Ponty claims that visibility operates on an invisibility that neutrally conditions and bolsters it, I modulate this claim to posit the necessary but unequal intertwining of privilege and poverty as each coils over the other. Sullivan's "ontological expansiveness" of privilege, I argue, operates on what I call the ontological constrictiveness of poverty that highlights and reinforces expansiveness by producing a life of unwanted anonymity.

Spacio Affectio

Rob Helfenbein, Mercer University

This paper is an attempt to put Critical Geography and Affect Theory in conversation—or perhaps more accurately to reflexively "plug in" these discourses into each other (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013). It almost seems obvious that the study of affect is spatial in nature. For example, as Seigworth & Pedwell (2023) offer, "*Affectio*...focuses on the body's (and/or bodies') doing or undoing at the point of contact/encounter/impingement" (p.6). Filled with the spatial—bodies, contacts, encounters, impingements—can all be thought in spatial terms; and after all, bodies exist in spaces. This conversation of theories will be emplaced within an educative frame. Critical spatial theory especially, the exploration of how we conceptualize place and space differently has allowed curriculum studies scholars to think more expansively about education, schools, pedagogy, and

curriculum. More specifically, it has allowed a more fluid understanding of how curriculum is formed, enacted, and shaped over time by framing the spatial as something beyond a “taken-for-granted” fact of our lives. The combination of spatial theory and curriculum studies has produced a myriad of explorations to see how oppression works in everyday spaces and how resistance and resilience refuse their impingements. What then might be added to educational inquiry by a particularly affective attention to space and place? How might sensual pedagogies open up spaces of possibility for a curriculum (dare schooling itself) that feels otherwise?

Genealogies of Queer Performance and the American “Visionary” Tradition

Leon Hilton, Brown University

This paper is drawn from a larger project that is investigating the concept of “sex magic” as an aperture to trace a subterranean intellectual/aesthetic genealogy within the American “visionary” tradition, building upon my ongoing research in the history of performance art, sexuality studies, disability, minoritarian embodiment, and histories of esoteric practices. I am particularly interested in artistic and philosophical examples within this esoteric tradition that work toward the articulation of a sexual ethics that exceeds—often extravagantly—the dynamic that Cedric Robinson identified as a core feature of racial capitalism, namely the inextricability of processes of capital accumulation from racial dispossession. I have begun research for this project using archival materials housed in the Visionary and Occult Literature Collection at Brown University’s John Hay Library, which traces its origins to S. Foster Damon, a little-remembered literary scholar and librarian whose expertise was on the poetry of William Blake but who amassed an important collection of occult books and periodicals in his capacity as librarian and curator of the John Hay Library from 1930 through 1962. This paper, drawn from this larger project, foregrounds questions of queerness, sex radicalism, and their connections to the intersection of the ethics of care and racial capitalism through the close examination of two key examples from my project’s archive: *The Great Free-Love Trial*, a pamphlet published in 1872 by the nineteenth-century African-American spiritualist Paschal Beverly Randolph, and an artistic collaboration created in response to the AIDS pandemic by performance artists Ron Athey and Divinity Fudge in the 1990s. How can we turn toward this archive for examples of how the possibilities of pleasure that do not adhere to normative rubrics of Western rationality and humanism.

“TikTok told me I had ADHD: The Pathologization of Disaffection on Social Media

Deanna Holroyd, The Ohio State University

Social media content detailing the personal embodied experiences of navigating adult Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) has become increasingly prevalent in recent years. Amongst this content, feelings of numbness, emotional paralysis, frequent zoning out, social withdrawal, and disassociation have all been vernacularly named as symptoms of ADHD. Drawing on extensive digital ethnographic research on ADHD short-form social media videos, and utilizing theoretical foundations of affect and disability studies, this paper seeks to understand the emerging connection between these so-called ‘disaffected states’ and ADHD. I find that, firstly, the haptic and

affective (dis-)engagements of scrolling through short-form social media content creates similar feelings of numbness and disaffection that content creators claim are symptomatic of ADHD. Secondly, I argue that by reconceptualizing these various forms of disaffection as symptoms of neurodivergency, content creators are generating a discourse of pathologization that makes it especially easy for people to recognize (and diagnose) their own everyday affective withdrawals as ADHD symptoms. Building on these findings, I ultimately make the case that the move towards documenting and pathologizing these disaffected states, on the very social media platforms that encourage and profit from numb engagement, actually encourages a particular practice of care; while the public act of pathologizing disaffection admittedly renders it an individualized, medical problem (rather than a result of societal-level issues) it nonetheless enables a community of support to emerge, and provides people with the vocabulary and a diagnostic mechanism with which to begin ‘coping with’ and ‘caring for’ their disaffected states.

After W/holeness: Digitality, Textuality, and Extraction

Hannah R. Hopkins, The University of Texas at Austin

Writing is wholly material and materially holey. Flusser reminds us that the gesture of writing “[means] scratching at a surface” and that the literacy’s history is one of “making holes, pressing through a surface” (Flusser, 2014). Put another way, the textuality of mediated textuality is one of gashes, rivets, divets, grooves: craters wrought by the piercing (Johnson, 2020), mining (Taffel, 2023), draining (Hogan, 2015), and ripping (Olivo, 2017) the jagged edges of our material-discursive environs. Such holes are particularly capacious in digital writing: even as the conditions by which we sustain digitality are inherently injurious; screens, devices, and infrastructures are irrevocably porous, beset with vulnerabilities, leaks, and viral incursions. It’s a whole thing, and I’d argue that approaching digital writing as a *hole* thing accounts for the affective dimensions of the “digital damage” (Edwards, 2020) visited on increasingly precarious affective relations. In this presentation, I argue for attending to digital writing’s attendant textural and textual trenches, hollows, scars, *holes* as textural rubrics and methods through which we might come to play with and against a range of affective and sensory interfaces among composition technologies and interspecies ecologies. Engaging Jussi Parikka’s *medianatures*, I use three case studies of how holes come to bear on writing surfaces, depleted lands, and composing bodies to demonstrate how holes comprise “specific and situated material interactions [underpinning] media technological practices” (Parikka, 2018). I suggest that holes might also be read slantwise as a passageways or portals; a means of connection, possibility, or even hope (Gregg, 2006).

On Bewitchment and Night Knowledge: Methodologies of Finding Out

Sandra Huber, Concordia University

In her book *Certain Magical Acts*, poet Alice Notley writes, “men were / witches without knowing what that was. // But I, the page, know what a witch is / and am one.” In this presentation, I am not only interested in who the witch is but in what they do and how they know. What kinds of literacies,

(dis)abilities, and methodologies do witchcraft practices point towards in interdisciplinary art and humanities? To narrow in, I will discuss a method of *bewitchment* informed by scholarly work, embodied practices, and participation in witchcraft communities. In particular, I pose the tall-tales of bewitchment as an alternative to narratives of enchantment that fallaciously pit “modernity” against “non-modern” practices in discussions of witchcrafts. To do so, I look at tricky and trappy objects such as mirrors, knots, and fluids through the ways that witches and practitioners of magic have misread them; not mirrors to look at, but to look through; not knots to tie, but to untie; not fluids to contain, but to spill. Bewitchment incites a different set of affects and tactics than enchantment – mischief over awe, cunning over naivety, finding out over discovery – it exists within a wider literacy of *night knowledge* that blooms in the midnight of reason, beckoning pedagogical and epistemic shifts towards the heretical, mad, and disobedient. I’ll end by showing projects of embodied research that further integrate witch crafts into techniques of writing, knowing, and (un)making. How do we begin to weave witchcraft practices into an alter-literacy in the awkward seam between the esoteric and academic? What does the witch have to teach us, and how do we listen?

Sticking with Ghosts: Entanglement, Agency, and AI

J. Blake Huggins, Northeastern University

This paper wrestles with the promises and threats signaled by the arrival of generative AI (GenAI). It does so by focusing on what Rey Chow calls “scenes of entanglement” in two contemporary writers – Vauhini Vara and Lillian-Yvonne Bertram – who turn to GenAI in response to impasses that leave them stuck. The paper begins with those impasses and thinks alongside theorists like Sara Ahmed whose account of affective stickiness helps make the tensions between promise and threat more legible. The stickiness of these entanglements between human and nonhuman, writer and machine, reveals how agency is mediated in each scene, illustrating “the aliveness of data” discussed by Lisa Blackman. The paper first considers Vara’s “Ghosts,” an essay that uses GenAI’s iterability to write through loss when stuck in/with grief. As the (patch)work of mourning unfolds, Vara gets unstuck by sticking with ghosts – an entanglement both promising and threatening. Contrariwise, when GenAI sticks to hegemonic voices of whiteness, Bertram responds by sticking with ghosts that haunt the archive itself. Their award-winning chapbook *A Black Story May Contain Sensitive Content* begins with a threat and works toward a promise – that data, too, can be haunted. Both texts focalize how ghosts appear in sticky entanglements with GenAI to condition the scene of writing and its intrinsic tensions. Drawing on recent discussions of agency and mediation in affect theory, the paper concludes by emphasizing how sharper attention to such scenes might shape our engagement with haunted archives, even as the cold tentacles of technocapitalism expand their reach.

Temporal Opacity: An Analysis of the Politics of Ambiguity, Repetition, and Diffraction Through *Twin Peaks Return*

Talha Issevenler, Barnard College

David Lynch and Mark Frost's production of *Twin Peaks: The Return* 25 years after the end of the prequel to the series is applauded by Cahiers du Cinema as the best *film* of the 2010s. Complicating the work's status as a film, broadcasted and streamed through weekly release, this continuation traversed temporal frames of filmic and televisual genres often drew from aesthetic possibilities of painting, musical performance and novelistic polyphone a la Bakhtin. This paper unpacks this artistic engagement with temporality found in *Twin Peaks*. Multiplication of opacities as triptych formed by Agent Cooper's different modalities of existence or as in ambiguity of what's a primary timeline as opposed to fictional, dreamed, fantasized, or inarticulable therefore most real/noumenal timeline. Subverting tropes of rational male and dangerous woman, TP diffracts the temporality of Cooper, undoes his investment in rational deduction and disassociates finality from redemption. In the context of the surplus legibility produced by digitalization of everyday life that draws on appropriated threads of familiar social patterns such as Facebook's incorporation of family and friends as constitutive networks, Lynch and Frost's lines of becoming-opaque are offering rich grounds to tap into differentiation of temporal genres. Moreover, recently governance of protest movements that includes strategies of repression and de-amplification took on a more immanent character thanks to real-time tracking and expansion of algorithmic analysis of large-scale data that can tap into not only actual political affects but also their potential trajectories ahead of their becoming a felt-presence. In this juncture, a multidimensional analysis of opacities, including historicity, narrativity, memory and artistic experimentation, operating through temporality is crucial to articulate political stakes involved in the contemporary affective environments emerging out of human/nonhuman assemblages. *Twin Peaks*'s insertion of temporalities of return and repetition are fertile ground to mirror political possibilities.

***PlantMurmurs*: Aesthetic Instances of Presenting Affective Spaces of Opacity**

Masayuki Iwase, Simon Fraser University

My presentation extrapolates from my latest award-winning documentary film entitled *PlantMurmurs* (2024) (48 minute-long) (Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/893556839/f517a65427>) aesthetic instances of presenting affective spaces of opacity. The film features 80-year-old Brigitte Potter-Mael, a German-born Vancouver/BC-based local migrant plant artist and various plants she forages, extracts inks from, and brings to life with her exhibited art works. Throughout such co-evolving and entangling processes, Brigitte, the plants, and art nebulously, enigmatically, and curiously murmur to each other beyond languages, interpretations, representations, and linear chronological temporalities. The film throws light on such unfathomable yet deeply sensed affective murmurs that are immanently manifested through the invigorating human-nonhuman symbiosis that vitally intersects nature, biodiversity, and the public. The affective murmurs entail Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) sense of "haecceity," which is a "non-subjective assemblage of humans, time, space, physical objects, and

everything else” (p. 262). In such an immanent, non-representational intermezzo, nothing stands above to take any privileged, predetermined, and essentialized position. Instead, Brigitte’s body as a female migrant, her chronological temporal age at 80, plants’ categorical names such as *Mahonia aquifolium*, and myself as a Japanese-born Vancouver/BC-based migrant scholar-filmmaker all become relationally entangled ‘fabulative intercessors’ (Deleuze, 1989). We mutually affect and are affected by one another to falsify all expected and predetermined identitarian categories and to enact ‘becoming-other’ (Deleuze, 1989). The presentation attempts to ‘read immanently and intensively’ (Masny & Cole, 2012) key actualized on-screen images of affective murmurs aesthetically signaled in the film as spaces of opacity.

Sonic Opacity, Black Performativity, and the Politics of UK Drill Music

Angus Jackson, The New School

This paper argues that UK drill music exceeds external attempts to ‘fix’ Black subjects, and blackness itself, in place. Parting with much recent scholarship that seeks to defend drill by ‘uncovering’ hidden meanings and intentions in lyrics [Lee, 2022; Fatsis, 2019] or ‘translating’ the disturbing elements of the genre into the politically reasonable and/or cathartic [Thapar, 2023], this paper instead attends closely to the *material* of drill music itself: its sonic texture and performativity. This sonic performativity, I argue, produces what Edouard Glissant described as an ‘opacity’ resistant to forms of surveillance and translation that seek to render blackness ‘visible’ and ‘legible’, and thereby criminalize it. To do so, I examine a range of examples drawn from high-profile drill artists alongside court cases involving lyrics and my own experience of facilitating lyric writing courses with young, incarcerated drill artists in the UK prison system. Building on concepts drawn from theories of more self-consciously radical forms of Black sound – Fred Moten’s ‘ensemble’ in relation to jazz, Saidiya Hartman’s ‘chorus’ of incarcerated African-American women, and Malcolm James’ idea of the ‘sonic intimacy’ produced by alternative Black Atlantic music cultures – the paper concludes by considering the political implications of drill’s more troubling sonic texture and violent performativity. The paper ultimately suggests that *because of*, rather than *despite*, these elements, drill sonically extends and nuances Glissant’s call for the ‘right to opacity’ as being central to imagined forms of collectivity which exceed the ocularcentric liberal logics of ‘recognition’ and ‘inclusion’ for marginalized subjectivities.

When Running’s a Bore

Reuben Jentink, Independent

When running becomes a bore, is it still worth it? Lots of people hate running. But that isn’t what I mean by bored. Nor is it that feeling when you’d rather just not. From my earliest days as a runner on the elementary x-country team, I understood running as a sport for kids no good at teams, for queers who couldn’t kick a ball. Then (and for many years to follow) it was fun. It held a promise and that promise turned me into something of an athlete. But what to do with a practice (Freeman 2023) that meant so much for so long which has now lost its lustre? Favorite routes run stale, soles wear

out, and running partners move away. Still, we might encounter boredom for its “potentiality, for its restlessness, for how it moves subjects into new relations and attachments” (Anderson 2021). Not that it’s moving me out the door and down the street—but boredom might move our bodies in pursuit of other promises. Conceived of as a series of running stories, this paper explores what bodies can do when a promise breaks down.

Loving Art at Zero-Degree Flesh

Randall Johnson, Independent scholar

This essay begins by thinking the art object in relation to Merleau-Ponty’s elemental flesh. Art working and its products are then conceived in relation to Hortense Spillers’ characterization of flesh and vestibularity. Thinking these conceptions of flesh together as aesthesiological and not merely ontological presages a brief reading of Rizvana Bradley’s book, *Anteaesthetics*. Bradley critiques not only ontology and phenomenology but also media theory and white Western feminisms as being largely complicitous, both wittingly and unwittingly, with the long duration of an often-disguised *worlding* – ontology become *one-worlding*, as I characterize it – that literally *takes place* and presumes to be all space only by *displacing* and all but fully eliding the captive black feminine. My discussion focuses specifically on her reading of Merleau-Ponty in relation (or nonrelation) to Spillers. In his later thinking, Merleau-Ponty begins to employ the term *aesthesiology*. I grasp this as a philosophical concept that names the effort to apprehend the very logic of happening of *aesthesis* in its broadest affective understanding as a yet indeterminate opening that reveals itself at the sensing hinge of the sensed sensible. Granting this aspect to Merleau-Ponty’s thinking allows a reconsideration of the critical reading of phenomenology as being so directly implicated in any particular ontology and opens a way to think elemental and vestibular flesh in creative affinity rather than in any sort of necessary critical dehiscence. Loving art at zero-degree flesh heeds Bradley’s ending call for *unworlding*.

Once Upon a Queer Dream

Omar Kasmani, Freie Universität of Berlin

My paper seeks to discuss the stream’s interest in the “open-ended becoming of the world as a process of bodily, sensory, and emotional attunement” through the genre of religious-mystical dreaming. Thinking across an account of my own dreams and those of my interlocutors – fakirs in Pakistan – I wish to think through the tenuous ways in which a religiously-inspired dream has acted as a queer vision in my life, an enduring force of unstraightness if you will. I’m therefore interested in asking how dreamers embroil themselves in knotty processes with more-than-human figures, or the ways in which dream offers that imaginal-magical fold through which a sense of solidarity is cultivated across spatial-temporal divides. Similarly, how might we dreamingly respond to the incompleteness of the present, upend impasses of the here and now – in other words, dream here is not so much a technology for divination as it is a future-facing form. The greater impulse is to

illustrate how dreaming spills yet to be articulated desires out into expanded realms of knowing. No matter where they come from, a divine realm or the secular unconscious, dreams, when taken seriously are magical forces through which our ties to the world are made, unmade and remade.

“Our Skin is the Most Sensitive Interface”: Cultivating Haptic Pedagogies, Enfleshed Literacies, and Affective Materialities within Computational Media Education

Mackayla Kelsey, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Drawing on new materialist frameworks (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013; Ahmed, 2007), this paper examines the entangled alterities of teaching and learning within computational media, affective materialities, and the cultivation of haptic pedagogies and enfleshed literacies. Following the materialities of glitches (Preece, 2023; Pena, 2016) as disruptions and glimmers (MacLure, 2013) as revelations, this paper explores the affects that emerged, diffused, and lingered through touch-based teaching and learning practices in an undergraduate computational media course. These practices are conceptualized as haptic pedagogies and enfleshed literacies. By tracing these materialities, this paper provides insights into how affective encounters and entanglements move in emerging media arts education through embodied experiences. Attendance is given to the co-presence of levity, vulnerability, serendipity, inadequacy, curiosity, futility, whimsy, and other affects - which are simultaneous, fluxual, and interdependent - experienced in the computational media classroom. This exploration ultimately seeks to reject Cartesian and neoliberal structures embedded in computational media and broader educational contexts. The paper concludes with critical reflections on re-turns (Barad, 2014) to touch as a modality and skin as a medium for cultivating attunement to and agency of entangled alterities in thinking, knowing, doing, and being within uncertain, shifting educational realms.

Self Help Technologies As Racializing Mechanism

Mallika Khanna, Indiana University

My paper examines a pervasive strand of rhetorical and affective racialization embedded in contemporary digitized meditation and therapy spaces. I consider how exhortations to “reclaim” the body through invocations of genetic inheritance, ancestry and unbroken lineage discipline BIPOC into racial legibility and coherence. Putting transcriptions from five meditation apps catered specifically to BIPOC in conversation with self-help guides authored by “racialized wellness experts,” I pay attention to how embodiment practices that demand sitting still, breathing deeply and noticing flows within the body parallel an imaginary of an unbroken racial lineage seamlessly carried through genetics and DNA. Diktats of neoliberal smoothness are echoed both in the structure of meditations and therapeutic exercises as well as in the expectation that BIPOC bodies exist in an uninterrupted temporal flow that idealizes wholeness and continuity. Frisson as affect and friction as embodied disruption become configured as pathological experiences to be kept at bay. If stillness turns the body into a vessel for continuity, what is the promise of the body that refuses to sit still? Of fidgeting, distraction and play? Can these modes resist seamless narratives of racialization through a refusal to

“connect?” To answer these questions I analyze my own embodied reactions to meditations and therapeutic exercises as disruptions that break an affective circuit which demands earnestness, self-disclosure and ease. Taking the (racialized) body as a site of resistance seriously, I suggest that resisting the pull of neoliberal smoothness and clean line(ages) can conjure a form of racialized subjecthood that embraces rupture and brokenness rather than foreclosing the possibilities that emerge from these states of being.

Love Enough

Ayoung Kim, Emory University

Dionne Brand has always set the affective/quotidian as the site of potential and change. In doing a reading of Brand's *Love Enough*, I point to her message of love enough (not enough love), to be one way out of the things that will help us endure what we experience as the impasse. Almost as a love letter to Black feminist love politics, what Brand poses in her novel *Love Enough* is pertinent to the quality of affect. Weaving with Audre Lorde's notion of the erotic, Brand works through the difficulty of embodying and living the practice of love even as one may recite so much, and be so knowledgeable on the very topic. I see the novel as Brand doing two things. First, soothing the reader and reminding them that the world is far too interconnected now for anything to go as planned. So perhaps in the same line of the frustration that might come with not having everything follow form, there is the potential of the Hap (Ahmed), the uncontrollable debris of existence. In a very broad generalization, I understand that for academics who are especially likely to have wounds with performance and perfection, this often leads to a confounded connection with praxis. This connects to the second point, of needing to embrace multidirectionality. Brand shows that the need to attune to disorientation and multidirectional modes of attention is one way to tread water of the impasse. Rather than a prescriptive script or pedantic argument, Brand holds space to introspect the qualities of love that we must tarry with.

Alien Affects and the (Potential) Becoming Alien to Oneself

Ayoung Kim, Emory University

Reading Colson Whitehead's *Nickel Boys* I attempt to bridge the gap of affect aliens and the emergence of alien affects within society. As Sara Ahmed has spotlighted the feminist killjoy way of life, and from there on there have been a variety of different analysis of affectation that are in coping with the world from more specific standpoints such as asiatic femininity (Xine Yao), asiatic queerness (Vivian Huang), black femininity (audre lorde, octavia butler), and black queer life (james baldwin), etc. In reading Whitehead however, I urge the question of returning to the initial fall/drop from feeling alongside the mainstream affects or feeling alongside the nation. What is the very nature of alien affects and their relationship to our own sense of sustaining our selves? What does it mean to survive? In bringing *Nickel Boys* in conversation with Berlant's *Cruel Optimism*, I dedicate this space and time to thinking about how the very conditions that keep us alive, may also eviscerate any identifiable aspect of who we are.

Grindr's Prosthetic Pleasures

Patrick Kindig, United States Naval Academy

Few technologies have generated more queer studies scholarship in recent years than Grindr, a geolocative gay hookup app that has been charged by detractors and proponents alike with reshaping queer sexual ethics and fostering a sexualized attachment to smartphones. Though wonderfully attentive to the rhetorical affordances of the app, most of this scholarship has tended to overlook one of Grindr's key functions: to augment the sensorium, to extend users' powers of perception in physical space. In my talk, I theorize this function in detail, suggesting that we think of Grindr not only as a virtual space that facilitates particular forms of social interaction but also as a perceptual prosthesis, a kind of technologically realized gaydar or ESP. Foregrounding the app's perceptually prosthetic nature helps to explain why, as several scholars note but few interrogate, many gay men turn to Grindr not only when they are horny but also when they are simply bored. This happens, I suggest, because one of the app's key pleasures is that it extends and intensifies the body's potential for sensory experience. Bringing together theoretical work from the fields of queer studies and technology studies, I argue that Grindr does not simply influence users' sexual relationships with one another or with technology itself; rather, it translates sexual experience into perceptual experience, turning the sensual pleasures of cruising into the sensory pleasures of virtual contact.

Empathic Anxiety and the Opacities of Political Turmoil:

A Reading of Hisham Matar's *In the Country of Men*

Saumya Lal, Louisiana State University

Hisham Matar's novel *In the Country of Men* explores the political turmoil of 1970s Libya through the perspective of its child protagonist Suleiman whose family faces persecution because of his father's covert dissidence against the dictatorial Qaddafi regime. The multiple opacities that Suleiman confronts—his parents keep secrets from him, his relationships with friends change inexplicably, and baffling events unfold in and beyond his home—reflect the broader atmosphere of uncertainties, concealments, fabrications, and hostilities during political turmoil. In this paper, I read the novel to theorize “empathic anxiety,” which comprises varying combinations of fears, desires, and confusions that arise when normative structures of interpersonal and social understanding are disrupted. Drawing on the works of Carolyn Pedwell, Sara Ahmed, and Suzanne Keen, I suggest that empathic anxiety reveals the challenges of accepting the partial—in the double senses of incomplete and skewed—nature of empathic understanding. Matar's novel demonstrates that empathic anxiety intensifies when one struggles to understand the perspectives of friends and family during political turmoil, since it occasions a disorienting confrontation with otherness within the realm of the intimate as well as with the otherness of the self. In addition to portraying the affective textures of empathic anxiety within its narrative world, the novel evokes readers' empathic anxiety via several narrative

strategies. In doing so, the novel suggests that mitigating the distress of acute empathic anxiety requires ongoing negotiations of empathic fissures, rather than attempts to achieve complete empathic understanding, which is always an impossible and unethical goal.

Slipstream Methods for Critical Inquiry: Demystifying Settler Imaginations of Futurity

Michael Lechuga, The University of New Mexico

This essay explores the ways affect is folded into conceptions of futurity within the U.S. settler *Komplex*-Assemblage. Namely, settler political organizing logics rely on the narration of future trauma—including physical pain and grief—to justify the current conditions of violence against Land and its stewards, propelling settler occupation. This assertion builds on Veracini’s theorizing of settler consciousness, Lacan’s Imaginary-Symbolic-Real, and Deleuze’s explanation of Foucault to describe how the settler subject is bound to a promised future and how seeable and sayable mediated narratives are symbolically structured to materialize settler imaginaries through disaster. Then in the second half of this essay, I pull from Indigenous Studies and Science Fiction Studies to propose a slipstream method for interrupting settler time and thus, demystifying the universalizing narrative of linear progress that harbors settler consciousness. As a critical approach, slipstream allows one to temporalize space and seek out how the spirals of time might slip into each other affecting moments on other levels, like a coiled snake pressing into itself. Then, using this slipstream method, I critique border violence in El Paso, TX, USA by exploring the violences revisited in this place again and again—from Spanish conquest, to U.S. Invasion and General Scott calling for violence, to Border Agents and Zyklon B, the hyper-militarization from the 1940s through the 90s, and ending with El Paso Walmart Shooting—to demonstrate how space/time shapes our material political relationships. I conclude with suggestions for imagining a slipstream method through spacetime and how this notion frames our understanding of both settler time and the possibilities for anti-settler critique.

By-Places: Affective Entanglements with More-Than-Human Resistance

Morgan Legal and Sybil Willoughby, Simon Fraser University

Our paper proposes “by-places” as a mode of impersonal becoming-collective through placemaking. By-places crop up adjacent to public and private spaces, by the wayside, luring in all that is displaced in cycles of civic growth and improvement. Underpasses, alleyways, overgrown parklands, things abandoned but frequented: by-places are hiding in plain sight, variously composed in the interstices of urban life. In Vancouver, the westcoast city from where we write, development, redevelopment, decampment, and the speculative housing market are just some of the life-sapping practices that have taken hold. Trapped between the cruel optimism (Berlant 2011) of urban profiteers and the disaffection of isolation, burnout, and cynicism, we turn to spaces of opacity as an opening-up of joy and the unsure promise of ad hoc infrastructures for thinking, feeling, and affecting. By-places are opaque. Their not-knowable-in-advance compositionality grows from an impersonal alliance: places and their untimely visitors, both of whom refuse (or fail) to be propertied and improved. Our project thus hangs on a wager that by-places offer in miniature the best of what a

temporary autonomous zone brings into the world, occupying a crack at the edge of the ordinary. An alleyway chair for smoking out of view of surveillance cameras. A firepit concealed from the road by a thicket of trees. A plant cracking its way through asphalt. These scenes repeat a welling-up of earthly life. Our paper thus explores how the displacement brought by projects of improvement (both civic and personal) are felt, but also how modes of study (Moten & Harney 2013) entangle and attune us to the opaque and uncertain futurities of by-places: those cracks and edges of metropolis that resist improvement. Through and with affect, we become accomplices in unfinished modes of habitation.

Sonic Tropes of Asians in America

Jennifer Lin LeMesurier, Colgate University

This proposal responds to the stream's specific question of "What are the biocultural registers of threat, and how are they modulated to reproduce sociopolitical orders?" and the provocation of whether or not threats can be "playfully reclaimed." Through considering dominant representations of and assumptions about the Asian American sonic, particularly how stereotypical characterizations rely on the trope of the "ching chong" as part of the ongoing "mis-hearing the Asian 'other,'" I argue that the perpetuation of such sonic tropes as 'playful' parodies still results in rhetorical power to wound, a chuckle that abrades (Sano-Franchini, 2018). Although these moments are brief, temporary enactments of deeper white supremacist assumptions, the fleeting, minor nature of these events nonetheless re-sounds disidentification through inner anvils and hammers. As Amanda Nell Edgar points out, the recurrence of these tropes does more than enact a brutish prejudice. Rather, these models for listening shape "the ways we speak, solidifying or challenging racialized and gendered expectations for vocal sound through our reproduction of speech" (7). In other words, reading backwards from the ching chong, what was the presumed audience already listening for? My presentation will focus on prominent examples of white people choosing to ching-chong in public. I read the casual racism as purposeful in order to better understand the rhetorical strategies that make this choice feel legitimate as well as the underlying assumptions about Asian embodiment, specifically the mouths that might produce such sounds, that are re-rendered as part of our affective normal.

Exploring Adverse Childhood Experiences with Affective Methodology

Tiina Lempinen, University of Oulu

My study aims to broaden the previous individualized and pathological perspectives on adverse childhood experiences by adapting affective methodology. For me, affect means critically examining the idea of rational human subject throughout the research process. I view affect not just as a method, but rather as a methodology with continuous potential to shape the research process. Through my research, I have been tracing experiences and memories which always partially flee from rational thought and linguistic expression. This has led me to do creative collaging together with adults when mapping the entanglements of intergenerational transmissions, adverse childhood

experiences, and school memories. Through collaging, I've been able to give thought to the material, discursive, and affective forces that shape memories. During the research encounters, I've been attuning the bodily responses and affectively intensive moments. Focusing on these has guided me to consider how memories have affective capacities and are always more than just subjective, cognitive, linear, or narrative. I argue that exploring memories with affect theories can broaden our view of the past, moving beyond viewing it as fixed entities. Researching affectively, then, has the capacity to shift our understanding of social issues and create space for more just and responsible institutional practices to emerge.

Fascinating Bodies: Trans Spirituality, Esotericism, and Apotheosis

C. Libby, Penn State University

Popular slogans asserting, “trans people are sacred” and “trans people are divine,” offer two contemporary examples of a much longer historical association between transgender subjects and a privileged connection to the supernatural. When Edward Carpenter made this connection explicit in his text, *Intermediate Types among Primitive Folk*, (1914) he attempted an early defense of queer and trans identity buttressed by occult epistemologies incongruent with Enlightenment epistemes. This link between gender crossing and the sacred appears explicitly in nineteenth century sexological writing at the same time as new trends in esoteric thought, grouped under the category of occultism, began to emerge. This connection helps make sense of why trans sacrality continues to be used by trans antagonists via accusations of Gnosticism and by trans activists arguing for trans rights and dignity. Foregrounding the affective constellation of fascination, this paper places trans sacrality in a broader historical context to illuminate a series of questions concerning the construction of gender variance by anthropologists, sexologists, and esotericists in the nineteenth century, racially inflected anxieties about sex and gender, and connections between heresy and gender deviance. I conclude that the modern discourse around trans sacrality is indebted to a set of scientific and anthropological logics that continue to haunt the contemporary fascination with trans sacrality.

Refusing 1968

Walter Lucken IV, Queens College CUNY

In 1994, Lauren Berlant worried in “‘68 or Something” that “the drive to make legitimate a progressive politics in America will force the academic left into accepting the rationalizing lingua franca of professionalism”. Instead, she exhorted us to “refuse to learn the lessons of history” and resist any capitulation to the indictment of “being ‘68”. In the 2020s, the meaning of 1968 has been absorbed by the rationalizing lingua franca she warned of. Rather than dismissal of 1968, we are faced with a proliferation of officially sanctioned canonizations of the era’s legacy of student protest at United States universities, illustrating that even the memory of 1968 can find itself at impasse, isolated in its historical context and interpellated by institutional rationalities and professional discourses. What feels most cruel of all is to be asked to attend a celebration of 1968 where Palestine solidarity protests of today are elided at best. Indeed, the same institutions which celebrate

their own histories of student protest have wielded state violence against protesting students, producing disorienting feelings of shock, abandonment, and disillusionment. This paper will ask how Berlant's call to "refuse the lessons of history" functions as a generative force, how we can move beyond our stuckness by refusing the memory of 1968 and refusing attachment to a triumphant past. It feels bad to refuse 1968, to boycott its anniversaries. In this case, maybe feeling bad is really the best we can do if we're serious about grappling with the reality of our present circumstances.

Affect, Radical Right and Antigender Movements in Latin America: Our Bias

Cecilia Macón, CONICET-University of Buenos Aires

The problematization of affect when it comes to accounting for the rise of the new radical right is today a constant in the explanations of the phenomenon both in the global north and the global south. Thus, analyses like those by Hochschild, Illouz, Strobl, Morresi, Aruguete and Traverso have introduced this axis in their conceptual discussions and fieldwork. Added to these perspectives are the elaborations of Hemmings and Butler focused on exploring the affective dimension of anti-gender movements embodied in the radical right. Although ideological and historical differences among the affected countries have been pointed out, the analysis of the affective dimension reveals a global vocabulary and alleged universal experiences. This paper is devoted to accounting for the specificity of how the circulation of affect occurs in the Latin American radical right - in particular, in Argentina and Brazil-. Understanding that the affective order is not alien to the ideological or argumentative level, the hypothesis that guides this presentation is that in the Latin American case, the developments that identified in the affective order an authentic, presubjective, extralinguistic, non-pigeonholed and potentially emancipatory instance are being used not to deploy or justify transformative projects but for others of an anti-egalitarian and post-fascist nature. It discusses how the adherents and leaders of these movements justify themselves by appealing to the uncontrollable, non-captured, and authentic nature of affect, turning that gesture into political content *per se*. That is, how they construct their identity. Still, the justification of their interventions, appealing to a strictly affective and visceral order, refers to the impossibility of controlling it and vindicating the liberation of affect that the culture described as "progressive" aims to regulate.

Queering the Promises and Identities in Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

Saran Mahasupap, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

Queer of colors 'stories challenge the concept of the queer liberalism by showing the bias and limit of the queer liberalism that cannot use as a tool for reading the narrations of queer minority. In the lens of queer of colors, race, affect, and body are keenly interwoven in narration in forms of everyday life, fantasy, myth, and eroticism. Hence, queer affect and racial body, closely collaborated, play the crucial roles in questioning the homonormativity. By doing so, queer of colors must embrace the status of the vulnerable and dispossessed subjectivities, ransacked by the normative society. However, in the process of dispossession, affect and body are left untouched from the dispossession. Therefore, queer affect and body significantly create the queer of color's politics.

Besides, they are in movements of memory and time to reveal the empty promises of institutions, as Laurent Berlant's concept of "cruel of optimism". In this paper, I aim to propose the queer affect, both positive affect and negative affects, and body in Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* as a new possibility to read queer of minority's experiences and show how affect and body enable to shape the queer, diasporic Asian-American identities in the US. Additionally, the queer affect and body in this novel is the main and powerful elements in playing and negotiating with these empty promises and, simultaneously, the queer affective forces and body also unconsciously initiating the queer promises as the way to highlight the identities as an absence in the presence.

Opacities of the Classroom: Self-Care and Survival Under the University

Gabriel Matthews, University of Richmond

Transparency, companion to rationality and objectivity, is one of the central premises of the University. The University promises to be a site of transparency, for research and for teaching, and further promises to cultivate transparent subjectivities, what Denise Ferreira de Silva names the transparent "I," a part, maybe, of what Sylvia Wynters names Man and the overrepresentation of the human. It is not enough, however, to simply locate the ways in which the University fails to deliver on this promise, the ways in which the University fails to be a site of enlightenment, and to attempt to make good on that promise. Attempts to make the classroom transparent, a site away from power, can only obfuscate the artifice of the classroom and the subject it produces. It is necessary, rather, to refute the cruel optimism of the transparent, and to pursue modes of writing and teaching otherwise which cultivate opacity, that which transparency denies. The classroom serves here as a generative site at which to imagine the pedagogical cultivation of opacities, the cultivation of spaces in which it is possible to refuse the call to order in the pursuit of otherwise practices of study. In this way, the opacities of the classroom can make possible practices of self-care and resistance which make the site of the University and its Undercommons more livable.

Stickiness: Future Textures in American Empire

Daryl Maude, University of Colorado Boulder

In the everyday of American Empire, the building of more US military bases in the Pacific—including Okinawa, Guam, South Korea, the Philippines, and Japan—brings the threat of racialized and sexualized violence and environmental damage for already marginalized peoples. For those in the shadow of these bases, imagining and creating a future through art, theory, and life becomes ever more urgent. At the same time, between individual desires for a good life and broader desires for political liberation, trying to move forward can feel like being stuck. This paper takes up this *stickiness* as a texture to think about the future with. Stickiness suggests a relationship to the future that is difficult, while also counterintuitively offering affordances. Through tape or glue, a residue or bodily secretion, being sticky makes you slow and keeps you still; this temporal and spatial relation might also allow you time to think and grow. To consider stickiness, I draw from Berlant's "impasse" (2011) and Ngai's "suspended agency" (2005), as well as the queer writings of authors in the shadow

of American military bases in Okinawa and mainland Japan such as Shō Yamagushiku and Murakami Ryū. Paying attention to depictions of both literal and metaphorical stickiness, I use close reading of the works to focus on the textures—details, moments, feelings, patterns—theorizing stickiness as a messy affective possibility in and on which post-imperial futures might begin to be built.

Dating in the End Times: The Rise and Fall of the Dating App

Maria Markiewicz, The New School for Social Research

As dating apps continue to proliferate, a growing disillusionment with their efficacy and impact on personal connections has become apparent. This talk seeks to examine the reasons behind this dissatisfaction, analyzing it in line with the recent phenomena of heteropessimism and sex-negativity. Delving into the complexities of what I call post-sexuality in the digital age, I look into the connection between dating apps (Tinder in particular) and capitalism, dating apps and heteronormativity, and dating apps and digital anxiety, exploring why so many young people, women in particular, are – increasingly – looking for intimacy elsewhere, refusing models of relationality promoted by the apps. In line with this, I explore the notion of ‘peak libido’ to look at sex and sexuality in the digital era – how are our ideas on sex and relationships changing? Exploring straight women’s growing dissatisfaction with online dating, I turn to feminist and queer theory in order to argue that today, the act of ‘hooking up with the app’ has become more libidinally and affectively charged than the actual ‘hook up’ itself. Since the purpose of desire is not its fulfillment but its constant replication, dating apps’ goal, as I assert, is not to help us arrive at a dream relationship or to facilitate a satisfying sexual encounter, but to continuously reproduce the fantasy of finally arriving at one.

Impersonal Desire in the Age of Algorithms and Apocalypse

Emily Martin, Rutgers University

My talk will explore some of the intricacies of libidinal desire within the uncertainty of an age driven by algorithms, ecological disaster, and hyper-capitalist excess. In these seemingly endless end times, the digital realm has become inseparable from the ‘real’ world. As such, the omnipresence of algorithms plays a pivotal role in shaping our desires into forms that starkly contrast with traditional notions of eroticism—resulting in a contemporary moment seemingly devoid of passion, physical frisson, and seduction. Emergent technologies, however, also harbor a latent, inhuman eroticism that functions beyond our conventional understanding of eros. The behavior of these self-scattering entities may reveal a more sustainable non-anthropocentric paradigm of desire centered upon excess. In other words, libido may never have been ‘human’ in the first place. This talk argues that our anthropocentric view of libido is both limiting and flawed. As human desires are exploited for capital with disastrous planetary effects, an impersonal and generous understanding of desire becomes crucial. Exploring alternative modes of desire can reconceptualize libido, extending eroticism beyond our own limiting boundaries.

The Role of Affect in Andrew Tate's Appeal

Richard McDaniel, University of Minnesota

Over the past two years, social media has been taken by storm by a man who is known for his misogynistic statements and his melodramatic character: Andrew Tate. Tate's popularity has been one of the internet's main focal points for the circulation of sensations, moods, and emotions. Through his actions and his oversized appeal to younger generations, Tate has been a source of panic for parents, teachers, and governmental authorities. While many have stressed the need to understand why people invest in Tate's content, analyses often fall short of understanding the various factors which come into play in his viral presence. More specifically, contemporary understandings of Tate's appeal ignore the importance of the affective dimension as being partially responsible for compelling some people to invest in his misogynistic discourse. Building off of Lawrence Grossberg's conception of affect, this paper examines how Tate's popularity transpires at the intersection of several contemporary structures of feeling. Through briefly analyzing the structures of feeling that accompany Tate's rise, this paper finds that Tate's appeal largely relies on affect. The feelings, moods, and sensations that are elicited by both Tate's image/voice and his recognition of male vulnerability heavily contribute to his popularity. The only viable strategy to confront the growing threat of misogyny is to understand and engage with the feelings, moods, and sensations driving people's investments towards discourses such as Tate's. Through understanding that Tate's appeal heavily relies on the affective plane, the path to eventually transforming and redirecting these affects becomes possible.

Growing a 'Lateral Line' Organ for Slow Environmental Humanities

Dylan McGarry (Rhodes University), Vivienne Bozalek (University of Western Cape) and Aaniyah Martin (Rhodes University)

This paper explores the matterphorics (Gandorfer & Ayub, 2021) of the fish's "lateral line" as a framework for developing a figurative organ of perception in humans within the context of Slow environmental humanities research. This sensory system in fish, allowing synchronized swimming in schools, serves as a symbol of "sym-poiesis" (Haraway, 2016) reflecting a post-human ethic that acknowledges the social and ethical lives of animals. Advocating for a broader perspective in science, the authors urge for a shift towards Slow inquiries reminiscent of Goethe's delicate empiricism. Connecting Goethe's methodology with Black feminist perspectives, the authors propose the development of a figurative lateral line as a new organ of understanding, blurring boundaries between humans and the environment. The lateral line becomes a metaphorical tool for reimagining Slow environmental humanities grounded in collaborative attentiveness, care, and accountability, addressing historical misuse of scientific knowledge in South Africa. The presentation contemplates Slow environmental humanities development by considering natural/social stimuli and attuning to the environment, inspired by the lateral line's ability to scan broadly and focus on specific details. An imaginative enquiry into slow methods, that are inspired by the lateral line, offer cooperative ways of

thinking/being/doing slow science. Overall the presentation advocates for a transformative and ethical scientific approach, urging researchers to embrace a Slow environmental humanities paradigm that values collaboration, inclusivity, and responsiveness.

Sculpting Invisible Materials, Through Water: A Hydrofeminist Meaning-Making Practice Through Potentized Sacred Water Ceremonies and Social Sculpture

Dylan McGarry, Rhodes University

Artist Joseph Beuys considered everyone to have the creative capacity to participate in shaping the world around them, making society itself a work of art. Social sculpture extends beyond traditional art objects to include invisible materials, such as actions, conversations, and relationships as artistic materials. Through his concept, Beuys aimed to democratize art, emphasizing the interconnectedness of creativity, politics, and daily life. Over the past 13 years I have been potentizing a water remedy social sculpture, entitled “The Mother Remedy” which has been collecting and potentizing sacred water from diverse locations such as Lourdes, the source of the Ganges, and the Bermuda Triangle, and many sacred sites across the world, has been shared with over 3000 citizens across from children, teachers, government officials, in schools, parliament, UN assemblies, Universities, court rooms, etc. The remedy, drunk collectively in a ritualistic and contemplative way, has warmed up many cold rooms and hard agendas in academia, government, and public space, shifting and affecting whole rooms of people to lean into more esoteric, idiomatic and intuitive forms of reasoning. While at the same time, lending to an affective shift in the power of water and imaginative magic, to sculpt empathy and building social tissue, at various scales and contexts. The paper is a tincture of African hydrofeminism, affect theory, post-qualitative enquiry and African shamanism that influences transgressive social learning process on a global scale. Exploring Social sculpture practice and African water divination, I explore the affective encounters and an-archiving pedagogical innovations that have transcend geographical boundaries, creating a new social tissue and musculature through imaginative ritualist water drinking.

Sonic, Psychic, Visceral Solidarities of the Salish Sea

Briana Meier, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Through psychic, sonic, and visceral acts, two female killer whales, Talequah and Sk’aliCh’elh-tenaut, have sounded affective calls for help that have entangled settler, migrant, and Indigenous humans in ceremonial and political struggles for survival. These killer whales have instigated streams of sometimes irreconcilable solidarity that continue to flow from their home waters of the Salish Sea and their site of captivity in a seaquarium tank in Miami. Theoretical debates at the intersections of critical posthumanist and Indigenous feminisms collide with the plight and promises of these solidarity efforts in the Salish Sea. These flows extend from and through the bodies of these females who have suffered and died in the pits of global trade, patriarchy, and greed where subjectivity is destabilized and reassembled in contingency and precarity. Alongside these alliances, as an ally and

scholar, I am seasick, literally. In 2019, I stepped in to the stream of affective ceremonies that were instigated by these two orcas, but since Sk'aliCh'elh-tenaut's death last summer, illness has swept over me in the form of persistent waves of vertigo washing through my skull. How do I paddle forward with these whales when what my own body can do is constantly in question? This paper seeks the promise in these pits of seasickness and alliances across critical, posthuman-ish (Braidotti, Haraway) and Indigenous (Watts, Betasamosake Simpson) feminist theories. In the throws and flows of all of this is the water that makes these thoughts and struggles, a stream of loss, and a confounding rush of awakening... and promise?

Exploring Affective Networks: Communities of Feeling in Shafak's *The Island of Missing Trees and Beyond*

Ridita Mizan

This paper explores affective networks through an analysis of Elif Shafak's novel, *The Island of Missing Trees*. Centered on the character of the anthropomorphic fig tree, the paper investigates how Shafak's narrative prompts a reconsideration of human relationships with nature and non-human entities. Drawing upon Manuel Castells's "The Network Society Revisited" and J. Scott Turner's analysis of the Techno-Military-Industrial-Academic-Political-Scientific Complex, the paper contextualizes Shafak's narrative within broader socio-political frameworks. Castells's concept of *the network society* along with the culture of *real virtuality*, provides insights into the contemporary cultural landscape shaped by digital technologies. Through this lens, the paper examines how modern technologies mediate human interactions with the natural world, impacting emotional connections and ecological awareness. Turner's analysis of the Complex, on the other hand, illuminates the interplay between the corporate influence of technological, military, industrial, academic, political, and scientific forces in shaping human society, as well as the psyche. By integrating Turner's framework, the paper unpacks the socio-political forces at play in Shafak's representation, highlighting the complex interaction between human networks and ecological consciousness. Drawing from the episode of Ada's scream in the novel, amplified by social media, the paper examines the impasses created by mob mentality and memetic behavior. It analyzes the tension between transactional interactions driven by social media and symbiotic relationships within mycorrhizal networks, shedding light on affective exchanges in interconnected systems. Through the lens of Suzanne Simard's research, the paper emphasizes the symbiotic relationships between nature, highlighting the role of "mother trees" as hubs of communication and support within mycorrhizal networks. By integrating literary analysis with ecological and socio-political perspectives, this paper sheds light on the complex interplay between different elements within affective networks, including human and non-human entities. It invites readers to reflect on their position within these interconnected systems and consider how political philosophies, such as democracy and majority rule can impact mob mentality and the dynamics of affective networks. The paper highlights the importance of fostering awareness about the broader implications of interconnections of networks, emphasizing the need for a more wholistic understanding of hierarchies within interconnected systems considering the various levels of influence and power dynamics at play. Investigating the

natural networks, it elucidates the underground connections sustaining the natural ecosystems. Overall, the paper scrutinizes how technological advancements and institutional structures shape human perceptions of the natural world, often overshadowing the emotional resonance of ecological interconnectedness.

***Zhuangzi* and the Untended Space of Affective Transference**

Weifan (Michelle) Mo & Chufeng (Garry) Meng, New School for Social Research

Conventional readings of the excerpt on "fish happiness" in the *Zhuangzi* share a preoccupation with "knowing" (知): some berate Zhuangzi for making an unjustifiable claim to knowledge, whereas others celebrate his "mystical" capacity for directly empathizing with nature. A more sophisticated account defends Zhuangzi in terms of his unique brand of "skepticism": there are plural standards of knowing beyond Huizi's impossibly strict dogma. However, in this paper, we shall argue that this predominant "epistemic bias" misses something important. Zhuangzi does not claim to "know" at all: rather, it is Huizi who imposes this position upon him, while he merely plays along with the argumentative game. Zhuangzi's original remark--that the fish are "happy" in their freely roaming about in the water--can be seen as an attempt at affective communication. Though, instead of directly proclaiming his own happiness, he poetically conveys its affective charge through the mediation of a third party, the fish who just happen to be swimming about. This is an exemplary case of what Berlant calls the "poetics of indirection," where a "reaching out" to a fantasized other "is actually a turning back, an animating of a receiver on behalf of the desire to make something happen now that realizes something in the speaker." For Zhuangzi, language is primarily a medium for communication, not argumentation, and poetic expression is a fitting way to convey the "intent" (意), the feeling of happiness that swells up in the proximate encounter with nature, to his travel companion. This affective approach to language/communication in the *Zhuangzi* serves at large to counteract the excesses of the traditional philosophical focus on epistemology.

Teaching in a Time of Sorrow: My Pedagogy in the Midst of a Mental Health Crisis

Rebecca Moody, Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Between July 2021 and January 2022, seven students on my campus died, six by suicide. Our typically close community reeled, student, faculty and staff alike. As time stood still, we held our breath when opening email fearing yet another notification; we more proactively attended to students' otherwise mundane absences. Whereas before I never would have, I began freely offering students hugs... and most accepted them. I scrapped lesson plans to simply sit with them, checking in with each one by name, encouraging them to use class time to process on the trauma, grief, pain, paralysis. I shifted learning objectives toward simply surviving in the hopes that, in some seemingly distant future, we'd again thrive. That was the point: we wanted those around us to survive. And those who did still remain close, often reflecting on how it marked us, what we continue to carry into each term, each class, each conversation with each student. In this paper, I'll bring together Sara Ahmed's stickiness in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's texture in *Touching*

Feeling and Stephanie Springgay's tactility in *Feltness*. Using their attention to touch, I'll reflect on how I shifted my pedagogy toward *teaching feelingly*. Without knowing it, without having words for it, I relied on what Springgay calls a feltness that "invokes intimate pedagogies of touching, of transcorporeal, affective force" (3). Then and now, I lean on a *feelingly* proximate relationship with my students. Then I hoped it would help us preserve ourselves and productively move forward; now I hope it'll simply prevent further crisis.

Power in Suffering: Aaron Bushnell and the Uses of Uselessness

Kai Moore, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley CA

On February 25, 2024, Aaron Bushnell wore his uniform as an active-duty member of the US Air Force to the Israeli Embassy in D.C. and lit himself on fire, saying "I will no longer be complicit in genocide." As he burned, he shouted "Free Palestine! Free Palestine!" until his voice gave out and he collapsed on the sidewalk. What makes this action so impactful is, in part, the way it mobilizes irrationality: it carries with the void at the edges of Western rational subjectivity and proclaims a meaning which transcends meaning itself, shouting with burning flesh the commitments that could not be captured in mere words. Bushnell's death demonstrates the intense affective political power of Lee Edelman's "nothing"—understood from a psychoanalytic perspective as the chaotic void which is objected from rationality—particularly when it is wielded strategically in relation to the dominant identities of white cis masculinity and military symbolism. Edelman insists on the uselessness of the nothing, which he sees figured symbolically in socially-excluded qualities like queerness, Blackness, and transness, rejecting attempts to find something useful in it as ultimately missing the point of his argument. While his insistence on negativity underlines the fundamentally affective character of his argument, I conversely argue that the most political and analytical value lies in the interplay of something and nothing, use and uselessness, as a mapping of the constantly-shifting borderlands of power relations lived out on the affective register.

Affective Atmospheres in Romantic Literature and Landscape Painting

Kate Nankervis, University of York

The Romantics were "doing" affect long before dedicated affect theorists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. William Wordsworth's experimental system of poetry presented in *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) and its Preface (added later in 1802) exemplifies this and was an important influence on the development of Romantic concern with the affective experience of the natural world. *Lyrical Ballads* epitomises Romantic exploration, although not consciously, into the promises and impasses of affect through its experimentation with a 'real language of men' to capture 'the incidents of common life' in an interesting way. This affective turn coincided with the reconception of climate as a dynamic global system that occurred during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. These decades demonstrated a growing awareness of the relationship between climate and culture linked to the emergence of meteorology as a science. This paper proposes affect theory as a

compelling research method for understanding this cultural turn and shift of consciousness. Using the neologism “solastalgia”—a term that describes the feeling of distress linked to environmental change of or near one’s home—I identify affective atmosphere in Wordsworth’s poetry and John Constable’s artworks as a dwelling, thus underlining the period’s understanding of climate as an important context for human affective experience. My “solastalgic” reading of atmosphere demonstrates how Romantic reconceptualising of climate points to a growing ecological consciousness that viewed the world as “open”. In this way, I highlight the value of an ongoing dialogue between Romantic studies and the study of affect.

Inconvenient Pedagogies: Getting in the way with *The Handmaid’s Tale*

Alyssa Niccolini (Goethe University Frankfurt) and Bessie P. Dernikos (Florida Atlantic University)

In May 2024 at her high school graduation, Annabell Jenkins, a student from Meridian, Idaho, made national news when she used Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* to stage a “quiet protest” (Edwards, 2024) against the book’s removal from the school library. After smuggling the book within her graduation robe, Jenkins revealed it to the crowd then attempted to hand it off to her superintendent. He refused the offering and Jenkins placed it at his feet. A 12-second TikTok video of the event garnered 25 million views overnight and Jenkins’ act was quickly heralded in the media as a bold protest to rampant book bannings in the US. From protesting cosplaying in red robes at supreme court hearings to Jenkins’ activism, Atwood’s feminist classic has become a symbol of protest. This paper is interested in the use of Atwood’s book as a material object and “follows” the affects (Ahmed, 2004) it produces in various political encounters. We theorize the book’s use here as an “inconvenient object” (Berlant, 2023). Rather than a grand political gesture, a book at the superintendent’s feet is a minor inconvenience to step aside or over. We see such inconvenience as a potent political tool that forces what Berlant calls “readjustment.” As Berlant argues, “heuristics alone don’t defeat institutions like, say, racialized capital, patriarchy, or the fantasy of the law as justice. But they do spark blocks that are inconvenient to a thing’s reproduction” (p. 22). We conclude by thinking through the “inconvenient pedagogies” banned books bring into schools and why these are considered threatening to many school leaders, parents and politicians.

The Dream Trip

Esther O. Ohito, Rutgers

Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native’s brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it (Fanon 1963). Her shape haunts the maps drawn by his hand. She implies a different spatial and temporal geography of tunnels and time warps. She herself is not fully legible to colonialism’s eye and cannot be defined by its sciences nor described through its grammar of power.... She is still only a hint of a figure in this paper (la paperson 2010). [She] imagines a diasporic landscape of longing, a cartography of desire wherein boundaries are marked only to be

transgressed, where the exile returns home only to leave again (hooks 1995). Everything I love is an effect of an already given dispossession and of another dispossession to come. Everything I love survives dispossession, is therefore before dispossession.... Refusal is only possible for the ones who have something, who have a form, to give away—the ones who ain't got no home anymore in this world (Moten 2013). i swear, here, we cannot tell the difference between/dreams and nightmares. in a dream, a petal pushes/out of my eyes. in the morning, it becomes a dead/flamingo (Imossan 2023). I dream a dream that dreams back at me (Morrison 2009). Dreamer? The dream is real, my friends. The failure to make it work is the unreality (Bambara 1992). In this hybrid/experimental essay, I employ experience and/as theory to wonder about and wander into possibilities for (re)constructing the self that open in hypnagogia, the liminal state between the wakefulness characteristic of reality and dreamland. Filtered through my analytical eye—as an Indigenous woman, an African immigrant perpetually out of place in the settler-colonial United States, and a womanist interdisciplinary researcher—hypnagogia becomes an abundant site rife with opportunities for spiritual remembrance, reclamation, and both re- and disconnection as bodies commingle, boundaries collapse, space-time continua collide, and worldviews are contested. I recursively wonder and wander within and alongside asynchronous temporalities, topographies, surroundings, memories, and thoughts. Employing Toni Morrison's notion of wondering and wandering in and beyond material and metaphysical worlds as a creative method, I (re)form and (re)locate my self in relation to the intertwining of bloodline, community, cosmology, history, land, plants, people, kinfolk, dispossession, and more, all the while grappling with the unsettling question of what *how it feels* to reveal, reckon with, and (re)turn to a wildly expansive, ever-evolving, and awakened true self, a whole and purposeful human being, seeking to be at home and in sync with the polyrhythms of everything originating in nature and everyone (re)born and existing in every imagined space-time loop.‘

This Thing That We Do:

In Pursuit of Hope-Full Renewals Through Hydrofeminist Scholarly Praxis

Jayne Osgood, Middlesex University and Vivienne Bozalek, University of Western Cape

In this paper we dwell amongst what was agitated from enacting Neimanis' (2012) hydrofeminism in an 'aqueous-body-writing-reading' experiment that unfolded in discrete but entangled locations (London and Cape Town) to actively disrupt and reformulate ideas about what it is to do scholarly work. We consider how we might dislodge Anthropocentric ways of knowing, being and doing through our swimming-writing-reading. Aligned with emergent hydrofeminist scholarship our unruly writing experiment has - over seven months of alternating seasons on two continents - involved exchanging, diffracting, and curating words that e/merge together. The multiple, interwoven stories told in this paper are a direct challenge to what and how knowledge gets produced, by whom, where, and for what purposes. Working with wit(h)nessing; contact zones; and radical openness, our speculative, enmeshed, multispecies praxis offers glimpses into the possibilities that exist in porous spaces to generate knowledge differently in the spirit of hopeful renewal.

Notes on Affective Literacy

Ana Pais, ICNOVA - FCSH/UNL (Portugal)

The uprising of rightwing populist forces configures an international landscape, particularly in Europe, the US and Latin America. A performative and personal style defines the new populist leaders (Moffitt 2016). Yet, if discourses and strategies share similarities across continents, the way populations perceive and respond to them are necessarily bounded to historically situated experience. Thus, finding ways of coping with inflammatory populisms that endanger democracy through affect theory demands attuning our senses to the cultural and historical situatedness of affect. Concepts like affective atmospheres (Anderson), affective economies (Ahmed), public affect (Berlant), political emotions (Nussbaum) paved the way for a deeper listening and to challenge assumptions of a “monoaffective imaginary” (Berlant). However, to amplify the plurality of imaginaries, one needs to fully understand and interpret the conditions of possibility of creating those imaginaries, that is, the visceral and the historical together as one thing feeds the other. In this paper, I will address some of these issues thinking through the notion of “affective literacy” aiming at describing ways of recognizing, interpreting and fully understanding what one feels and why. I will be suggesting that such concept cannot be generic or abstract but rather, it needs to be anchored in the cultural and historical configuration of affects that informs situated experience, hence accounting for plural affective and geopolitical imaginaries. I will be discussing fear and freedom as dominant public feelings in Portugal in light of both the context of the 50th anniversary of the Carnation Revolution and the sudden rise of the far-right party *Chega*. For that purpose, I will analyze how they are performed in the production *Catarina and the Beauty of Killing Fascists*, by Portuguese director Tiago Rodrigues, as a premonitory diagnosis of the present. Considering affective literacy as an ethical empowerment of our choices, thoughts and actions, I will further emphasize its potential contribution to raising collective awareness in public engagement activities.

“A Body Plus:” Gender, Illness, and the Otherworldly

Victoria Papa, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

This paper explores aesthetic mediations of gendered embodiment in relation to both the material and immaterial forces that shape encounters with illness. Making use of autotheoretical modes of expression, artists and writers like H.D., Leonora Carrington, Johanna Hedva, Sophie Strand, and Carolyn Lazard ground their work in embodied experiences of illness as they consider the body’s relation to the psyche and the struggles and celebrations of gendered embodiment. In their work, wide-ranging esoteric practices (astrology, tarot, spellwork) and engagements with folklore, legend, and mythology (medieval, Celtic, Greek, Egyptian) are means and methods for countering Enlightenment logics and the scientific emphasis on “proof” often found in psychology and medicine. Here, the spectral realm is endowed with credence not by and through the denial of material conditions—those of ableism, capitalism, patriarchy, racism, sexism are explored across these works—but rather within minoritarian acts of recognition: the very structures of domination that contour these artists’ experiences are shown to have very real effects, yet they are positioned as far

from being monolithic forms of power. I contend that the artists at hand show that to have a body is always to have what the contemporary mythopoetic and ecofeminist writer Sophie Strand calls “a body plus;” a body that, as Strand puts it, remains in “ambiguous communion” with forces both of and beyond the world and the human. Furthermore, I consider my own engagement with these ideas through my collaboration with Johanna Hedva for CARE SYLLABUS—a public humanities project that I co-created in 2020.

‘I can’t even feel myself anymore’:

‘Systems’ of Self-Defence in Miranda July’s *The First Bad Man*

Holly Parker, University of Lincoln

Miranda July’s *The First Bad Man* (2016) tackles the difficulty of negotiating emotions under the political pit of postmillennial neoliberalism. In an age of self-help, work-life balance and ‘mindfulness’, we are encouraged to manage our emotions at every turn. With this cultural context in mind, this paper explores how the novel’s protagonist, Cheryl, performs self-defence routines to control how she experiences affects such as pleasure and disgust. In her everyday life, Cheryl employs a regimented ‘system’ of self-management to protect her from the vulnerabilities of love and pain, but this ‘system’ causes her existence to become ‘silky’ and indistinct (22). In contrast to the ‘system’, the self-defence simulations allow Cheryl to experience affects such as pleasure and disgust; affects that become assembled with shame and anticipation. Importantly, the self-defence simulations begin as an extension of Cheryl’s system but Cheryl’s housemate, Clee, plays a vital role in Cheryl’s affective experience by contaminating and disrupting Cheryl’s ‘system’. The need for contamination and disruption alongside regimentation is vital to Cheryl’s negotiation of disgust, pleasure and shame. Work within affect theory and performance studies, such as Adam Kelly’s (2017) work on the ‘anxiety of anticipation’, Sara Ahmed’s (2010) concept of ‘sticky objects’, Lauren Berlant’s *Desire/Love* (2012) and Sedgwick and Frank’s (1995) theories on shame informs my reading of *The First Bad Man*. Overall, this paper argues that July’s novel operates as a critique of self-management in contemporary neoliberal society and promotes a more vulnerable, affectively-rich living experience. By depicting ‘systems’ of self-defence (both emotional and literal), July presents feelings as inherently knotted and contradictory and that they are necessary components of strong relationships.

Toxicus Amor Fati: Politics of Chance in the Age of Contingency

Simone Pellegrino, Goldsmiths, University of London

Chance regulates a significant number of contemporary cultural practices. From the oracular character of entropic LLMs in generative AI (Parisi, 2013; Hui, 2019; Bridle, 2023; Roncaglia, 2023) to the functioning and perception of the lottery, social media platforms (Cotter et al., 2022) and other successful unscripted media texts, fortune and destiny often arise as the products of meaning-making processes of affect. This paper questions the way the “phenomenologically vitalizing movement of rhetorical animation” (Berlant, 2010, 95) brought about with contemporary cultural

practices of chance, contributes to a love for fate that, repurposing the Nietzschean expression, results toxic for the late-modern individual. In an era of contingency, where the subject barely exists in the tense, schizophrenic (Jameson, 1991) surprises of the present moment, how is chance reified as an ideological surrogate of stability? As chance supplants the authentic, total experience of extended temporality with condensed proxies of quasi-theodical connection with the past, and libidinal hope for the poetic creation of the future, the purpose of this research consists in evaluating the extent to which media discourses that precede, punctuate or follow the unpredicted event, might make for epistemological tools functional to the implementation and reinforcement of chaotic, cognitive (Berardi, 2005) and abstract (Toscano, 2008, 2014; Han, 2021) forms of power in late capitalism, as well as the formation of a resilient and progress-confident neoliberal subject, and the reproduction of an ontologically liquid (Bauman, 2000; 2005), opaque and unpredictable society. This study follows a multi-methodological qualitative approach that draws on both phenomenology and critical discourse analysis (CDA) that, despite their foundational distances, are employed in tandem so to assess the hegemonic implications of chance from multiple vantage points. Questions of temporality and space, consciousness and attention, affectivity and desire are explored in this project, as the risks that contingency poses to the state of agency, creativity and resistance in the late-modern individual are closely examined and juxtaposed with the therapeutic, liberating and nomadic (Deleuze, Guattari, 1987) possibilities that chance and its irrational renditions might rather offer.

Honing Our Devils

Gary Lee Pelletier, University of Toronto Mississauga

Organizing for sociopolitical justice can be devastating. This presentation picks up where my colleague Ryan Conrad and I left off in our treatise on the destructive tendencies of intracommunal queer relationality. Our tracking of events in the last 10-15 years within our queer networks have helped us to understand particular impasses in queer organizing as acerbic and self-destructive—what we described as “acid sociality” (see volume 9 #2 of QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking). In such instances battlefields on which allied community members viciously attacked one another commonly manifested. Although generative at times, such debates and dialogues can contain a great deal of vitriol, judgment, complacency, demands for apologies and annihilation, and in some instances, threatening and violent language, all which inhibit the momentum of sociopolitical progressive movements. This presentation begins with an analysis of said destructive paradoxical relationality and moves beyond it to a critical analysis of the queer propensity to “hone our devils”. We continue to witness queer intracommunal impasses – social gridlock – in which monsters of our own making derail organizing efforts and depress hope. We are particularly interested in how and why these devils are so often our allies or fellow community members. With a current political backdrop that normalizes such counterintuitive relationality, we aim to debunk this phantasmic social practice with the aid of queer and feminist theory, affect theory, psychoanalysis, and activist testimonies. We land on the recommendation to ditch our devils for better collaborations throughout our queer spaces, communities, and futures.

Losing Mastery over the Image: Vika Kirchenbauer and the Opacity of Thermal Imaging

Edoardo Pelligra, UCLA

In Vika Kirchenbauer's *Cool for You* (2017), a thermal camera captures the heat signatures of two indistinct figures that touch and rub a substance on each other. The two bodies thus resist being codified in relation to maleness or femaleness, their phenotypic traits being erased. By deploying close-ups, moreover, Kirchenbauer prevents a totalizing vision of the figures as discrete and readable bodies, delivering a genderless and opaque image. How are spectators affected by such bodies, which are presented through their heat traces, foreclosing any form of individuation? Can infrared vision evoke the vital movements and intensities of desire beyond representation and identity politics? An opaque visibility entails giving up mastery over the image, the screen becoming the realm of the formless and indefinite, deprived of predetermined patterns of signification. Martine Beugnet's "aesthetics of blur" (2017)—which defamiliarizes the logic of representation and spectatorial engagement—enables me to show the thermal camera's liberatory potentialities, upon its displacement from a military context and subsequent appropriation by screen media. Within the contemporary mediascape—in which a specific visual regime has settled, one dominated by surveillance technologies, visibility, accuracy, and sedimented taxonomies to approach the complexity of the real—an opaque aesthetics such as thermal vision privileges the unstable and obscure. My presentation demonstrates how infrared vision can destabilize the normative dynamics through which bodies are depicted according to predictable configurations of gender and sexuality. Thus, I will explore the "promise" of visual indeterminacy to elicit new modalities to perceive bodies and desires beyond the impasse of transparency and legibility.

Co-creating Affective Methods in a Sonic Posthuman Collaborative Inquiry

Shannon A. B. Perry,

This presentation explores how collaborative inquiry (Heron, 1992; Bray et al., 2000) proved an ideal method for exploring the role of feeling and affect in learning in one dissertation project. Collaborative inquiry (CI) is a flexible action research approach developed from Heron's (1992) whole person theory and specifically emphasizes aesthetic knowing through artful ways of doing. This expansive method allowed inquirers to access, articulate, and, thus, learn from feelingful experiences in order to revitalize and enhance shared creative practices within a longstanding musical collaboration. The particular sonic inquiry explored here showcases the methodological playfulness of CI and the potential CI has as an affective research and pedagogical method for exploring and understanding the complexity of affective experiencing (Gendlin, 2018). Structuring researcher activities for experimenting with many ways of enacting sonic processes, CI provided an enabling framework for diffracting (Barad, 2007) different experiential angles into a creative collaboration. Multiple experimentation-diffraction spirals enabled researchers to play with the posthuman potentials (Braidotti, 2019) embedded in experimental music practices (Woods, 2021), thereby expanding CI's humanist origins and design. Meanwhile, multiple spirals of analyzing previous spirals of sound experimentation led to the adaptation and co-creation of novel methods for

following affect in qualitative inquiries and presenting research in more affective ways. The presentation concludes by considering how the methods discussed contribute to the larger project of creating affective pedagogies rooted in aesthetic knowing and developing deeper understandings around how an “affective pedagogy of aesthetics is posthuman education” (Hickey-Moody, 2016, p. 258).

The Ecology of Affective Research: Re-Assembling Communitas by Design

Maria Prieto, California Institute of Integral Studies

Affect theory suggests an approach through which researchers can explore human responses towards contemporary planetary challenges. Indeed, affect, as an intensity of formless potential, offers a unique lens through which to examine the felt dimension of human experience as part of the broader ecology of design practice. This paper explores applications of affect in and through research as a methodological approach in architectural design. Grounded in theories of affect from Baruch Spinoza, Gilles Deleuze, Bruno Latour, and feminist studies of the body, affective research exceeds traditional cognitive and representational methods by emphasizing non-cognitive and more-than-cognitive aspects of learning and teaching in architecture. This investigation reveals how embodied inquiries into design practices can yield transformative insights about the affective dimensions that shape the everyday environments we inhabit, as well as the field of architectural humanities. Through a series of examples that integrate affective research into design practice and pedagogy, this paper highlights how affective intensities engender architectural interventions that inform our environments in intercorporeally resonant ways. Lastly, this study delves into how affective resonances eventually bridge architecture with the intercorporeal dimension of communitas. Communitas refers to a new realm of unstructured and spontaneous togetherness. By drawing the aesthetic, the ethical and the political implications of affective responses, this paper aims to demonstrate how affective research enrich our understanding of communitas and our situated response-abilities toward planetary problems.

Everyday Affective Ecologies: Experiments for Attuning to Involutionary Momentum

Ceall Quinn, University of British Columbia

Anthropocene affects polarize: Faith in techno-fixes reiterate salvific fantasies of sovereignty while apocalyptic doomerisms lock us into catastrophic futures. As Myers (2024) suggests, these dispositions are Janus-faced expressions of coloniality, reinscribing the figure of Man as engineer of godlike salvation or cataclysmic destruction. Thus, the force of Anthropocene affect recursively restages scenes of imperial durabilities (Stoler 2016) and circumscribes realms of agency, relationality, and subjectivation. Refusing Anthropos, what other kinds of planetary dispositions might emerge in the gaps and patches of colonial capitalism’s world ecology? This presentation tracks frictions (Tsing 2005) expressed in the planetary’s local expression—the “lively formations” (Barua 2023) of the settler city, Vancouver. Specifically, it accounts for a collective experiment in a site that condenses and composes railside, restoration, and marginal ecologies. Organized in two parts, first

we play in the genre of Bioblitz, employing the algorithmic taxonomy of iNaturalist to inventory ecological community and asking how algorithmic softwares mediate and produce certain kinds of ecological relations and affects. Next, we juxtapose the categorical imperatives of Bioblitz-ing with practices that reach towards an “un-gridable ecology” that “refuses the colonialism, militarism, heteronormativity and economisation of life that grounds conventional ecology” (Myers 2024). How might developing practices for attuning to ‘involutionary momentum’ (Hustak and Myers 2012) sharpen analyses of political ecologies? What roles might sensorial encounters play in composting Anthropocene affects towards more fertile dispositions? This paper suggests that developing practices for tuning into everyday affective ecologies might have the potential to transmute individuated sensoriums and unsettle sedimented Anthropocene affects.

Feeling with Animals: Muslim Women and Precarity in Postsocialist Russia

Tatiana Rabinovich, North Carolina State University

Drawing on fieldwork in Saint Petersburg between 2015 and 2017 and follow-up research, this paper ethnographically explores how marginalized communities, especially low-income devout Muslim women, experience socioeconomic instability, political volatility, and the neoconservative turn in Russia. To survive and even thrive on the margins of Russian society amid conjoined crises, these women care for abandoned animals, namely stray dogs and old horses that had been relegated to slaughterhouses. The women’s affective and haptic care for non-human others illuminates the textures and valences of precarity in the country that continues to grapple with the painful collapse of and transition from state socialism. It foregrounds the culturally specific and historically situated ways of knowing and feeling precarity together with other marginalized and abandoned sentient beings. Moreover, this care offers insight into the ethical projects that coalesce around multispecies survival, attunement to the needs of others, individual and collective piety, and service to the Divine. Conceptually, the paper asks: how might ethnographically informed exploration of feeling states such as precarity advance scholarly knowledge on affect? How might peripheral geographies, namely that of Russia, contribute to our theorizing of affect as culturally and historically particular? What is the politics of paying closer attention to other affective formations and genealogies that congeal around certain spiritual orientations, modes of touching, or ways of “thinking with the heart” (Cusicanqui 2018)? This examination is especially significant amid the ongoing geopolitical tensions, where the Russian government has engaged in a prolonged, full-scale invasion of Ukraine, leading to Russia’s continuous marginalization and ostracization.

The Coloniality of Time: Time, Orientation, and the “Indian Disposition”

Carlos Ramírez-Arenas, Syracuse University

In his famous essay “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America” (2024), Aníbal Quijano claims that with the colonization of America “a new space/time was constituted materially and subjectively: this is what the concept of modernity names.” (270). Even though Quijano indicates that this new form of temporality is related to questions of “perception” and “aesthetics,” he himself and

his interpreters often reduce it to Eurocentric ideas of “universal history” that anchor racialized subjects to “primitive” phases of history. An exception is Alejandro Vallega (2021) who insists that coloniality operates primarily on an “*aesthetic*” level “that refers to affective and memorial dimensions, to senses of time and space, to existential and cosmological orientations beyond subjective reason” (197). Following Vallega, I avoid the emphasis on history and focus on the phenomenological implications of the “coloniality of time,” but expand on a concept that usually goes unnoticed: “orientation.” I take inspiration in Sara Ahmed’s (2006) reflections on the “temporality of orientation” (20)—an interesting modulation of Norbert Elias’s (1992) notion of time as a “means of orientation” (21)—and argue that thinking temporality/orientation phenomenologically reveals the affective, practical, and intercorporeal dimensions of the coloniality of time. Taking this approach, I interpret the Latin American “Indian disposition”—as it appears in nineteenth century documents—or the “Indigenous problem,” to use Quijano’s phrase, as a Eurocentric discursive fabrication, but also as the threat that, paradoxically, drives the “*aesthetic*” constitution of primitivized subjects through certain practices and institutions that (re)orient them in specific temporal directions.

Feeling Diabetic: Technological Promises for Living a Chronic Life

Carrie Rentschler, McGill University

This talk examines how diabetic technologies such as continuous glucose monitors and insulin pumps shape the “promissory notes” of diabetic life, the very ideas of futurity as they are lived and felt in the day-to-day tracking of our present condition always in relation our past and near future. I approach diabetes tech as “inventive” affective mediators that “fold time” (Mol 2008, 54): where past, present and future co-exist in the temporalities of chronically ill lives organized by medical technologies and their daily, intimate rituals and routines (Forlano 2016). By centering diabetes, I place chronic illness and disability at the center of “futures talk,” bringing what constitutes the future down to the small scales of chronic living. I’m interested in what futures exist because of the work disabled and chronically ill people do, and know to do, to build worlds based in structures of care that help us meet our own and other people’s needs (Piepzna-Samarasinha 2022, Dokumaci 2023). By focusing on what diabetics do, how they talk about how what they feel, and the capacities they have for feeling bodily states with technology over time, I argue that “feeling diabetic” helps articulate what chronic time is and can be.

Unsettling as an Affective Materialist Methodology of Engaging with Social Scientific Certainties

Zara Richter, George Washington University

In many areas of academic thought, there are implacable assumptions blocking the way of new ideas. Certainties I would like to call them are ideas that have an assumed-to-be facticity about them. I would suggest that the final incarnation of poststructuralist critique has to take this minimalist form of a negation that does not polemicize but merely reveals certainties to be terrains of motion. Unsettling names the method of phenomenologically revealing the motion within certainty-laden

ideological terrains. Unsettling is the name of an affective materialist methodology that is highly phenomenological because it takes the various material substrates that make up the concrete world and admits that the synthesis which makes those substrates certainties is loose. Affect studies thinkers like Berlant and Ahmed urge us to think of the flow of emotion and feeling as loose and not constrained by the psychoanalytic laws of desire. Unsettling revels in the chaos of affective heat signatures which jam the givenness of terrains of inquiry. Unsettling has both this affective, materialist and decolonial potential as a new method among the descendants of old phenomenology. Affective Unsettling is a cousin of ideas like Idhe's Postphenomenology and Salamon's Critical Phenomenology. But Affective unsettling has the decolonial potential of making resolved debates irrupt again and making colonial maps flail and jostle as if facing earthquakes. Unsettling jostles the coolness, lightness and unspokenness of affective feelings but also epistemological states of matter contained in certainty.

Decolonization in Psychology Through Sensual Pedagogies of Shame: An Affective Exploration in a Psychology of Shame Course

Mike Rifino, The Graduate Center, CUNY

In politically urgent times, numerous scholars, occurring mostly on the margins of psychology, have challenged the colonial foundations of psychology for its entrenched orientation toward Euro-Western theories, methods, and assumptions (Reddy & Amer, 2022; Sraha-Yeboah, 2022). Somewhat less central in these advances, however, has been critical examinations concerning how narrow approaches of pedagogies persists in the affective dimensions of coloniality. If left unchecked, decolonialization efforts in psychology will unwittingly reinforce western "binaries that kill" by separating and masculinizing rationality at the expense of affectivity and embodiment (Patel, 2023). In this paper, I will argue that sensual pedagogies of shame provoke ambivalence, suggesting that it can reproduce systemic oppressions, but can also facilitate disidentifications with the potential for solidarity as "standing together across difference" (Duggan & Garcia Zarranz, 2022) fostering pedagogical relations grounded in love-politics (Nash, 2013) and a politics of affirmation (hooks, 2003). I contextualize my argument in my affective engagements teaching a Psychology of Shame course at City College, (CUNY). Thus, my paper will offer pedagogical reflections on how decolonial pedagogies in psychology can advance its agendas by drawing on sensual pedagogies of shame. Specifically, I explore: a) how embracing shame in the classroom, stemming from injustices, can promote action-oriented transformation (Zembylas, 2019), b) how Black feminist theories of shame offer critiques on white feminism's pedagogical notions of vulnerability (e.g., Brown, 2006), and c) how sites of discomfort toward transformation can be initiated by a political lens on shame. The aim of this work is to continue bridging traditions of decolonizing psychology with ongoing radical advancements from affect studies.

Silence as Vibrant Matter With/In Affective Disciplinary Encounters

Jacqueline Righetti, Deakin University

This paper applies Barad's (2012) use of 'the void' and Bennett's (2010) vibrant matter to re/imagine silence and how it intra-acts with/in school and other researcher disciplinary encounters. Re-considered as indeterminate, haunting and vibrant, silence works to make more room for how we recognise the ethical dimensions of power and challenge oppressive systems that shape our entangled reality of discipline at school and beyond. The paper explores silence as an infinite body of potential and how it intra-acts with/in senses, trauma, shame, historical clergy abuse, fear, Loud Fences, whiteboards and knives and how, in its state of vibrant potentiality, also holds such ensembles together- apart. Affective discipline as concept exposes discipline as more than a cognitive practice and acknowledges the often-silenced ghostly dynamic mattering of what is felt. The author shares 'scenes' extracted from interview transcripts of a current research project (Discipline Affect) in an effort to 'mine the empty space for ghosts,' (Franklin-Phipps, 2024) and as an offering to feel discipline's knottiness, grip and entanglements in diverse and complex ways. By facing the indeterminate, (a)voided and vibrant silences of discipline, educators and policymakers can lean in closer towards disrupting the inequalities of school discipline and take up response/ability for 'actions of compassion as justice-to-come.'(Barad, 2012).

Moistening Academic Scholarship Through Slow Swimming-Thinking-Reading-Writing Practices

Nike Romano (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Vivienne Bozalek, (University of the Western Cape) and Tamara Shefer (University of the Western Cape)

Our swimming-thinking-reading-writing practice emerged from our yearning to reconceptualise higher education within the context of post-apartheid South Africa and the larger project of justice and decolonial scholarship globally. Reluctant to repeat the normative practices of the neoliberal academy, and its concomitant colonial, patriarchal and humanist logics, we turned towards imaginative, creative, embodied, processual, relational and affective practices which materialise different ways of doing academia. In this video presentation we share some narratives of our hydrofeminist oceanic encounters. Encrusted with ocean bacteria, shivering with cold, and awash with images of luminescent underwater spaces, our writings and images speak of the poignant experiences of 'taking a thought to water'. The film documents these visceral and affecting multi-species encounters with underwater creatures and plants, delighting in their exquisite colours, textures and forms and the awe of a methodology of encounter (Probyn, 2016). As our porous skin absorbs the fluid temporalities and hauntings of apartheid and colonial violences that saturate the oceans and beaches, these place-space-time matterings trouble our own situatedness. Our relational encounters also surface the upswelling disasters of present and future, the polluted and violated seas, sharpening our response-ability for the anthropocentric damages to the ocean and planet. Our shared vulnerabilities in the ocean in isolated COVID-times, and our care-full attention to each other while swimming keeps us afloat in the sea and perhaps also in other spaces of precarity.

Aesthetic Wit(h)nessing and Care-Carriance in the Reparation of South African Art History Pedagogies

Nike Romano, Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Saartjie Baartman, the so-called “Hottentot Venus”, is a haunting presence who continues to contour, colour, and texture discourses around decolonising the curriculum in South African higher education (SAHE). This presentation traces an affective entanglement copoetic, co-affective arts-based pedagogical encounters. During these encounters, design students and I write-with and draw-with the ghost of Saartjie Baartman as a gesture of care and repair of a haunted art history curriculum in ways that “undo” the canon without recentering it as normative. Thinking-with feminist theorist Bracha Ettinger’s notions of response-ability, aesthetic wit(h)nessing and care-carriance and political theorist Joan Tronto’s fifth phase of care that emphasises “caring with”, solidarity and trust, the presentation explores how care practices in the ethical, aesthetic realms might re-dress the dehumanising effects of Eurocentric hegemonies. Embracing feminist care practices, the paper shows how students’ artworks of Baartman are both embodiments of care and careful embodiments of repair across time and space. These entanglements with South Africa’s traumatic past materialise unexpected embodied sense-making experiences that potentially surface discomforting emotions which require care-full pedagogical practice both on the part of educators and students alike (Boler & Zembylas, 2003). The paper argues that by placing matrixial care-carriance at the centre of pedagogical practice, students and educators can build relationships of solidarity and trust across difference and inequality.

Openness, Affect, and Futurity: 3 Dimensions of a Postfoundational Politics of Inquiry

Jerry Rosiek, University of Oregon, MaryJohn Adkins Cartee, Grand Valley State University
Kevin Donley, Georgetown University, and Alex Pratt, Pennsylvania State University, Altoona

Once social inquiry unmoors from the regulative ideal of producing uniquely accurate representations of a “real world,” what warrant is left for research performances? The authors conducted a review of over 300 articles and books that apply posthumanist, new materialist, Afrofuturist, and Indigenous studies theories to more speculative practices of social inquiry (soon to be published in the 2024 annual *Review of Research in Education*). In most of the articles we reviewed, the alternative warrant for social analysis was located in the “emergent futurities” they enabled (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010). This paper identifies three conceptions of futurity that were most often used to orient this postfoundationalist research activity. The most common involved a general celebration of liberation from oppressive onto-epistemic constraints and a promise of relational openness and possibility for innovation. A second involved research that sensitizes audiences to specific affects—“lures” (Mazzei & Jackson, 2022), “attunements” (Dernikos, 2020), “data that glows” (MacClure, 2013)—that provided leads to new relational possibilities. A third relation to futurities involved commitments to specific reconstructions of ethical/political possibilities (Fikile Nxumalo, 2021; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). We compare and contrast these different understandings of research futurities. The paper concludes that postfoundationalist inquiry is best served when all

three enactments of futurity come together in studies of the social. This is neither simple nor easy. However, it enables inquiry to avoid the hubris of imperial foundationalist knowledge projects, while contributing substantively to amelioration of the most pressing ethical and political matters of our time.

When is Post-Foundationalism White Escapism?

Engaging Tiffany Lethabo King's Refusal of Subjectless Social Analysis

Jerry Rosiek, University of Oregon

There are widely cited concerns that privileging the ideal of non-representational or subjectless social analysis is not a triumph of critique, but instead serves to depoliticize social analysis by suppressing testimony about experiences of identity-based subjection and reinscribing an ahistorical white innocence in the guise of moving beyond individual subjecthood (Jackson, 2020; Mikulan & Rudder, 2019; Nxumalo & Tuck, 2023; Rosiek, Snyder, & Pratt, 2020; Wolgemuth, et al., 2022; Tuck, 2010; Watts, 2013; Todd, 2016; Zymbelas, 2018). Alexander Weheliye (2014), for example, warned, "...Within the context of the Anglo-American academy more often than not an insistence on transcending limited notions of the subject or identity leads to the neglect of race as a critical category..." (p. 48). This paper takes up Tiffany Lethabo King (2017) assertion that active hostility is often present in the way students and scholars of color are sometimes pressured to "disavow all claims to identity, subjecthood, and the desire for humanity" (p. 163) by those working with continental critical theories. It entertains the question: under what conditions are we justified in concluding that post-foundational emphasis on openness and anti-essentialism is affectively grounded, not in a desire of liberation, but in a desire to avoid the emotional and political work of solidarity with anti-racist and anti-colonialist struggles? Taking this question seriously, it is argued, creates an opportunity to deepen the political ontology of postfoundationalist affect theories—a transformation that will likely entail both emotional and social costs.

Problematising the Sublime: Affective Archives within Landscape Design

Shaun Rosier, Virginia Tech

This paper brings forth the problem of bodily, affective, intelligence and its role within landscape architectural design processes. Specifically, how might landscape designers draw on their internal memory-archives of body-environment affects to help shape design decisions? Despite sustained interest in phenomenology and other theories of environmental aesthetics, the operations of spatial affective experience have remained ambiguous within design discourse. This has led to the design of spatial experience being viewed with suspicion due to claims of 'mere subjectivity' or a lack of rigor compared to recent trends towards universality and positivism. To counter this, this paper argues that the concreteness of affect can be made present through Deleuze and Guattari's aesthetics of affect and assemblages. More specifically, experiences of the [landscape]sublime can be understood as an ecological encounter with intensity that disrupts our being's ability to reference it against one's bodily archive of affects. This disruption shocks us into determining a creative solution

to the spatial and sensory problem at hand, which at first may manifest as a sense of terror. Still, as the processes of experimentation unfold, we find ourselves reveling in the joy of the creation of a new self through the processes of individuation and actualization. Through this aesthetics of affect, this paper argues that although the sublime is an 'experiential limit case', it reveals how other forms of landscape experience can be deciphered and made concrete through and for design.

You Will See Burning Trees

Kaitlin Rothberger

In this paper, I think with the planetary biopolitics of nature in service of imperialism, and bare devastating, imperfect, and unsettled witness to the "crises of forced dispossession, deprivation, and displacement" (Walia, p. 4). *Everywhere, Palestine is burning*. Thinking witnessing as affective (Richardson, 2016) and as modes of attunement (Robinson, 2020; Springgay, 2022), my paper engages with Jessica J. Lee's evocation of a border as a constructed threat. In *Dispersals*, Lee (2024) wonders, "What happens when a plant—or a people—moves from one place to another? (p. vii). Throughout her text, Lee explores the "diaspora of flora" and the messiness of belonging, paying careful, almost prophetic attention to the story of a tree planted on a precarious border. *The border* – a melting pot of constructed threats. And yes, *the tree*, but also: the hands the planted the tree, the farmers, settlers, blockades, segregated zones, the plants, *a people*, burning, being moved, bordered, from one place to another: an olive tree / a genocide. "Our pictures of the world are only ever fragmentary," Lee (2024) writes, and the fragment that continues to tug at me was found by farmers in the hills south of Hebron: "*You have reached the border! Entry is forbidden and dangerous, and anyone who approaches will see burning trees.*" My presentation considers the affective of colonial forestation, regimes of disposability, and the catastrophic immobility of a people; the tree / the precarious border—and all that has been sown in between.

The Wandering Affect of the Bo Diddley Beat

Dennis Rothermel, California State University Chico

French soldiers, POWs, watch from above as young German recruits march to their drill instructor's commands, as a fife and drum unit delivers the steady mechanical beat for the marching soldiers. It *gets* to the French soldiers, who recall the experience from their own training, though they now think of themselves as having outgrown such reactions. "You must admit it's stirring," one says. "I can't stand fifes," says another. "Whatever you say, it gets you." [...] "It isn't the music that gets you, It's the marching feet." As any observer of marching drum and bugle corps, marching band, or military band may confirm, young children fall into line behind the marching musicians, high-stepping to the beat and giggling at such easily had delight. It is how music can engage us into becoming-child, even against our resistance, such as the scene in Jean Renoir's *Grand Illusion* demonstrates. The affect of the marching beat invades one's feelings deftly overcoming indifference and even against conscious suppression. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari urge how "[t]he motif of the [musical] refrain may be anxiety, fear, joy, love, work, walking, territory ... but the refrain itself is the content of music."

(Deleuze and Guattari, 300.) Thus, there can be music that imparts affects other than what inheres to “the collective fascination exerted by music, and even the potentiality of the ‘fascist’ danger [...] music (drums, trumpets) draws people and armies into a race that can go all the way to the abyss.” (302). As easy as it is, for Deleuze and Guattari as well, to speak of a *singular* affect of an entire piece of music, or of a composer’s entire opus, or of a complete genre or tradition or era of music, they also—by way of Pierre Boulez’ theoretical writings – introduce the concept of the “sound block” so as to provide a more discrete focus upon “a mobile and mutant” refrain from a theoretical standpoint somewhat less than stratospherically removed. (297n). There is a particular musical sound block, known as the Bo Diddley Beat, that has a history in popular music – particularly that of Bo Diddley, Buddy Holly and the Crickets, and the Grateful Dead. It has a prehistory in the music of West Africa and Cuba. (See Fernandez, 13-16; White, 58-62) So, it is a sound block that has an enduring historical legacy. There is a particular rhythmic *content* to the Beat, which hits us when we hear it and are affected by it. The flow of the rhythm pulls and pushes us, rocks us forward and back, over and over gently and continuously. The affect is visceral, somatic, preconscious, and contagious. (See Robinson and Nickelson, 274) It is reflected in how people smile and how they dance, which is evident in concert film footage. From the sustained affect arises the emotion, *equanimity*, as the reflective cognizance of the beat and its affect. (See Massumi, xxv) As the Beat is recreated in songs that adapt it, that continuous affect and emotion follow with it. And we can see this in how people dance to it, how they gently rock, chant, and clap – and in how they smile.

Traversing Opacity: Late Soviet Comedy and the *Affective Capturer*

Pavel Savgira, UCLA

Societal collapse presents a peculiar space, located at the edge of the past, present, and future. It is an opaque one, given that no ideology, state structure, or even legal framework functions stably. It also defies rationality because there exists no easily accessible framework on which outcomes can be reliably compared. In a world with no promise of tomorrow, what does “good” or “successful” entail? Furthermore, how does one come to navigate this space at all? In this presentation, I search for ways of traversing opacities of transition in cinematic representations of the late Soviet Union, a locale caught between previously unshakable systems: communism and capitalism. Using Eldar Ryazanov’s *The Promised Heaven* (1991)—a tragic comedy that depicts once ordinary workers turned vagrants trying to survive on an industrial garbage dump about to be swept for an American hotel—I show how comedic laughter becomes a timely critique of any “certainty”, an exposé of *cruel optimism*s. Not only does it reveal problematic attachments, but the film’s vagrants also present what I call *affective capturers*—marginalized figures operating primarily on the level of feelings who come to function as recorders of history and surfaces on which history records itself. They survive by begging, or, in other words, by maintaining a timely visceral relevance, a process that demands constant adjustment of presence. I argue that they become seismologists of feeling, capturing emergent change on an opaque landscape, and telling histories of transitions from otherwise foreclosed angles.

Rhythms, Refrains, and the Less of Care: Choreographies of PrEP in Berlin

Max Schnepf, Freie Universität Berlin

Rhythms, carefully planned and enforced, can provide the tune to wander off, to venture out. Nested within the rhythms of care, I argue, *Sorglosigkeit* (carelessness/carefreeness) blooms – a way to care less about given orders, to improvise spontaneously. This paper speaks to the stream’s interest in promises and futures engendered in bodily movements, by engaging with adjacent rhythms and temporalities of care and carelessness. It does so, on the basis of ethnographic research conducted in Berlin on Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), a pharmaceutical regime to prevent an HIV infection. ‘In writing futures of bodies in movement,’ PrEP and its medical apparatus perform what Antwi (2024) calls a ‘choreography of care.’ They set bodies and lives into well-rehearsed movements. Biomedical protocols prescribe tests in specific intervals, swabs and syringes take measure of the promiscuous body, and alarm clocks secure a daily intake. Understood along the lines of Deleuze and Guattari’s *Refrain* (1988), the rhythms of PrEP territorialize the sexual self. They ‘home’ sex through domestic rituals and routines of taking the drug every day at a given time. Simultaneously, rhythms hold the promise of improvising; a venturing from home ‘on the threat of a tune’ (Deleuze and Guattari). PrEP allows its users to explore sexuality as rehearsed and choreographed and as spontaneous and immediate. In moments of improvisation, care and its domestic rhythms of responsibility are abandoned to give room to the promise of carelessness; to the pleasure of not caring and not giving a fuck.

Chickasaw-Crawfish Kin and River Resistance

Hann Scurlock, University of British Columbia

Chickasaws have been with water and on water since time immemorial, this is a part of our ancestral memory and tradition. This connection resonates through the rhythmic linguistic sounds of “ch ch ch,” as if water is breaking on the riverbank, and it echoes our oral traditions, such as that of crawfish or Ofi’ Tohbi. According to Chickasaw origin stories, crawfish emerged from the riverbed to shape Chickasaws from the land below. In these narratives, crawfish embodies both terrestrial and aquatic qualities, defying categorization—an anomaly, as Daniel Heath Justice observes, and thus queer in its refusal to conform to singular definitions. Aba’binihli embraces such anomalies, entrusting the creation of our world to beings like crawfish that traverse between realms. This perspective aligns with Stacy Alaimo’s concept of transcorporeality, where humans are not merely intertwined with each other but enmeshed with non-human creatures and landscapes. Rather than viewing this through a strictly posthuman lens, my focus centers on Indigenous perspectives of multi-species coexistence. Drawing from Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio’s insights on Kanaka Maoli living, I explore the concept of “upena of intimacies,” likened to a fishing net that binds individuals across genealogical and spatial distances. Every knot in this net signifies connection, highlighting the inseparability of beings—human and non-human alike. No matter how far two Kanaka Maoli may seem (geneologically or otherwise), they are connected through upena— if any knot of upena is severed, weakened, or compromised— the entire upena’ threatens to unravel. This sense of togetherness

emphasizes that no body, human or not, can exist independently of others. In this presentation, I am interested in the relationship between Chickasaws and rivers, emphasizing how this transcorporeality is queer in its refusal of conventional white colonial understandings of land.

Divesting from Denial:

Autotheoretical Reflections on Affective Withdrawal and Social Reproduction

Margaret Schwartz, Fordham University

The bourgeois interior has long been figured as an insular space, a “haven in a heartless world” (Brown 2008, Lasch 1995). Yet the world intrudes ever more violently into the home, requiring increasingly baroque strategies of denial to maintain itself as separate. This autotheoretical paper considers the possibilities of withdrawing from the exhausting labor of maintaining this denial. I reflect upon the nearly unbearable fact that every morsel of food I feed my children, every object I’ve ever put into their hands and every scrap of clothing on their backs is freighted with the violence of racial capital. The unjust exploitation of distant human others, of nonhuman animals, and of the environment is woven into the fabric of their everyday life– and yet invisibilized by the normative pressure to maintain the ideological separation of the home from the nastier realities of the economic and political spheres (Brown 1995). If the unfreedom of late capital is precisely the inability to divest from it (Blanchette 2020), then the only option is a refusal to pretend otherwise. Drawing on insights from disability studies (Kafer 2013, Piepzna-Samarasinha 2022), I consider a new framework for justice, one that centers mourning for our enforced and everyday complicity in global capitalism. Doing the work of mourning within the home resists its insularity by a means other than the mobilization of collective empathy. The home is thus a space opened on to the brokenness of the world, which seems to me a much better starting point from which to change it.

A Technics of the Unobtrusive: Thinking Media Through Textures of Holding and Containment

Margaret Schwartz, Fordham University

A technics of the unobtrusive theorizes mediation not as vision/knowledge/understanding but as touch/texture/affect. Rather than the singular, self-determining liberal subject engaged in knowledge production, its avatar is the subjectively diffuse gestator, engaged in the labor of generative containment. In this framework, mediation ceases to be a neutral transmitter of content and becomes an integral part of encountering the world. Surfaces yield their material textures, offer themselves as containers or as needing containment, as holders or as needing to be held. Crucially, a technics of the unobtrusive offers a way to theorize the ways that violence and touch are intertwined. Touch is transitive– it leaves traces. When I hand an iPad to a child, conventional media theory is concerned with its “content” and “effects.” Yet the iPad also bears the traces of the violence of rare-earth mineral mining in the Congo. What space of promise unfurls if, when I hand the iPad to my child, I consider its affective freight? This transitive relationship is disavowed in the

bourgeois home, which is impossibly tasked with reproducing itself as a haven from the impasses and threats of late capital. A technics of the unobtrusive thus allows a theoretical grappling with the vectors of labor, affect, and interdependence that permeate the home, whether we recognize them or not.

Becoming Magician: Tarot, Affect, and Alchemy in Virtual Space

Andie Shabbar, University of Western Ontario

How does tarot intervene in overcoded social media spaces by inciting new ways of thinking-feeling-doing? What is the role of magick and alchemy in collective healing and individual transformation? Exploring these two questions, this paper discusses the phenomenon of tarot readings on YouTube and their capacity to effectuate unpredictable becomings. I posit that collective virtual divination practices have the capacity to deterritorialize online interactions from social media's rigid structures, which attempt to capture users as passive consumers. During a tarot reading, viewers become active participants in the co-creation of meaning and content as they encounter an assemblage of human and non-human intensities arising from archetypes, symbols, feelings, and intuitive sensations. Far from passive consumption, tarot readings are affective events. These events have the potential to create enlivened spaces that foster communal moments of connectivity and conceptual rupture. Drawing on my three years of experience as a YouTube Tarot reader, I will explore how these dynamic spaces allow new images of thought to emerge, challenging the conventional boundaries of community set by social media platforms. Working with Deleuze's delineation of the actual/virtual, I also consider how YouTube tarot readings can be viewed as an actualization of the Magician archetype. This archetype, as an esoteric symbol of creativity, indexes and encourages non-discursive levels of understanding where viewers resonate with their own potential for becoming. Both the reader and viewer actively engage with the affective intensities of tarot to transmute and heal, becoming Magician in the process by remaining radically open to unpredictable and indeterminate futures.

Stepping onto Solaris: Fluidity and the Possibility of Contact in Alien Encounters

Sarah Sharp, The New School for Social Research

To what degree is an alien encounter possible? This paper attempts to address how Stanislaw Lem's 1961 science fiction novel, *Solaris*, obliges us to rethink what we mean by 'contact' across various registers and how this in turn reshapes about our understanding of human identity, affectivity, and alien encounters altogether. Given the alien on Solaris' status as a sea, fluidity and liquidity are used throughout this paper as key conceptual frames for unpacking what Lem's novel might suggest about identity, encounter, and the possibility of contact. To draw out the sense in which these concepts are both problematized and preserved through the frame of 'fluidity' I draw on a fragment of Heraclitus, an ancient philosopher who contemplated the nature of the cosmos through images,

most prominently that of a river. Turning to Heraclitus' writing on fluidity presents us with two distinct notions of difference, *heteros* and *alios*, that may be used to better understand what is at work and at stake in any self, other, or alien encounter, particularly in the context of encountering the sea on *Solaris*.

Grief in Anne Carson's *Nox*

Sarah Sharp, The New School for Social Research

This paper aims to examine grief in Anne Carson's *Nox*. While Carson's earlier work tends to centre eros, her later texts, as exemplified by *Nox*, shift their focus towards grief. As a writer, translator, and poet, Carson considers and reimagines boundaries. Throughout *Nox* Carson demonstrates how boundaries are constituted differently in grief than in love. Carson's use of ancient sources in *Nox*--a central motif in nearly all her writings--particularly her unique rendering of Catullus' poem 101, demonstrates this relation between grief and boundaries and, crucially, illustrates their connection to (as well as constitution and desolation of) history, translation, and subjecthood. Drawing on Peter Sack's conception of elegy, this paper ultimately concludes with a discussion of grief, artistry, and aesthetics by examining the relation, in Carson's work, of loss and artistic creation. The primary methodology this paper uses is close-reading Carson's texts alongside an extended interview she did with *Brick* magazine in 2014.

The Queer Occult as Biopolitical Affect Regime

Sydney Sheedy, Concordia University

In my proposed paper I theorize contemporary occult and magical practice, such as astrology, witchcraft, and tarot, as processes of affective expansion. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork among queer occultists in Montreal in 2022, I show how interlocutors apprehend magic as a means to build capacity to affect/be affected by the world, becoming sensitive in order to attune to lifeways, knowledges and worlds that machineries of empire have rendered invisible. How does the occult represent an attempt to *build capacity for receptivity* among participants, and how do they link this capacity to betraying white supremacy and enacting decolonization? How can scholars take magic seriously as a method of being transformed by what "haunts" the social? If contemporary occult movements represent a turning towards putatively repressed modalities as alternatives to what we otherwise inherit in the afterlives of empire, I show how interlocutors herald queerness as a relative sensitivity that puts them in kinship with it. At the same time, I am interested in how a body's capacity to be "receptive" to impressions has historically been racialized, locating the contemporary phenomenon within theories of sentimental biopower. I argue that contemporary magic reifies sensitivity as a marker of civilizational health at the same time that queerness, rather than whiteness, is imagined as its privileged conduit. I argue that magic is taken up as a means to workshop forms of solidarity that appear particularly urgent for white and/or settler practitioners, who look to building receptivity as key to undermining the authority of whiteness.

An Esoteric History of Vibration

Rebekah Sheldon, Indiana University

“Every milieu is vibratory”

– Deleuze and Guattari

In *Immediacy, or the Style of Too Late Capitalism*, Anna Kornbluh argues against the pervasive valorization of intense experience that she diagnoses in contemporary fiction, criticism, and art. Naming the whole “immediatism,” Kornbluh evocatively describes her object as the appetite for “free, pure vibe” and, a paragraph later, characterizes her method as a “list-y, circuitous, roving vibeology” (6). This conceptual elasticity is generally true of vibration’s uses in current critical discourse and in popular culture. Familiar from the many “good vibes only” branded products, vibration also appears prominently in affect theory and new materialist philosophies, where it is likewise treated as a catachresis. Without clear references, vibration is free to signify promiscuously or to not signify at all. As a term, vibration is, well, all vibes. In fact, though, vibration is brimming with specific, highly technical definitions from physics and philosophy. In telling some of those histories, this presentation will show how vibration occupies a fascinatingly liminal position. Oscillating between mystery and mechanism, vibration occupies the seam between the spiritual and the material, the mystical and the magical, and so, I will argue, captures a deep-seated ambivalence about explanation within theories of affect.

On the Inconvenience of Myself

Chad Shomura

Lauren Berlant theorizes inconvenience as a vital affective relation that cannot be avoided, only adjusted to and never entirely well. While Berlant considers the inconvenience of other people, this paper explores the inconvenience of myself. Not the inconvenience posed by the self to others, but the inconvenience of the self to itself in a range of phenomena, such as impulsive actions, unshakable habits, and unwieldy feelings. Dominant traditions of political theory have taken the proper self to be free of such inner inconvenience. That self is typically, if tacitly, reduced to my-self: a possessive relation that makes the self unified, discrete, and whole, at least in the public domain. That self is not affectively messy. While useful for enacting a political vision, this model of self can also constrain the political while being illusory, damaging, and saddled with racial, colonial, ableist, and gendered baggage. Taking cues from affect theory, this paper strays away from those traditions in political thought to ask: How does the self unavoidably inconvenience itself/its selves? Might inconvenience within the self fruitfully expand and alter the political? What forms of politics emerge out of inconvenience? To engage these questions, this paper thinks with political theorists of affect, such as Berlant, William Connolly, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Jane Bennett. It seeks to draw out the political potential that may come with the inconvenience of the self.

Sapphic Affects: Feeling Soft, Going Slow

Helis Sikk, Brown University

Since its most recent renaissance in the mid-2020s, the figure of the Sapphic – the dusty and sentimental older sister of the lesbian—has emerged as an elusive disruptor, not tied to specific bodies, object choice, or (bio)politics (Sullivan 2022). An ambiguous aesthetic category, Sapphic connects a video of Florence Pugh gazing at Janelle Monáe performing at the 2023 Met Gala afterparty, a Spotify playlist tenderly entitled “Yearning” (featuring Billie Eilish, Boygenius, St. Vincent), and Cate Blanchett (in any context, but especially) in the movie *Carol*. This paper is intentionally soft and slow in its exploration of the affects that are evoked by Sapphic methodology (a way of reading, watching, listening), which in turn prompts the following questions: How might we understand the relationship between queer temporality (Freeman 2010) in Sapphic expression (slow-burn, yearning)? How does Sapphic disinterest in climax or any determined point of arrival differ from the negative affects that are associated with suspension (Ngai 2007)? Where exactly can we find the hidden negative “side affects” (Malatino 2022) in the seemingly endlessly soft Sapphic affective economies (Ahmed 2004)?

Punk Rock Changed my Life and so did *Ordinary Affects*: Connecting Affect Theory to the work of Art Education in Public Schools

Dan Smith, University of Georgia

In the song “History Lesson—Part II,” D. Boon of the Minutemen sang that “Punk rock changed our lives.” Punk rock definitely changed my life as its lowbrow subculture inspired me to study art and pursue careers as artist and art educator. *Ordinary Affects* (2007), by Kathleen Stewart changed my life as it propelled me down a life-changing path into affect theory. The book’s format and style wonderfully hid scholarly tendencies and spoke to how ordinary, mundane happenings influence our so-called “normal” lives. This study morphed into my dissertation as I explored different ways of thinking, looking, and being. This research challenged norms of scholarly research, presentation of “data,” and what affect might do in art education. As my art connected to this research, I explored school classrooms and other art spaces. During my graduate studies, I changed jobs from elementary art teacher to district level arts coordinator, which changed my perspective as did my encounter with affect theory. Using art-based ways of inquiry, I documented “visits” through photos, art, thematic writing, and more. One memorable account was an in-school concert, where a cafeteria’s charged atmosphere allowed the school to breathe with an energy that was light and affective. Through an arts-based approach to inquiry in this vignette I ask, “How was the air a little lighter in the cafeteria on an ordinary December Friday morning at an elementary school?” and consider how considering affect theory might disrupt education. Might we be able to say “Affect theory changed our students’ lives?”

Multiversal Ceremony: On Tending Differential Being

Nathan Snaza, University of Richmond

Historically, concepts we might cluster under the heading of “mental illness” have been used to interpret the early modern witch hunts in Europe. Some diagnose those accused of witchcraft with various mental illnesses, while others see a *social* form of “hysteria.” These seemingly divergent framings don’t just insist upon a difference between rational and irrational (or “disordered”) thought, but also politically and epistemologically privilege the rational, often excluding the spiritual entirely, and often in ways that seek to shore up the distance between our moment and early colonial modernity. My aim in this paper is to re-approach witchcraft’s—or rather, to use a distinction I elaborate in my book *Tendings*, “esoterism”—relation not just to knowledge practices but to spirituality, indeed to the messy indistinction between matter and spirit. Taking up the concept of “tending” as I develop it in my book, I draw on new work in neurodivergent poetics and crip theory (especially Mel Chen’s *Intoxicated*) to argue that multiversal, decolonial praxes of worldmaking require the elaboration of neuro- and corporeal divergence from Man. I focus JJJJerome Ellis’s *Aster of Ceremonies*. Ellis is a “blk disabled animal, artist, and proud stutterer” whose practice spans poetry in more traditional senses and musical performance. Ellis sings a more-than-human world in which non-Man tendings endure through bodies and across time, and their ceremonies invite *us* to participate in that tending, if only by paying attention to how our “everyday” lives disrupt dysfluency, seek to homogenize it into Man as “disorder.”

The Brazilian National Flag as Trigger for Political Emotions

Daniel Tércio, Universidade de Lisboa Faculdade de Motricidade Humana: Cruz Quebrada, Lisboa

In probably every nation in the world, the relationship between the national flag and the anthem takes place on a symbolic and emotional level, combining sound with visual towards the stabilization of feelings of belonging and citizenship. This relationship contributes to the legitimacy of the political system and plays as representation of a collective identity. Considering the Brazilian situation between 2013 and 2023 and the importance that the national flag has had in the political situation of those years, namely in the confrontation between the far-right of Bolsonaro and the center-left of Lula da Silva, I intend to address how protests are operating in a zone of tension between the universal and constitutional inviolability of that relationship, the appropriation of the patriotic symbols by one of the factions and its radical subversion by the other. In this analysis I will take into consideration that “from the colonial period onward, participatory ways of moving the body in relation to musical sound have often been experienced as confrontational, subversive, immoral, or even revolutionary” (Christopher Smith: 2019). In this sense, special attention will be given to the way choreographer Luís Abreu created the work *Samba do Crioulo Doido* (2013). This expression means confusion and emotional displacement. The piece rescues the indexes in an original semantic sense to multiply, divide, clone, and dress the national flag as an object of sexual desire and ambiguity. At the opposite of Abreu’s creation process, I will argue that, among Bolsonaro’s supporters, one may

recognize patterns of physicality in which the flag functions as armor and weapon, such as the gesture of the hand shaping a gun. The Brazilian flag turns then into a cocoon to nurture political hate.

Tunneling Through the Microfascist Pits of the “American Nuclear Family”: Gender Failure, Queer Desire, and Other Intimate Threats

Meg Thompson, Independent Scholar

This paper would be an exploration of how the microfascist “infrastructures of feeling” (Berlant, 2016) associated with the White American Nuclear Family (WANF), as an intimate conduit of larger power structures, reproduces and digs us deeper into the pits of macro-level white-supremacist, Christo-Fascism. I would examine how appeals to “traditional family values,” in concordance with conservatives’ assault on and liberals’ negligence of trans and reproductive rights, intrinsically links the WANF to the expansion of American militarism as a means to protect its fascist project, both domestically and internationally. The social, conceptual, and material reproduction of the WANF advances a field of intimate relationships defined by a fascist investment in “war as a way of life” (Grove, 2019) which inextricably ties the health, security, and stability of the WANF to that of the nation’s. Therefore, its protection rises to the level of both a political *and* militaristic project. By taking this as my basis, I hope to explore how queerness, as a mode of relationality and a field of inquiry, might tangle with its position as threat to the microfascist projects of the WANF. Even as the assimilation of certain queer people to the promises of capitalism’s “good life” has attempted to defang queerness as a meaningful insurgency, queerness must remain unsettling as an intimate movement against fascism and militarism. While it may not be enough to help us completely emerge, how might examining queerness in this way help us tunnel through these pits together until the point of collapse?

Trans Stuckness: Affect, Speed, and Waiting in Transition

Max Thornton, Kean University

The metaphor of movement is baked into our language for transgender lives: crossing over, motion from one gendered place to another, the popular accounting of transition as a “journey.” Trans scholarship has engaged critically with this imagery, interrogating its relationship to literal movement as well as its tendency to oversimplify and reify a teleological narrative (Aren Aizura’s *Mobile Subjects* and Lucas Crawford’s “Transgender without Organs,” among others); however, less attention has been paid to the feeling of *stuckness* that many trans people experience. Waiting for clinical appointments, waiting for savings to accumulate, waiting for insurance company approval, waiting for an arbitrary period set by medical gatekeepers, waiting for hormonal changes to take effect, waiting to become a legal adult independent from parental authority: gender transition for most people is characterized by a large amount of *waiting*. Even amid the throes of a moral panic about “rapid-onset gender dysphoria” and people being “rushed into transition,” the actual pace of transition is, for the most part, agonizing slowness. In conversation with crip time (Alison Kafer) and

queer phenomenology (Sara Ahmed), this paper explores “trans temporality” (Alexandre Baril) affectively, probing the felt sense of stasis that holds the transitioning person in a kind of suspension, investigating the trajectory of the motile energies of a “gender journey” in slow motion, and examining the techniques by which trans lives are made livable under these painful circumstances of “bad trans feeling” (Cameron Awkward-Rich, Hil Malatino).

Minoritarian Hauntings

Michael Tristano Jr., Towson University

If as C. Riley Snorton (2017) posits, queer and trans of color lives are always lived in close proximity to death, then the minoritarian body, as archive, and memory, as data, (Bloch, 2022) are rich sites of cultural production and texts. In this essay, I privilege the minoritarian body as archive to investigate the aftermath of the Pulse nightclub massacre; a wicked event of violence that continues to haunt our everyday, lived reality. The massacre at Pulse animates my hauntological approach for understanding contemporary queer of color life. I move to theorize a minoritarian haunting; a deeply melancholic and productive process (Munoz, 1999) which animates new life worlds for minoritarian subjects. I am particularly interested in how the minoritarian body as archive and pedagogies of the dark (Gamboa, 2021) provide opportunities to consider political and cultural formation(s) eight years after the massacre. This timing is crucial, as often intense moments of crisis produce state-sanctioned, reactionary politics from various stake holders. For instance, immediately after Pulse, large-scale organizing around gun control and blood donation regulations was seen. But we are rarely as concerned with the off moments. Those in-between moments. Moments which are still haunted by crisis yet perhaps not *in* crisis. Through ethnographic methods, I think carefully (that is, with care) about politics born through a hauntology of everyday life (Rahimi, 2021)—in the club, on the sidewalks, and at the clinic—to consider the potentialities of political formations produced and sustained by minoritarian subjects and communities not captured by the state.

Affective Turn in Flamenco

F. Berna Uysal, Sabanci University, Hacettepe University

This study investigates the bodily encounters of a *bailadora* (flamenco dancer) and her *pericon* (hand-fan) by exploring the dynamic interplay between the corporeality of the dancer and the materiality of the hand-fan, within the performance. Flamenco, an art form characterized by intense rhythms, passionate movements, and profound vocal expressions, serves as a rich site for examining how affective intensities navigate the space between the body and its environment, and between the individual and the collective. This perspective challenges the traditional expectations of a representation of a flamenco performance through targeting the pre-/non-conscious experiences of the audiences, which arise the emotions. In the performance, as the result of a bodily encounter of human and non-human entities, the hand-fan integrates seamlessly with the dancer’s body, amplifying the expressive power of the dance. The hand-fan, as both a symbolic and practical accessory, amplifies the affective exchanges, contributing to the atmospheric and embodied

experiences of both dancers and audiences. incorporation of hand-fans by flamenco dancers introduces elements of drama, emotion, and storytelling into their performances where the hand-fan itself becomes the storied-matter. The hand-fan's elegant openings and closings, flicks, and spins produce a captivating visual display that holds the audience's attention. By mastering these hand-fan techniques, flamenco dancers can convey intricate stories and evoke a wide range of emotions. This study explores the methodological challenges of studying non-verbal and pre-conscious but bodily affective interactions to consider how affective methodologies can enhance our understanding of cultural movements and societal shifts, proposing tools and techniques suited to capturing and interpreting affective data in flamenco.

Vibrant Andes: Listening to Other Possible Futures in the Anthropocene

Gustavo Valdivia, Universidad del Pacifico

This conference paper takes seriously Stanley Cavell's claim that only by distancing ourselves from our natural habitation within the world, we can explain "our forms of unknown-ness and of our inability to know" (Cavell, 1979). It delves into the potential of sound to engage with the complex worlds that are emerging in the context of the Anthropocene. Through ethnographic field recordings made between 2012 and 2022 at the Quelccaya glacier—the largest tropical glacier on Earth, situated in the Peruvian Andes—, it presents an alternative approach to encounter the natural world in a way that is released from our private holds. These recordings, emphasized through the languages of ethnographic text, explore the possibility of engaging with the dispersed agencies of the natural world in their complete indifference to human suffering (Das, 1995), allowing nature, as Cavell puts it, *exhibit itself* (Cavell 1979). To what extent is the natural world susceptible to human understanding, explanation or control? Is it possible to access the primordial chaos in which the vibrational forces of nature precede a fixed organization of our sense experience? What would it mean to experience sound as a continuum of history rather than an ephemeral and recent event that may only perdure in human memory or through recording devices? The sounds of the Quelccaya glacier— from the crunching of massive ice blocks and the shattering of tiny ice crystals to the diverse flows of meltwater—challenge the notion of a passive, malleable nature. Instead, they underscore nature's excess, indifference, and destructive force. By evoking the endless sequence of events that constitute the present, these interwoven sonic forms are also unequivocally narrating the histories of the Anthropocene. These recordings can be listened at: <https://soundcloud.com/sonicmelting/sets/01-on-the-way-to-quelccaya-1>

The Opaque Aesthetics of 'Gyno-Psychiatry':

Body Horror and Affective Tensions in Joyce Carol Oates's *Butcher* (2024)

Irene Valenti, University of Augsburg

Joyce Carol Oates's latest novel *Butcher* tells the fictionalized life and works of the 'Father of Gyno-Psychology' through a multiplicity of voices that create an opaque literary assemblage strewn with embodied affective tensions. The autobiographical narration of the Butcher himself recounts his

gruesome experiments in Trenton's 'Asylum for Female Lunatics' through a pseudo-medical/scientific voice that gives his subjects/victims an opaque character: they are invisible—silenced, deprived of agency, and literally losing visibility with each amputated body part—but simultaneously hypervisible – the graphic descriptions of their mutilations verging on body horror. The opacity of the victims is mirrored in the asylum itself, its distinguished fame in stark contrast with the secrecy of its recesses: while its in-/hypervisibility entails oppression, allowing for the inhumane mutilations to take place, it also allows for revolt to slowly take shape, harboring the potential for liberation and disturbance of patriarchal structures. The polyvocal narrative then mirrors the tension of opacity: while the Butcher's voice erases the victims' existence, the narration of his escaped-servant-turned-poet allows for their collective voice to arise. Aesthetically, the brutal procedures described by the Butcher allow for a body horror that disturbs the narrative in its affective potential, while the servant's muted narration of abuse foregrounds the poetic language of textual affects, creating a tension that is opaque even in its embodied aesthetics.

The Blue Opacity of John Dugdale's Photography

Manuel Vogelsang

At first glance, John Dugdale's photography is a nostalgic celebration of classical beauty: Aesthetically pleasing bodies, flowers and pottery alike are shown in old farmhouses and Victorian mansions, bathed in the melancholy blues of cyanotype. But something is wrong with that past: Overt (homo)eroticism, models of different races, self-reflexive allusions to the pioneers of photography. The dark blues of the work reveal not so much the past as a late 20th-century desire at work, which finds its expression—opaquely—through a 19th-century photographic process. After a series of strokes caused by an AIDS-related illness left the artist almost completely blind, John Dugdale turned to the historical process of cyanotype, since it does not involve any hazardous chemicals and the photographs can be printed in daylight. The blue of cyanotype does not represent AIDS in any mimetic or metaphorical sense and is "delinked from individual experience and communal politics" as a form of what Eugenie Brinkema calls "a post-subjective, impersonal affect" grounded in the photographic process. It does, however, through the belated use of an old photographic process, acquire a highly specific meaning as the expression of the photographer's embodied artistic practice. Thus, the opacity in Dugdale's work stems not from the—seemingly apolitical—dark blues of cyanotype, but from the historically situated, political use of the process. Ultimately, I would argue, this opaque blurring of impersonal formalism and personal embodied practice can be taken as a starting point to reconceptualize the relationship between affect, embodiment, and materiality in queer visual culture.

Mediated Intimacy: Negotiating Closeness, Embodiment, and Power

Dr. Emma Leigh Waldron, UC Irvine

In my previous work on ASMR videos and sexuality (Waldron 2017), I established the concept of mediated intimacy as a means of describing intermediary practices and technologies that facilitate

rather than hinder intimate contact between bodies, both human and otherwise. In this paper, I will expand upon the concept of mediated intimacy and establish its theoretical grounding and utility in the field of affect studies. ASMR as a genre of media is an emergent product of the Anthropocene, and could be seen as indicative of the “dwindling of libidinal energies” referenced in this stream’s call for papers. However, I argue that it may instead exemplify a nascent collective reaching toward alternative and mutually response-able modes of life, in which intimacy, sex, and indeed, Eros, are defined with increasing capaciousness. I define intimacy as the felt sense of proximity, and invoke mediated intimacy to train attention to how it can take on different cultural meanings and values, resonate in bodies differently, and be dammed up and diverted, augmented or diminished through mediating forces. Approaching intimacy as mediated helps us to disambiguate the practice of sex from the affect of intimacy. And, if the (sexualized) body is central to the operation of power (Foucault 1984), and if the shaping of affect as a key technology of power (Ahmed 2004), then the study of intimacy is fundamental to critiques of power. Furthermore, critical attention to intimacy is of the utmost urgency in the end times, when the looming threats are the result of care-less and individualistic intimacies such as harm, destruction, extraction, and exploitation. Mediated intimacy calls attention to the intercorporeal reality that all intimacy is mediated, and that bodily boundaries are constantly in a state of negotiation.

We Are Quantum in Our Longings: Trans Affects and Astral Projection

valley weadick,

This paper explores astral projection as a practice of trans* becoming, understanding, healing, and survival. Astral projection can function as an intentional and cultivated practice of dissociation, disconnecting from the “real” world and removing oneself from unbearable touch, harassment, misgendering, or violence. It can also serve as a means of deliberately stepping *into* other worlds: manifesting phantom parts of ourselves and of others, caressing the celestial, disintegrating to the quantum, and communing with everyday and non-human cycles of life, environment, and gravity. In this sense, this paper seeks to reorient dissociation away from a pathologized, negative, or traumatic affect/effect of this world, towards an active practice and process of healing from its harms. If this world is breaking, and breaking you, moving through other worlds can be the means to suture oneself back into a recognizable form, a method of reconstituting the flesh into a liveable shape, of finding solace, even comfort, in embodiment. Disconnecting from this world can mean communicating with the non-human and otherworldly to exceed and come to grips with the material body and material world through the immaterial. On otherworldly planes—extraterrestrial, spiritual, sacred worlds—the body and gendered self feels more like itself than it does in the real world. Weaving together personal story with literary texts of Jordy Rosenberg, Kacen Callender, and Joshua Jennifer Espinoza, I explore astral projection as a practice both speculative and practical, spectacular and mundane, intangible yet intimately experienced as real.

Distorted Boundaries of the Body: A Critical Phenomenology of Fatphobia

Halie White, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Humans constitute the precarious position of being a bodily object in the world of others and simultaneously living through that body with a felt subjective experience. Using critical phenomenology, I track two bodily boundaries – the physical and the phenomenal – that are bound up in navigating a world saturated with body-based identity prejudices. Our shared meaning-making structures which target the object-body take on an affective and phenomenal quality when internalized in the embodied cognitive subject. Because the target characteristics of such prejudice are immutable in one's corporeality, one must continuously monitor oneself in response to a hostile social milieu. This self-monitoring creates a hypervisibility of one's object-body which encourages one to live primarily through the body image. This leads to distortions in one's sensorimotor subjectivity as actions are attempted from a view of oneself as an object (corporealized). I will focus on fatphobic prejudice which operates on a conceptualization of fat as an unlivable substance that is transitory, removable, and immoral. Such prejudice encourages a somatic disassociation (disembodiment) from the fat parts of the body, causing a receding phenomenal space below the physical boundary of the skin. Further, disembodiment and fatphobic stereotypes create a phenomenal field of obstacles ('I-cannot' field of affordances) for fat persons. The main obstacle becomes the corporealized body in mediating subjectivity due to physical and social alienation. In conclusion, social issues are not simply ideological, but *lived out and felt in the body*, and require phenomenologically informed solutions that mitigate the diminished affective experiences in oppressed bodies.

Conspiracy and the Politics of Fear: The Case of QAnon

Chris Wilson

This paper explores how conspiracy shapes our perception of the world through fear by drawing upon Sara Ahmed's work on fear and orientation. Specifically, I examine the role of the QAnon conspiracy in spreading the unfounded claims of election fraud in the 2020 United States presidential election, culminating in the January 6 Capitol Attack in 2021. Despite the decrease in its mainstream appeal since, the conspiracy's use of fear to undermine political systems remains a serious threat to democracy. I employ a phenomenological approach to the affective dimension of fear to understand this ongoing threat. By analyzing QAnon content, I argue QAnon provides its supporters with a perceptual filter that orients their world towards fear and thereby forecloses a future without fear. This political operation of fear insulates QAnon's followers from reasoned arguments to change their perception of the world. In the first section, I introduce the key ideas of QAnon conspiracy theory to show how its mantras such as "trust no one" appeal to the affect of fear. Next, I turn to Ahmed's work on fear. Ahmed shows us how fear is used to justify the containment of the *other*, which is achieved through establishing separation from the *other*. In contrast, I argue QAnon orients perception *towards* fear. QAnon provides its supporters the false

promise that they can take action to overcome their fears. I conclude by suggesting that a change in QAnon supporters' view of the world requires work in the affective dimension rather than through reasoning.

Affective Edges of Hearing and the Reception of Sonic Responsibility

Trent Wintermeier, University of Texas, Austin

Beyond listening as a way of “straining toward a possible meaning” (Jean-Luc Nancy *Listening* 7) or a political practice that “generates alternatives” (Salomé Voegelin *The Political Possibility of Sound* 28), hearing signifies a closer relationship between shared affect and the perception of sound. In other words, hearing connotes a primary affectibility between beings that precedes the effective potential of listening. Hearing is always open, and this makes affect the “first requirement” for an effect to happen (Diane Davis *Inessential Solidarity* 3). Such a shared affective state signals immanent responsibility, in that we are never absolved from the obligation to the other—be that noisy neighbors, the clap of thunder, or the sound of our own voice. But how can instructors teach and further develop an attunement to this responsibility? How can we develop moments for recognizing this responsibility within and beyond classroom spaces? In this presentation I'll not only expand on the implications of the responsibility of hearing, but also locate the potential of sonic technologies and their integration into the writing classroom. In short, I will turn to innovations in do-it-yourself shortwave radio receivers made with waste (designed by international feminist artist collective, Shortwave Collective) to practice the responsibility afforded by shared affect. In my adaptation of the receiver, writing is introduced into the circuit, providing an apt means for integrating the sonic and material into classrooms. Using materials, writing, and radio in the classroom provides attunement to the affectivity of hearing, creating possibilities for more sound obligations.

Sex Machina: In/Visible Queer Entanglement Human AI* Cybersexual Intimacies

Amy Xiao, M. Chau, and Kaitlyn Mundy, Brown University

It begins with the sex bot. We love her, who pleases us; we detest her, who pollutes our feed, who reproduces empty intimacies. We block and solicit, report and patronize. We resent the toxic bodies leeching into the networked soil we call our own, and yet we refuse to log off. Online communities of sex and kink, constructed out of queer aesthetics both visible and invisible to the public eye are a critical site of queer entanglement, spanning racial constructs, (non)normativities, and care ecosystems. With the introduction of AI and the rising popularity of web-scraping has come the perhaps inevitable popularity and profitability of NSFW AI companions. The sex bot as digital whore, loving companion, and perfect chameleon--the silent scraping of NSFW content represents the theft of not only the erotic labor of sex workers, but also the digital colonization of havens of queer intimacy and self-presentation. How do sex bots fit into a capitalist landscape as a product leveraging loneliness and racial fetish? How is a sex bot a Pepper's ghost of queer love, sex, and labor? Can a sex bot become an integrated extension of the digitized intimacy where queer entanglement thrives? In this paper, we take a critical feminist lens to the current and future state of

AI companions to speculate on the role of in/visible queer intimate engagements in the creation of generative agents and the implications of such developments in eroticism and technology in queer intimacies.

Entanglements, Hauntology, and Affect Theory: Slowness in Social Media at the Digital Age

Ping Yang, Millersville University

The fast development of modern technologies has brought us advantages and flexibilities, as well as threats and potentialities. In the digital age, social media generates a vast amount of information for immediate consumption, dramatic representation, and maximizing pleasure. It constrains the use of social media and limits people's lives. Derrida (1994) argues against the subject positioning of ontology and claims that presence is both fluid and fleeting. The term "entanglement" is conceivable through partition, partiality, and disparity (Chow, 2012; Blackman, 2021). Within the intersection of entanglement, hauntology and affect theory, this paper explores the ways in which lexical, visual, and audio representations of Stop Asian Hate movements during COVID-19 operate to create points of connections across medial and cultural forms on social media. Digital data on social media causes information overload, automaticity, temporality, and lack of credibility. The voices and visibility of the victims of Asian hate crimes on social media are submerged in fast and large quantity of displaced and disconnected media content. Some narrators are subject to "face-losing" comments from in-group members. The entanglements of space, language, and memory of Asian Americans help unravel the traces that complete the reality, pointing toward a possible future built in relation to these existing traces. This paper argues for slowness as a way of life in the digital era that offers a space in which to critically and creatively interrogate the visibility and invisibility, the past and present, sustainability and temporality, with the hope to empower marginalized groups in society.

SSA





SUPPORTING AFFECT INQUIRY

The Society for the Study of Affect (SSA) is a member-funded nonprofit that supports the international scholarly and artistic study of affect: discipline-specific, interdisciplinary, and non-academic inquiry that attends to those near-imperceptible, too-intense, interstitial, or in-the-making forces and feelings that make up our worlds. Through in-person and virtual events like conferences and workshops, publishing, social media, infrastructures of feeling, and non-institutional modes of mentorship, we aim to shake up existing structures and practices and foster a lively and engaged local and international community of affect study. We disseminate academic and creative work related to the study of affect in both print and online media, including the SSA's peer-reviewed and open access publications. Our hope is to encourage and assist graduate students, early career scholars, and others in the study of affect and to provide a centralized organization for affect study that will promote local affiliations and branches in different countries or regions across the globe. Why shouldn't one modest aim of affect study be a "more expansive ongoingness?"¹

BECOME A MEMBER

Join SSA with a small one-time or recurring membership fee and help support future conferences, open access publishing initiatives, mentorship opportunities and more. SSA benefits include access to *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry*, *Imbricate!* Press books, conferences and regional meetups, and a future members' directory and resources. Members can vote on future initiatives at our annual meeting. Fees are not considered a charitable donation and we are unable to issue tax receipts.

affectsociety.com

Gregory J. Seigworth, "Capaciousness," *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* 1, no. 1 (2017): i–v.





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The purposes of the Society are:

To encourage and promote the international academic and artistic study of “affect” (an interdisciplinary and creative field).

To foster a lively and engaged local and international community of scholars, artists, and non-academics through in-person and virtual events like conferences, seminars, summer schools, social media platforms, etc.

To disseminate and communicate scholarly and creative work related to the study of affect in both print and online media, including the Society’s peer-reviewed and open access publications.

To encourage, advise, and assist graduate students, early career scholars, and others in the study of affect.

To provide a centralized organization for affect study that will promote local affiliations and branches in different countries or regions across the globe.

SSA is a member-funded society. It is supported primarily by its members to carry on activities for their benefit. On its liquidation or dissolution, this society may distribute its money and other property to its members.

affectsociety.com

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AFFECT: WORLDING, TENSIONS, FUTURES #AffectWTF

The 2015 conference assembled eighteen plenary speakers, nineteen multi-disciplinary conference panel streams, and over a dozen workshops, installations, and performance pieces. Nearly 700 conference submissions came in from all over the world, narrowed down to 223 presenters, with an estimated 380+ total attendees including faculty, independent researchers, undergrad and graduate students.

October 14–17, 2015
Millersville University's Ware Center
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

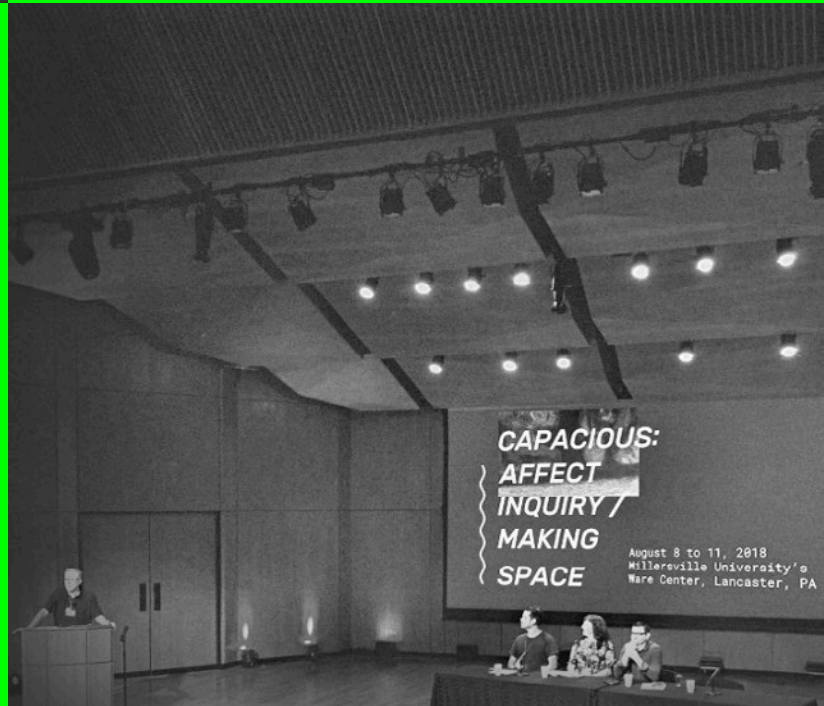
2015

CAPACIOUS: AFFECT INQUIRY/MAKING SPACE #CapaciousAIMS

Modeled on the same ethos of community building, mentorship, and intellectual generosity that guides *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affective Inquiry*, this conference assembled 200 papers and 240 attendees. Open to students, faculty, and non-academics #CapaciousAIMS emphasized the crucial role of graduate students and early career researchers in shaping affect studies.

August 8–11, 2018
Millersville University's Ware Center
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

2018



SUMMER SCHOOL: ANIMATIONS AND PROVOCATIONS #SSASS

With over 80 participants, the SSA's Summer School offered an opportunity to learn, interact, and create alongside two dozen of the most engaging folks working in and around affect studies from all around the world. We held twice-daily gatherings for "animations" and "provocations" intended to spark uniquely interdisciplinary and convivially non-hierarchical conversation.

July 29–August 02, 2019
Millersville University, Ware Center
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

2019

Society Publications

Founded in 2017, *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* is SSA's open access and peer-reviewed international journal. *Capacious* makes room for emerging voices in and around affect studies. We endeavour to promote diverse bloom-spaces for affect's study over the dulling hum of any specific orthodoxy. Member of the Radical Open Access Collective.

1600

Monthly readers

8

Issues so far



Society Publications

Founded in 2021, Imbricate! Press is SSA's peer-reviewed and open access book imprint. Imbricate! publishes work that gauges how critical or creative practices can bring together discourses, worlds, sensations, sensibilities, and atmospheres that raise questions and perhaps unsettle what counts as 'fit' and 'unfit' within and across shifting disciplinary contours.

2

Books published

1

Forthcoming



New Book Announcement

Everything is a Lab: Doing Ordinary Science collects the artifacts of a year's worth of public workshops that put affect studies and STS together. Through zinemaking, collaging, foraging, fermenting, perfuming, and walking together, the book does ordinary science from the kitchen table, bolstering literacies for how the world is being made and how we might make it differently. Edited by Mathew Arthur.

Dec. 6

In print and
free online

 imbricate.press



Everything is a Lab

The book works as exercises in writing and being together. It registers with care the circulation of practices, techniques, and affects that define the many labs through which we articulate what a community of sensing and thinking is. The book participates in the past years of research addressing labs beyond the strictly scientific, while also thus expanding the very insights into what are the situated spaces and shared affects of knowing and theorizing.

—Jussi Parikka, co-editor of *The Lab Book*

Taking seriously the proposition that science is ordinary, this dazzling book encourages us to consider how we do and might make worlds with care, courage and imagination. It pushes the boundaries of theory and practice, collecting together experimental writing and write-ups with beautiful images from collaborative workshops, pulling us into the worlds of bees, inviting us to turn ourselves into sensors, providing us with guides to compose new scents and more-than-human substances—and lots more besides. It is a treasure trove of a book, designed to delight and inspire researchers across STS and affect studies.

—Rebecca Coleman, author of *Glitterworlds*

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