

# 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; Millian 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" (Millian 2009) unsettle genres of life?