



Society for the Study of Affect Summer School

Subjection/Cosmology/Authority/Realism

August 6 to 8, 2025 (Wednesday to Friday)

University of New Mexico, Albuquerque

affectsociety.com/scar

Seminar #1

The Shit Show

Katie Stewart and Greg Seigworth

We're all *differently feeling our way through* the transitional immediacy of a charged present—unstable, damaging, luring in the bandwidth of a moment's coherence. The present is too much and too close—a strange intimacy with worldings, becomings, or a stray sign or attachment. Diffuse and atmospheric forms loosen into thought experiments that might create a line of action, magnetize themselves to an overpromise, deflate, or dig into a singularity, an event, the crazy. Attunements to what's happening speed up and slow looking for traction; we're in a state of alert, nimble or skittish. Materializations, never just neutral, are now weird, random, insensible, and deformed. Collectives, unmoored and in solution, skim and churn and abduct themselves in wild fictions.

Thought is mimicking, involuntary, hallucinatory. Its dissociation is a voluptuous, flooding panic whiplashing its tendrils in all directions, flicker-sampling and retracting from the present's too muchness—syncing/un-syncing, sinking/floating, sometimes waving, too often drowning. Perhaps that's one reason why a capacity to dissociate—as a viscerally endured phase-shift that arrives as a misshapen survival response to the tempos of transitions in shuffle-mode—seems, in addition to a psychosocial state, also a critical maneuver to hone: now more than ever. In the



politics of the real and irreality—what's real and what's not—things are disoriented, disintegrating, dis-aggregative and dismissed.

The wobbling and haphazard distribution of the sensible/insensible/nonsensical on display in all of the above necessitates experimenting with more malleable and improvisational ways to approach the generativity, instability, and brokenness of ordinary practices, forms, and performances that make worlds if only for a minute. Methods of thought might include modes of description, rethinking the subject and the object, and expansive elaborations rather than shorthand concepts that simplify—through reduction—into what's believed to be most readily manageable. how do we also account for what's thoroughly unmanageable, ungovernable, illogical, the upside down, the latest convulsion of the shit show? How does a body grasp the content and contours of its own ghosting under the fraught conditions of perpetual (and 'executive') gaslighting? What's in and around the worldly [im]precisions in a bodily affect, the tilt of a hat, a violence felt, an atmospheric surge? How do the composition and decomposition of forms of living persist in the potentials of a situation or commotion (or the sheer vacuum of their absence)? How is experience that's weighted with what surrounds it made generative?

This summer school seminar with Katie and Greg will be organized into three sessions devoted to experimenting with languages/concepts/practices/atmospheres/landscapes for living through and on:

- 1) inventing conceptual personae: a small group-collaborative exercise in loosening concepts from their definitional and methodological moorings, hybridizing their affects and their relative functionings and, then, plopping them onto a plane of immanence to see what they can do, what they might reveal about operative assumptions regarding some specific aspect of the contemporary shit show.
- 2) worldly composition: everyone brings 500 words (no more no less) to a writing workshop. We read aloud in batches of 3 while the others listen compositionally to create concepts out of what they hear. Thought is improvisational, associative, performative, collaborative. We write to feel out what's happening, or could be happening, in a scene, a character, a



sensation dilating, a tendency suspended in a look, scoring over the singularities of what might be emergent or immanent in a form.

- 3) falling into and out of sync: attunements, singularities, dissociative poetics. Getting out of yourself into densities, intensities, forms, performances, collective practices around pattern-[mis]matchings. Walking and composing briefly together in response to a prompt (concerning speculative thought, what is experience, performance, unforgetting, slowed or jagged attunement).

APPLICATION TO THE SEMINAR

To apply to take part in the seminar, please email a 250 to 300 word brief writing to hello@affectsociety.com by Sunday, June 1st, 2025 that describes your interest and the intersection of your work (writing, art practice, etc.) with the thematic focus of the seminar. If, instead, you would like to send a short sample of other recent writing of yours (no more than 1000 words), this is also fine.

BIOS

Katie Stewart is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Texas, Austin. She writes on affect, the ordinary, and modes of attunement from a speculative curiosity. *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an 'Other' America* (Princeton, 1996) portrays a dense and textured layering of sense and form laid down in social use. *Ordinary Affects* (Duke, 2007) maps the force of present moments lived as immanent events. *The Hundreds* (with Lauren Berlant, Duke 2019) is a writing experiment in dwelling in a history of the present. Her current work, *Worlding*, approaches generative ways of collective living through sensing out what happens.

Gregory J. Seigworth is a professor of Digital Communication and Cultural Studies within the Department of Communication and Theatre at Millersville University of Pennsylvania. He is co-editor of *The Affect Theory Reader* (Duke UP, 2010) and *The Affect Theory Reader 2* (Duke UP, 2023). Most recently, he co-edited *Capacities To: Affect Up Against Fascism* (IMBRICATE! Press, 2025). Greg is a founding member



and managing editor at *Capacious: Journal for Emerging Affect Inquiry* and among the founders of the Society for the Study of Affect.

Seminar Readings (will be provided to accepted registrants)

baer, hannah (2021). *trans girl suicide museum* (selections). Los Angeles: Hesse Press.

Barad, Karen (2015). TransMaterialities: Trans*/Matter/Realities and Queer Political Imaginings. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 21, no. 2-3: pp. 387-422.

Belcourt, Billy-Ray (2020). An Alphabet of Longing & Notes from an Archive of Injuries. *A History of My Brief Body*. Columbus, OH: Two Dollar Radio, pp.79-86 & 99-101.

Berlant, Lauren (2022). On Being in Life Without Wanting the World: No World Poetics, or, Elliptical Life. In *On the Inconvenience of Other People*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp.117-147.

Halperin, Richard (2023). Microperceptions, The *Je Ne Sais Quoi* and the Leibnizian Unconscious, The Mind is a Liquid, and The Confused and the Distinct, (Chapters 13-16). *Leibnizing: A Philosopher in Motion*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.135-166.

Kasmani, Omar (2023). Migration: An Intimacy. In *The Affect Theory Reader 2: Worldings Tensions Futures*, edited by Gregory J. Seigworth and Carolyn Pedwell. Durham: Duke University Press, pp.214-230.

Lingis, Alphonso (2015). Irrevocable Loss. In *Non-Representational Methodologies: Re-Envisioning Research*, edited by Phillip Vannini, New York and London: Routledge, pp. 165-176.

Martin, Chris (2022). A Place Where Islands Touch. In *May Tomorrow Be Awake: On Poetry, Autism, and Our Neurodiverse Future*. New York: HarperCollins, pp.50-77.



- McKittrick, Katherine (2021). The Smallest Cell Remembers a Sound and Consciousness (Feeling like, Feeling like This.). In *Dear Science and Other Stories*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp.35–70.
- Pelling, Jamie Heather (2025). Capacity to Dissociate. In *Capacities To: Affect Up Against Fascism*, edited by Gregory J. Seigworth, Mathew Arthur, Wendy J. Truran, and Chad Shomura. Lancaster and Vancouver. Imbricate! Press. pp.7–14.
<https://imbricate.press/book/capacities-to-affect-up-against-fascism/>
- Seigworth, Gregory (2025). All That is Solid Melts into Aerial Karate: Environmentality, Strange Intimacy, and the Banal Unconscious. *Angelaki*, Vol 30 Number 3, pp.tbd
- . (2012). "Reading Lauren Berlant Writing." *Communication and Critical Cultural Studies*. Vol 9. 4, pp.346–352.
- Simondon, Gilbert (2020/1964). Individuation and Affectivity." In *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.272–291.
- Stengers, Isabelle (2005). Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices. *Cultural Studies Review* 11 no. 1, pp. 183–96
- Stengers, Isabelle, Brian Massumi, and Erin Manning (2009). History through the Middle: Between Macro and Mesopolitics – an Interview with Isabella Stengers. *Inflexions: A Journal of Research Creation* 3.
http://www.inflexions.org/n3_stengershtml.html.
- Stewart, Katie (2017). In the World that Affect Proposed. *Cultural Anthropology*. 32, no. 2: pp. 192–198. <https://doi.org/10.14506/ca32.2.03>.
- . *Worlding*. (ms)



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Seminar #2

“Hey. You. There.” Sensing Interpellation

Dylan Robinson + Oliver Shao

Interpellation is often emphatic. But what happens when we listen otherwise to how racialization and the hails of ideology are emphasized? What happens when the address is from the more-than-human and “all my relations”, or hails us with other words: “are you ok?”, or “what will you do?” How do we experience racialization through whispers, asides, and dulcet tones? How do we feel interpellation through sonic hails, through our senses, and through other affective directionality? How do our non-human relations entreat us (what then constitutes the voice and how do we recognize it)? How might we name the affective detail of the address from specific listening positionalities?

Across the continuum of interpellative expression—from the shout of the police officer to the fearful cry of a little child—there are different volumes, timbres and speeds of address orchestrated in ways that constitute subjectivity. In the current climate of increasing hysteria and subjugation of racialized minorities in the United States, how do we name these orchestrations and how might we identify the structures of such hails beyond their narrative content?



This seminar explores the sensorial and racialized dimensions of interpellation, paying particular attention to formal, aesthetic detail of that which hails us. Certain voices, volumes, and timbres register differently depending on one's positionality, and subjection to histories of colonialism and inequity. The clipped tones of authority contrast sharply with the tender tones of a beloved singer, structuring belonging and exclusion in different ways. Sonic hails produce affective, emotional, and relational responses, shaping racialized subjectivities. Located at the intersection of sound studies, affect theory, critical race studies, and Indigenous studies, this seminar will move between discussion of key texts, listening practice, and peer review to better understand how interpellation constitutes social realities and how understanding this provides the possibility to practice alternative forms of relationality and reciprocity.

SEMINAR FORMAT

Participants will be asked to read a selection of writings in advance of the seminar. During the three days of the seminar, participants will discuss the readings and reflect on intersections between their research/artistic practice and seminar materials.

- On Day One, we will examine the concept and phenomenon of interpellation, exploring its relationship to affect, sound, and racialized subjectivities and spaces.
- On Day Two, we will delve into the embodied and haptic dimensions of interpellation.
- On Day Three, participants will share a short piece of their own writing, an artwork, or performance piece (among other possibilities) that exemplifies their own experience of interpellation.

APPLICATION TO THE SEMINAR

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BIOS

Dylan Robinson is a xwélmexw (Stó:lō/Skwah First Nation) writer and artist whose work seeks to prioritize Indigenous resurgence. As an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia, his scholarship examines public art's role in the interpellation of settler subjectivity and Indigenous resurgence. Other work includes a documentary film on the appropriation of Indigenous song and misrepresentation of Indigenous culture in Canadian classical music, created in collaboration with Neven Lochhead and Nick Dangel. His book, *Hungry Listening* (2020), asks how writing might otherwise express Indigenous epistemology and critical listening positionality.

www.dylanrobinson.ca

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Oliver Shao is an Assistant Professor of Music in the Liberal Arts Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He is the author of *Composing Aid: Music, Refugees, and Humanitarian Politics* (Indiana University Press, 2023). He is currently working on two major projects: one on the affective dimensions of music in Asian American media and social life, and another on the role of capitalist music in the climate crisis.

oshao@saic.edu

SEMINAR READINGS (PRELIMINARY)

Ahmed, S. (2013). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Routledge. [excerpts TBD]

Althusser, L. (2014). *On The Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. Verso Books. [excerpts TBD]

Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press. [excerpts TBD]

Bentley, I., McGlynn, S., Smith, G., Alcock, A. and Murrain, P. (2013). *Responsive Environments*. Routledge. [excerpts TBD]

Berg, U.D. and Ramos-Zayas, A.Y. (2015). "Racializing Affect: A Theoretical Proposition." *Current Anthropology*, 56(5), pp. 654-677.



- Berlant, L. (2020). "Two Girls, Fat and Thin," in *Cruel Optimism*. Duke University Press.
- _____. (2015). "A Momentary Anesthesia of the Heart." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 28(3), pp. 273–281.
- Biddle, I. (2013). "Quiet Sounds and Intimate Listening: The Politics of Tiny Seductions." in *Sound, Music, Affect: Theorizing Sonic Experience*, edited by I. Biddle and M. Thompson, Bloomsbury, pp. 141–154.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2019). "Feeling Race: Theorizing the Racial Economy of Emotions." *American Sociological Review*, 84(1), pp. 1–25.
- Campt, T.M. (2017). *Listening to Images*. Duke University Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Cheng, A.A. (2001). *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation and Hidden Grief*. Oxford University Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Coulthard, G.S. (2014). *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. University of Minnesota Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Fanon, F. (1986 [1952]). *Black Skin, White Masks*. Pluto Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Galella, D. (2018). "Feeling Yellow: Responding to Contemporary Yellowface in Musical Performance." *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, 32(2), pp. 67–77.
- Hall, S. (2016 [1983]). "Ideology and Ideological Struggle." in *Cultural Studies: A Theoretical History*, Duke University Press.
- Hage, G. (2010). "The Affective Politics of Racial Mis-interpellation." *Theory, Culture & Society*, 27(7–8), pp. 112–129.
- Howes, D. (2010). *Sensual Relations: Engaging the Senses in Culture and Social Theory*. University of Michigan Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Kapchan, D. (2015). "The Body." in *Keywords in Sound*, edited by D. Novak and M. Sakakeeny. Duke University Press, pp. 39–55.



- Kurtz, E.V. (2024). "Community in Syntony: Theorizing Axé in Capoeira Angola and Rural Samba of Backland Bahia, Brazil." *Ethnomusicology*, 68(1), pp.118-149.
- Mee, S.J. and Robinson, L. eds. (2022). *Sound Affects: A User's Guide*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA. [excerpts TBD]
- Moten, F. (2003). "Resistance of the Object." in *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. University of Minnesota Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Mowitt, J. (2002). *Percussion: Drumming, Beating, Striking*. Duke University Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Muñoz, J.E. (2006). "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down: Latina Affect, the Performativity of Race, and the Depressive Position." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 31(3), pp. 675-688.
- Pettman, D. (2017). *Sonic Intimacy: Voices, Species, Technics [or, how to listen to the world]*. Stanford University Press. [excerpts TBD]
- Rankine, C. (2014). *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Greywolf Press.
- Robinson, D. (2020). *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies*. University of Minnesota Press. [excerpts TBD]



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Seminar #3

Unsettled Attunements, Discombobulations, and Palimpsests of Feeling: Sensing SCAR(s)

Asilia Franklin-Phipps & Bretton Varga

Across pluriversal worlds, ways of seeing, listening, touching, and writing have been contaminated by prescriptive flows of power, moving in overdetermining and constraining loops that produce and affirm realities. Importantly, there is an urgency and ethicality to disturbing dominant frames of understanding and sensibility that engage with the realities of others, atmospheres, geographies, and more-than-human conditions—noticing anew. As scholars inside (and outside) of educational contexts, we believe that in order to collaboratively stage ruptures—working to cleave such logics—takes practice and (re)new(ed) mechanisms of meaning-making and structures of feeling. When such means are encountered, frontality is disrupted allowing for subtleties and seepings to accumulate, whisperings to become amplified, and textures to be felt. Here, we are primarily concerned with modalities of thinking sideways that are not entrenched in commitments to pin down meaning and knowledge.

This three-day seminar will use creative and syncopating techniques such as photography, walking, recording, poetry, and collage to undiscipline academic outputs and framings of knowledge that tend to be stringent, static, and inherited. Participants will attune and attend to minor gestures, the background, the forgotten,



the overlooked, the haunted, and that which remains in the cracks of material *and* theoretical debris. Scratching at the intersection(s) of the visual, sonic, and haptic, this gathering invites participants to pursue alternative mediating channels, intertwined and adjacent to the writerly, that can lead to unstuck movements and leanings with overlooked surroundings and milieus. Along with a daily focus on three different modes of thinking (visual, sonic, haptic), participants will create (fragmented) forms of writing/collaging we are referring to as *100+1s*—inspired by Lauren Berlant and Katie Stewart’s reverberating and experimental text, *The Hundreds*. It is our intention to then suture these enlivened outputs together to form a zine which can be scattered across collectives and communities.

FORMAT

We aspire to create a proliferating space that acknowledges and honors the myriad ways that the event—and all of its intensities—is felt, expressed, and becomes indelible. The summer seminar is structured around three sub-themes in relation to SCAR(s): visual sensing, sonic sensing, and haptic sensing to collectively and collaboratively re-sense, re-member, and re-encounter space toward expansive conceptualizations of embodied noticing.

DAY 1

Participants will be invited to walk, talk, and photograph—drawing attention to that which is often overlooked or backgrounded, but relevant to thinking (and feeling) across space and place. We will use the images taken to assist in (affectively) writing about the encounter to consider how attention can be alternatively shifted toward seeing/thinking otherwise.

DAY 2

Extending the creative work of photography, the second workshop of the seminar will foreground the generative capacity of sonic movements. How might we listen in alternative ways in order to grapple with arising tensions between more-than-human continuities and impasses? Participants will be prompted to listen intently to Albuquerque, layering sonic intensities onto the photos that were previously taken during the first gathering.



DAY 3

This final day of the workshop brings into focus haptic encounters comprising our movements in Albuquerque. What might our photos and sounds invite us to touch? What, throughout the dynamic flows of these collaborative efforts, continues to touch us? Our work will conclude with the cultivation of a temporary archive of feeling—a palimpsest—that takes its (nomadic) form as a zine. Participants will be invited to contribute recordings, musings, writings, images, and art to document shared experiences and attachments made and unmade during our time together.

Please note that participation will require participants to bring their own photography/recording device.

APPLICATION TO THE SEMINAR

To apply to take part in the seminar, please email a brief writing (250 to 300 words) that describes your interest and the intersection of your work (writing, art practice, etc.) with the thematic focus of the seminar. Please submit your application to hello@affectsociety.com no later than Sunday, June 1st, 2025.

BIOS

Asilia Franklin-Phipps is an Assistant Professor of Educational Studies with affiliate appointments in Art and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Inspired by art, film, and popular culture, Asilia's work explores affect, pedagogy, race, gender, sexuality, and visual culture.

Bretton A. Varga is an Assistant Professor of History-Social Science at California State University, Chico. His research and approach to meaning-making are shaped by a commitment to cultivate hope, imagination, speculation, care, love, and justice across more-than-human contexts. In particular, his scholarship works with(in) critical posthuman theories of temporality, materiality, and feeling to unveil harmful structures, logics, and practices that perpetuate racial injustice and ecological precarity.



SEMINAR READINGS

- Akómoláfé, Bayo. (2018). 'When You Meet The Monster, Anoint Its Feet,' *Emergence Magazine*, 16 October. Available at: <https://emergencemagazine.org/essay/when-you-meet-the-monster/>.
- Berlant, Lauren & Stewart, Kathleen. (2019). *The Hundreds*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Campt, T. (2021). *Black Gaze: Artists Changing How We See* (selections). Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Doughty, Karolina & Danielle Drozdowski. (2022). *Emotion, Space and Society* 42: pp.1-8.
- Macón, Cecilia. (2023). Haunting Voice: Affective Atmospheres as Transtemporal Contact. In *The Affect Theory Reader 2: Worldings Tensions Futures*, edited by Gregory J. Seigworth and Carolyn Pedwell. Durham: Duke University Press., pp.346-363.
- Manning, Erin. (2019). The Politics of Touch. Youtube [video]: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7yQaicWD_M
- Manning, Erin. (2017). For a Pragmatics of the Useless, or the Value of the Infrathin. *Political Theory* 45, no. 1, pp. 97-115.
- Sharpe, Christina.(2023) *Ordinary Notes* (selections). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Sharpe, Christina. (2016) *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (selections). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Shomura, Chad. (2021). Vital Impasse: Animacy Hierarchies, Irredeemability, and a Life Otherwise. *American Quarterly* 73, no. 4: pp. 835-855.



Stewart, Katherine. (2007). *Ordinary Affects* (selections). Durham: Duke University Press.

Taylor, Paul C. (2016). *Black is Beautiful: A Philosophy of Black Aesthetics (Foundations of the Philosophy of the Arts)* (selections). London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Varga, Bretton A. & Franklin-Phipps, Asilia. (2025). Inquiring *Artlessly*: Encounter(ing)s with Monstrous Materialities and Ecological Pollutants. *Qualitative Inquiry*. Advanced online publication.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10778004251316183>