

THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES
FEMINIST RESEARCH SPEAKERS SERIES WINTER 2017 PRESENTS

a symposium on QUEER AFFECTS

featuring lectures by
Alexis Shotwell & Randi Nixon

Friday, February 10, 2017, 2:00 – 4:30

Humanities Centre L-3

Queer Feminist Disability Rage in 'Person Livid with AIDS'

presented by **A. Shotwell**

Abstract:

The injunction "don't mourn, organize!" comes to us from one of IWW organizer Joe Hill's final telegrams; the view is that when death takes our comrades and injustice threatens our collective flourishing we ought to organize instead of mourn. This sentiment was an important affective force in AIDS organizing, understanding activists as "united in anger." Recent work has, however, critiqued this approach, suggesting that mourning can be as politically important as organizing. In this paper I affirm that the turn to anger alone is not a politically sustainable affective injunction. I amplify an ignored but co-present structure of feeling in AIDS, arguing that queer disability rage manifests a kind of sociality, sexiness, and sense of play that opens useable political space for our work now.

Biography:

Alexis Shotwell is an associate professor of Sociology at Carleton University, on unsundered Algonquin territory. Her academic work addresses impurity, environmental justice, racial formation, disability, unspeakable and unspoken knowledge, sexuality, gender, and political transformation. She is the author of *Knowing Otherwise: Race, Gender, and Implicit Understanding* and *Against Purity: Living Ethically in Compromised Times*.

Gay Pride and the Affective Politics of Neoliberalism

presented by **R. Nixon**

Abstract:

In this paper I use Gay Pride organizations and events as an entry point into the affective-politics of neoliberalism and its relationship to contemporary biopolitics. I trace the inevitable affective escapes from attempts to shape a particular kind of neoliberal proud subject through the careful production of a highly governed version of collective 'Pride'. By deploying neoliberal technologies of security and environment, which each take affect as their target, I argue that Gay Pride organizations seek to manufacture a specific affective atmosphere that implicitly fosters neoliberal goals and values, effectively obscuring its implicit biopolitical project. Through attention to the government of collective feeling in the context of Gay Pride events, the contours of the ideal proud subject emerge, and with it the kinds of affective flows that must be rejected and redirected to create a particular neoliberalized mode of pride politics. Finally, I consider disruptions to Pride events that demonstrate the troubling and troubled nature of neoliberal pride, and I suggest that these disruptions indicate that attentiveness to affect opens up possibilities for doing and feeling pride and its politics otherwise.

Biography:

Randi Nixon is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Alberta, and an instructor in the Department of Women's and Gender Studies. Her current research project uses pride as an entry point into thinking through the relationship between the intensities of gendered and raced embodiments, the sense-making capacities of collectives, and transformative politics.



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