

Radical Negativity

An interdisciplinary conference interrogating productive possibilities for negative states of being

Supported by the Centre for Feminist Research, Department of Media and Communications, and the Centre for Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London.

Friday 13 June 2014

Goldsmiths, University of London

Keynote Speaker: Lisa Blackman, Professor in Media and Communications, Goldsmiths

For more information visit: <http://radicalnegativity.com>

Call for Papers due 14 February 2014

More recent feminist and queer scholarship has begun to productively address the dark aspects of human subjectivity perceived to have a detrimental impact on the self-constituting practices of the positive self, such as shame, trauma, unhappiness, loss, pain, and melancholia, and reconceptualise them not only as integral to the process of subject formation, but critical and productive affective states in which to engage political action.

This interdisciplinary conference addresses the ways in which feminist and queer research may be informed by embracing philosophical oppositions, the 'negative double' of the positive value. The conference will interrogate what can be learnt from interventions focused on the interconnections between the negative and human agency, and how such a frame can inform ideas of feminist and queer practice.

Borrowing from Eve Sedgwick, this conference proposes that forms of the negative are "not distinctly 'toxic' parts of a group or individual identity that can be excised; they are instead integral to and residual in the processes by which identity itself is formed. They are available for the work of metamorphosis, reframing, refiguration, transfiguration, affective and symbolic loading and deformation (Sedgwick and Frank, 2003, p.63)."

If, like Sedgwick, we take up this challenge to valorise negative states of being as key conditions both for the production of meaning and being and as organising principles of identity, then we hope explorations into such states may provide the potential to open up new possibilities for politics and connection.

We invite papers and panel proposals that explore how negative states and conditions of being such as unhappiness, irresponsibility, passivity, vulnerability, failure, shame, hesitancy, pain, dispossession, rage, madness and depression may provide loci from which action and political engagement can arise.

Submission Guidelines

Please submit paper abstracts of 300-500 words along with a short biography of 100 words.

Panel proposals should include a 300-word description along with accompanying paper abstracts for the panel of 300-500 words. Please provide a short 100-word biography for each presenter.

Email submissions to: radicalnegativity@gmail.com by **Friday 14 February 2014**.