

SXST 4101/ WGST 5901B
Winter 2021

Interdisciplinary Studies in Sexuality
Special Topic: Queer Public Feelings in a Time of Pandemic

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This course will investigate queer affect theory and related fields as a resource for thinking about public feelings in a time of pandemic. The course will be an exploratory seminar – that is, it will respond to the rapidly shifting circumstances created by the covid-19 pandemic, including not knowing at the time of this writing whether the course will be taught in person or not. We will be aiming to create emotional and intellectual resources for understanding and surviving the present moment (including a history of the present).

The course will establish a foundation in queer affect theory by José Esteban Muñoz, Sara Ahmed, Lauren Berlant, Heather Love, and Amber Musser, among others, and will explore its roots in traditions of radical thought that include women of colour feminisms, HIV/AIDS cultural activisms, and pro-sex and queer feminisms. Related topics to be explored include art and cultural politics, archival activisms, trauma studies and cultural memory, queer of colour critique, queer indigenous and decolonial studies, queer crip and disability studies, transfeminisms, and queer and trans practices of collective care.

Students will be encouraged to develop their own independent final research projects, which will be workshopped in the class, and there will also be several “exercises” along the way designed to facilitate queer method and classroom community. This course draws on research and teaching I have done previously under the rubric of “public feelings,” but it is the first seminar I have taught at Carleton (for more background see my website, linked above). I will thus hope to adapt the course to the needs of students here as I learn more about you.