

DISCLOSURE: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE “CONFESSING ANIMAL”

Berlin, July 22-23, 2022

<https://disclosureconference.wordpress.com>

DISCLOSURE, a graduate student research group, is inviting participants for a two-day symposium set to explore the current state and future directions of the “confessing animal,” as Michel Foucault’s famous diagnosis from *The History of Sexuality* (1976/78) goes. Foucault was notably suspicious of what he saw as a ritual of voluntary self-subjugation, both in its ancient Christian and contemporary Freudian manifestations. After decades of Foucault-inspired suspicious criticism, *DISCLOSURE* seeks to rethink confession in light of the crises of accountability that are becoming the hallmark of twenty-first century social justice projects. Rather than a dated and coercive ritual of self-policing, we take confession to be a secular means of moral self-inquiry and an aesthetic of self-fashioning focused on character, defined by a set of moral values and principles—ethos. For our first symposium, we invite scholars working on adjacent topics to join us in asking what it means to confess in the twenty-first century. We especially welcome comparative and interdisciplinary approaches and perspectives broadening our understanding of what constitutes “confession” in different contexts. Proposals for papers, to be presented either in workshop or panel discussion format, may wish to address the following areas:

- Confession in literature: contemporary poetry, essay, memoir, autofiction and autotheory, narrative nonfiction
- Confession in performance and media: true crime, podcasts, vlogs and blogs, video games, social media, stand-up comedy, spoken word, performance art
- Confession in politics and the law: social justice movements (e.g., Me Too, Black Lives Matter), identity politics (e.g., LGBTQI+), law (e.g., plea bargaining)

Submission guidelines

Abstracts for papers (max. 300 words) must be sent to Sonja Pyykkö (pyykk@gsnas.fu-berlin.de) and Elizabeth Neumann (claraelin95@zedat.fu-berlin.de) by March 15, 2022. Please include a brief biographical note (max. 100 words) and indicate whether you would be interested in workshopping a draft or delivering a 20-minute presentation in a panel. The conference will be organized in hybrid format. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide grants to cover travel expenses. Please see our website for more details.

Organizing committee

Sonja Pyykkö (Graduate School of North American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin), Elizabeth Neumann, Felix Fischer, Constantine Helm, Hannah Maier-Katkin, Dilayda Tülübaş, Metin Turgut

For enquiries, please contact Elizabeth Neumann, claraelin95@zedat.fu-berlin.de.