



# Affect

## Call for Participation

Key Concepts of the Humanities and Social Sciences | GSAH | Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies

**Guest:** Prof. Dr. Eugenie Brinkema, Contemporary Literature and Media, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge

**Moderation:** Prof. Dr. Gabriele Rippl, Chair of North American Literature and Culture, Department of English, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Universität Bern

**Date/Room:** Public Lecture: June 3, 2021, 4.15 pm – 5.45 pm online via Zoom  
Colloquium: June 3, 2021, 6.15 pm – 8.00 pm online via Zoom  
June 4, 2021, 3.00 pm – 7.00 pm online via Zoom

**Zoom:** Meeting-ID: 620 7367 0195 / Code: 561241

**ECTS:** 1.5

**Application:** By April 20, 2021 to [toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch](mailto:toggweiler@wbkolleg.unibe.ch) and in KSL: <https://www.ksl.unibe.ch/> (Login with UniBe account, search with title)

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### Public Lecture

#### *Cinema and Affect*

Professor Brinkema's talk will begin with a genealogy of the turn to affect in cinema studies, articulating the different traditions that have taken seriously problems of sensation and emotion in relation to film texts and film spectatorship. It will then revisit the argument of her 2014 *The Forms of the Affects* in order to set out her claims about the relationship between aesthetic form and affects, and it will explore her more recent work on the need for a radical formalism, in particular when confronted with the affective and ethical extremes of horror and love. The case study of Quentin Dupieux's 2010 horror film *Rubber* will pose specific questions about how affect is to be read, how affects relate to objects, and the relationship between violence and the ethical. Reading the toroidal form of the killer tire in Dupieux's postmodern film, the talk will argue that the film stages a meta-formal thinking of two competing theories of affect: one bound to the anthropomorphic view of a diegetic chorus and the other attached to the vibrant life of non-correlated objects—only to disqualify both as providing the ground of an ethical critique of violence. Violence is re-described as being not catastrophic but catamorphic: a generalization of the folds of changing forms. *Rubber* thus attests to the positive limit of the ethical and redefines horror as the terrain on which a critique of violence is rendered good for nothing.

### Colloquium

*For PhD students and advanced Master students of the University of Bern*

Part 1 of the colloquium is dedicated to the discussion of the lecture and the texts suggested by the guest. In Part 2, a core group present their PhD thesis, speaking for about 20 minutes (English) on how concepts like "Affect" and related concepts connect to their research questions and which aspects of the texts are of particular relevance to their own work. The presenters raise questions for the discussion with their peers, which should contribute to the development of their thesis. Finally, in Part 3, the conversation will open up again so that the other PhD or advanced MA-students have an opportunity to address issues related to their projects.

#### Required reading:

Brinkema, Eugenie 2020: *The Violence of a Fascination with\* a Visible Form (on Martyrs, Cruelty, Horror, Ethics) [\*on and vs. with vs. as]. In: Postmodern Culture 30:2.*

Brinkema, Eugenie 2014: *The Forms of the Affects*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, pp. 26-46 (chapter 2: *Film Theory's Absent Center*).

Williams, Linda 1999: *Film Bodies. Gender, Genre, and Excess*. In: *Film Quarterly* 44:4, pp. 2-13.



**Eugenie Brinkema** is Associate Professor of Contemporary Literature and Media at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her research focuses on violence, affect, sexuality, aesthetics, and ethics in texts ranging from the horror film to gonzo pornography, from structuralist film to the visual and temporal forms of terrorism. Her articles have appeared in the journals *Angelaki*, *Camera Obscura*, *Criticism*, *differences*, *Discourse*, *film-philosophy*, *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, *qui parle*, and *World Picture*. Her first book, *The Forms of the Affects*, was published with Duke University Press in 2014. Her second book, *Life-Destroying Diagrams*, explores radical formalism's relationship to horror and love, and will be coming out in November of this year (2021), also with Duke. More information about the new book is available here: <https://www.dukeupress.edu/life-destroying-diagrams>