

CFP – Feeling Class: Emotions, Bodies and the Affective Politics of Social Inequality

-- University of Sheffield – Tuesday 5th May 2020 --

This event aims to bring together scholars from across disciplines to discuss the embodied, emotional and affective dynamics of class. Although not always explicitly positioned, principle subjects currently engaging the (re)turn to class have clear emotional and embodied dimensions. For example: classed and geographical processes of stigmatization and marginality manifest in emotional states and bodily feelings (Nayak, 2019); institutions and occupations have imparted themselves on working-class bodies through injury, disability and trauma (Selway, 2016); and resistance to this exploitation is often through the affectively intense practice of solidarity (Kelliher, 2015). Studies of solidarity highlight the need to acknowledge and celebrate the many positive aspects of working-class culture that bring emotionally and bodily therapeutic respite from social inequalities – humour, laughter, care, community, hope. Relatedly, memory and heritage, at the forefront of deindustrialization studies, are also deeply emotional, evoking intensities of nostalgia and comfort, as well as loss and mourning (Emery, 2019). Such emotional-temporal states are, in turn, linked to belonging and its spatiality, central topics within working-class studies, and concepts that are emotional, embodied and atmospheric (High, 2018). Relatedly, there is emerging research in geography that suggests that austerity has been conducive to the production of new affective atmospheres – or structures of feeling (Hitchen, 2019). To what extent austerity, and neoliberalism more broadly, has given rise to entirely new affective class conditions is circumspect however, considering the literature on social haunting, legacies, transmissions and other affective-intergenerational dimensions surrounding the ‘psychic landscapes of class’ (Reay, 2005; Bright, 2016; Walkerdine, 2015; Mah, 2012). Critically, it is the affective politics of nostalgia, belonging, alienation and austerity that is attached by many to the (re-)emergence of far-right and extremist radicalisms, with the working-class firmly at the centre of these debates (Bhambra, 2017).

This free one-day conference held at the **University of Sheffield, UK** will advance understanding of the contemporary working-class experience in its historical, intersectional and geographical complexities. It will appeal to scholars in geography, sociology, historical studies, political sciences, urban studies, literary studies and other disciplines interested in multifaceted experiences of class and working toward a more empathetic and just class politics.

Keynote lecture by Professor Anoop Nayak, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University, UK

Abstracts of up to **300 words** are invited for 20 minute papers exploring the emotional, affective and/or embodied dynamics of class, including, but not limited to:

- Stigma
- Deindustrialization
- Neoliberalism/austerity
- Marginality/exclusion
- Memory/nostalgia
- Class politics
- Belonging/alienation
- Heritage
- Working-class culture

Please send abstracts to Dr. Jay Emery (j.emery@sheffield.ac.uk) by **Friday 31st January 2020**.



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