

# **INCOHERENCE:** **expression, translation, violence**

Cultural, Social, and Political Thought Conference

University of Victoria

April 21 - 22, 2012

## *Final Program*

Workshop Space: DSB C116

Registration: DSB C114

Meals: SSM Kitchen



[csptconference2012.wordpress.com](http://csptconference2012.wordpress.com)  
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# Welcome

Today, struggles around thinking alternatives to dominant social, cultural and political positions are often dubbed "incoherent" and moves are made to translate such struggles into "coherent" or "possible" possibilities. These kinds of actions take place in and through a wide variety of sites and work through multiple methods, from attempts to coherently narrativize what is not easily reconstructed, to constructing a materially recognizable space or identity for that which resists such categorizations. We can often observe coherence-seeking moves in popular responses to social movements - the Occupy movement and the 2011 London riots are two such rich venues for thought. Through them, it is possible to trace the often violent ways indeterminate expression is translated into coherent, if illegitimate, action. This kind of violence is polyvalent, exemplified in a diversity of shifting methods, as practices of exclusion and co-optation respond to incoherent challenges. However, it is also necessary to think through these contexts in considering the production and reproduction of "coherence" and "incoherence" as a (problematic) duality, the way in which we tend to think in coherence. As an interpretive thematic, in/coherence can be explored in ways that destabilize the binary reduction of "coherence versus incoherence".

It is our hope that this event, the fourth annual graduate student event of the Cultural, Social and Political Thought Program at the University of Victoria, will offer a venue to explore these critical questions, through both the presentation of papers and fruitful discussion in the workshops, around them, and beyond them.

# Agenda

*Saturday, April 21, 2012*

|       |                                                              |
|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:00  | Coffee, breakfast, registration                              |
| 9:45  | Welcome & introduction to workshops                          |
| 10:00 | Keynote: Bruce Braun, Minnesota                              |
| 11:30 | Narratives I                                                 |
| 1:00  | Lunch                                                        |
| 2:00  | Spatiotemporalities                                          |
| 3:30  | Presentation by Serina Zapf and Soma Morse                   |
| 4:15  | Coffee break                                                 |
| 4:30  | Narratives II                                                |
| 7:00  | Reception at Cenote Restaurant and Lounge<br>(768 Yates St.) |

*Sunday, April 22, 2012*

|       |                                  |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| 9:30  | Coffee & breakfast               |
| 10:00 | Plenary: Peyman Vahabzadeh, Uvic |
| 11:30 | Materialities                    |
| 1:00  | Lunch                            |
| 2:00  | Narratives III                   |
| 3:30  | Coffee and wrap-up               |

Keynote Lecture: Dr. Bruce Braun, University of Minnesota  
*"Environment as infrastructure: eventful natures and resilient cities"*

Taking a recent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) as a point of departure, this talk explores the remaking of environment as infrastructure in ongoing efforts to design New York City as a resilient socio-ecological system. Underlying this transformation is a novel understanding of the city as a complex system that can exist in multiple states, and as nested in a hierarchy of dynamic systems of similar character, such that small changes to any one system can result in unpredictable effects that cascade across multiple levels. Understood thus, urban life is seen to be haunted by the specter of what Brian Massumi describes as 'indiscriminable' threats, indistinguishable from a general environment that is 'overfull' with potential. Moving out from the MOMA exhibition, the talk details the knowledge practices, logistics, and apparatuses of government that accompany this shift, and concludes by exploring two questions. How might these practices elaborate, complicate or strain the definition of 'environmentality' that Foucault developed in his last lectures? And does resilient urbanism represent the integration of nature and society, as is often claimed, or might it re-enact a fundamental division between nature and society, now no longer in terms of space, but in terms of time?

Saturday, April 21, 2012, 11:30 AM

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## *Narratives I*

*Introduction:* Laura Anctil, University of Victoria

"Czeslaw Milosz's "Thin Membrane": Creating Space for Alternative Expression of the Past in Poetry" Kirsten Alm, Trinity Western University

"The Teratology of Knowledge: Subjugated Histories and the Limits of Acceptability" Tim Fryatt, University of Victoria

"Silent Adoration and the Omnipotent State: An Exploration into Death and the Monumentalization of Law" Sara Hassani, University of Ottawa

"Always Decolonize!: A Critique of the Call to "Always Indigenize!" Elna Hill, University of Victoria

"A Critique of Adult-Child Hierarchies in Art Galleries" Katie Lefevre, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design

*Discussant:* Greg Blue, University of Victoria

Saturday, April 21, 2012, 2:00 PM

DSB C116

## *Spatiotemporalities*

*Introduction:* Adam Molnar, University of Victoria

"Tents Occupying the City - Unsettling Spatial Fixity & Staging Equality" Patrick Ciaschi, McMaster University

"Interpreting the Paradoxical Effects of Neoliberal 'Skills Discourse' on Political Membership," Corey Ranford-Robinson, University of Victoria

"Post-Home: Critiques of Domesticity within The Secret Agent, "The Machine Stops," and Crash" Rachel Shields, Lehman College

"(De)Territorializing Somalia, Identifying Somalis: History, Anthropology, (Geo)Politics" Tim Vasko, University of Victoria

*Discussant:* Rob Walker, University of Victoria

Saturday, April 21, 2012, 3:30 PM

DSB C116

## "Vernacular":

A presentation by Serina Zapf and Soma Morse

Saturday, April 21, 2012, 4:30 PM

DSB C116

## *Narratives II*

*Introduction:* Joanna Cordeiro, University of Victoria

"Palestinian Nonviolent Struggle: Challenging Conventions of Peace, Violence and Democracy" Michael Carpenter, University of Victoria

"Symbolic Violence and the 2011 London Riots" Kevin Elliott, University of Victoria

"Metis Historical Narratives and the Imagination of Canadian Sovereignty" Adam Gaudry, University of Victoria

"Trans-identified People's Citizenship in the Liberal Democratic State" Aleta Gruenewald, University of Victoria

"A time for justice: The unfolding of History in the Iranian 2009 Show-Trials" Setareh Shohadaei, University of Ottawa

*Discussant:* Rob Hancock, University of Victoria

Sunday, April 22, 2012, 10:00 AM

DSB C116

Plenary Lecture: Dr. Peyman Vahabzadeh, University of Victoria  
*"Suggestion, Substitution, Dissolution: Invitation to a Weak Project"*

This paper offers a glance into the regional ontologies of political positions and views action in relation to the comportment of Being in our age of accomplished metaphysics. Political positions are enabled by suggestion, substitution, and dissolution. We witness in both the motility of Being and in the rehabilitation of original configurations of beings possibilities for action. A "weak ontology" is the proper way of understanding political life in our age of diversity.

Sunday, April 22, 2012, 11:30 AM

DSB C116

*Materialities*

*Introduction:* Jeanette Parker, University of Victoria

"Fabulations are not realistic: on video art & feminism",

Rébecca Lavoie, Concordia University

"Disa/accessibility : Deafness and challenges to able bodied culture", Véro Leduc, University of Montreal

"Fomenting Coherence: Biopolitical Expectations in Wolf Narratives of the West" Michael Lukas, University of Victoria

"The Spatial and Temporal Axes of Facebook's Drive to Digitality" Liam Mitchell, University of Victoria

"Vernacular" Serina Zapf & Soma Morse, performance artists

*Discussant:* Nicole Shukin, University of Victoria

Sunday, April 22, 2012, 2:00 PM

DSB C116

### *Narratives III*

*Introduction:* Stefan Morales, Wayward School co-director, Acadia University alumnus

"On 'Being at Home' or Perhaps Not", Laticia Chapman, University of Victoria

"That's not the shape of my finger!': Meditationes de Idiomatica Philosophia", Sagi Cohen, University of Ottawa

"Aesthetics of coherence in political thought: engaging impredicativity" Simon Labrecque, University of Victoria

"A politics of play – 'Jogar' with Whiteheadian process philosophy", Katja Philipp, Concordia University

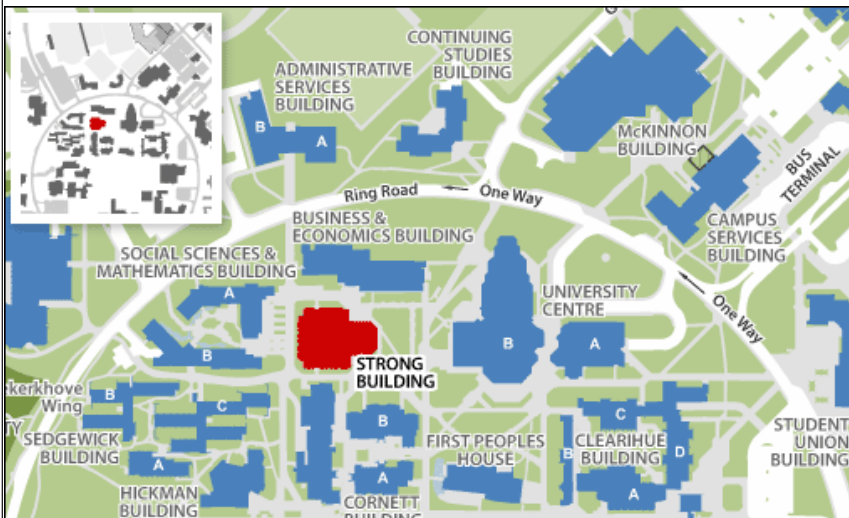
*Discussant:* Bruce Braun, University of Minnesota

Sunday, April 22, 2012, 3:30 PM

DSB C116

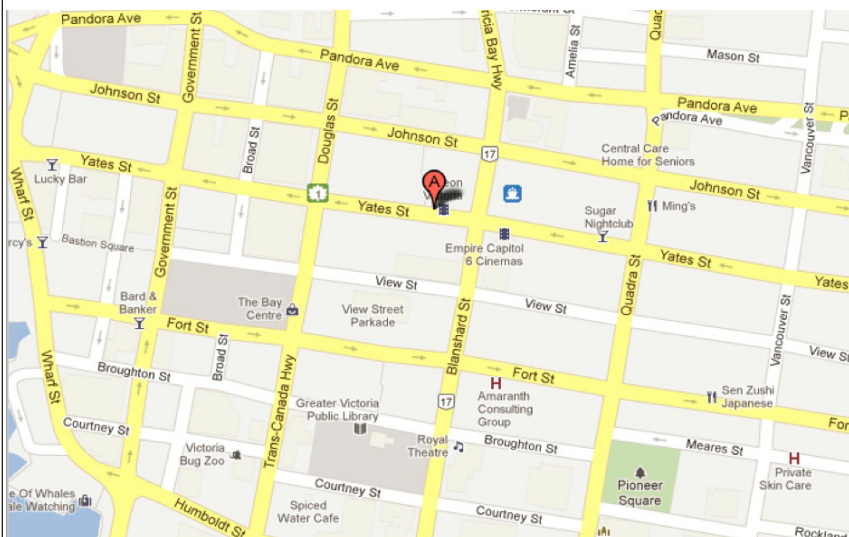
Coffee and Conference Wrap-Up

## Maps & Directions



*David Strong Building*  
 C116: Workshop Room  
 C114: Registration Room

*Social Science and Math Building*  
 A2--: Breakfast and Lunch Space



*Cenote Restaurant and Lounge: 768 Yates St. (A)*  
 Buses 4, 7, and 14 from Uvic travel downtown frequently (\$2.50) -  
 take bus to Douglas and Yates.

# Thank you

This conference has been made possible by the Cultural Social and Political Thought Program. Now in its 23rd year, CSPT continues to be a key site for creative and provocative thinking at Uvic. The organizing committee is grateful to the many graduate students, CSPT alumni, faculty and staff who have been involved in the thinking, planning, and staging of this event. We would especially like to thank Dr. Nicole Shukin, CSPT director, for organizing us as a committee and offering invaluable guidance and advice along the way, and the CSPT program assistant, Karen Erwin, whose administrative expertise has been indispensable. We would also like to thank the faculty and students who have agreed to act as discussants and introduce the workshops that make up this conference.

This year's event has received critical financial support from the CSPT Program, the Deans of Graduate Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Departments of Political Science and Geography, the Graduate Students Society at Uvic, the Political Science Graduate Students Group, and *Peninsula: a journal of relational politics*. We are also thankful to Discovery Coffee and Cenote Restaurant and Lounge for providing us with food, drink and a venue for evening imbibing at seriously reduced prices. This event would not be possible without the generosity of these groups and individuals. Thank you!

## Peninsula: A Journal of Relational Politics

Did you submit a paper to this year's CSPT conference? Are you interested in publishing it? The University of Victoria's graduate journal in political theory may be for you. *Peninsula: A Journal of Relational Politics* would like to publish papers (or reviews, reflections, or works of art) from a range of methodological approaches that offer readings of in/coherence. We will accept papers in French or English and publish them in a single peer-reviewed issue in the early summer.

For detailed information on the submission process, please visit [uvic.ca/peninsula](http://uvic.ca/peninsula) or contact the editor, Liam Mitchell ([liamm@uvic.ca](mailto:liamm@uvic.ca)). He'll be at the conference so please come up and say hello.