



Thursday, 16 October 2014, 5:00 –6:30 pm  
A. D. Hope Conference Room (Level 1), Building 14  
The Australian National University, Canberra

# Queer Theory's Queer Sex

Professor Robyn Wiegman, Duke University

For readers uninitiated into the critical concerns of queer theory, the prospect of talking about queer sex might herald a thrilling departure from the conventions of everyday sexual and gender forms. Weird, wild, naughty, depraved: the adjectives proliferate against a background drawn in muted tones:



straight, domestic, uneventful, routine. But the stories that queer theory tells about the sex we might call its own are not always perversely pleasing. Whether in the language of "Is the Rectum a Grave?", No Future, Extravagant Abjection, or Sex, or the Unbearable, the field has shown a primary interest in the negativity of sex, not its lusty or liberatory redemption. This talk parses the analytic and political differences at stake in the ongoing debate about negativity, paying particular attention to the way that race has been figured as the decisive term for both valuing and rejecting negativity's critical allure.

Professor of Literature and Women's Studies at Duke University, ROBYN WIEGMAN has published *Object Lessons* (2012) and *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (1995), and numerous anthologies, including *Women's Studies on Its Own* (2002) and *Feminism Beside Itself* (1995). She is currently working on *Arguments Worth Having*, which locates points of critical dissension in contemporary encounters between feminist, queer, and critical race thinking.

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