

Fall 2013 Fisher Center Speaker Series presents

OUR BODIES, OURSELVES?



A Body with New Organs: Becoming Trans, Becoming Disabled

Wednesday, Nov. 13

7:30 p.m.

Geneva Room, Warren Hunting Smith Library

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In this paper I historically situate the most current intersectional flavors of the day, “trans” and “disabled,” through their emergence as the latest newcomers to the intersectional fray. I look at how their parallel yet rarely intersecting epistemological constructs—both come into being, or becoming, in the early 90s in the academy as well as in broader political terms and movements—require exceptionalizing both the trans body and the disabled body in order to convert the debility of a non-normative body into a form of social and cultural capacity, whether located in state recognition, identity politic formations, market economies, the medical industrial complex, or subject positioning. I argue that the potential politics of trans disability are seemingly only perceived in terms of the intersectional “trans-disabled subject” or the “disabled trans subject.” Using assemblage theory to advance the relationships between trans and disability beyond an intersectional rubric of subject identification, I elaborate a politics of conviviality through engagements with the medicalization of the body that might de-exceptionalize the transgressive tendencies of trans and disabled in favor of a shared politics.

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Jasbir K. Puar is associate professor of women's & gender studies at Rutgers University. She has also been a visiting lecturer in the department of performance studies at NYU and a visiting fellow at the Institute for Cultural Inquiry in Berlin. She received her Ph.D. in ethnic studies from the University of California at Berkeley in 1999 and an M.A. from the University of York (UK) in women's studies in 1993. Her research interests include gender, sexuality, globalization; postcolonial and diaspora studies; South Asian cultural studies; and theories of assemblage and affect.

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