

The Corporeality Working Group

Thomas F. DeFrantz and Gustavo Furtado, directors, presents:

Humorlessness/Politics

A Talk by Lauren Berlant

January 30th at 5 PM

East Duke 204 B



“Finally Got the News”

Abstract: This paper addresses humorlessness as ontology, performance, and affect; and as threat and aspiration. It asks how the encounter with humorlessness structures the political scene and style of encounter, and it looks at how unlearning attachment to some styles of it without repairing its force have been modeled aesthetically as performance. Its cases range from the League of Revolutionary Black Workers' documentary, *Finally Got the News* (1970) to some contemporary political art of Steve McQueen, William Pope.L, and Claire Pentecost. The talk is humorless, among other things. This is a first foray into a new project.

Bio: Lauren Berlant is George M. Pullman Professor of English at the University of Chicago. Her national sentimentality trilogy — *The Anatomy of National Fantasy* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City* (Duke University Press, Durham, 1997), and *The Female Complaint* (Duke University Press, Durham, 2008) — morphed into a quartet with her celebrated book *Cruel Optimism* (2011), on precarious publics and the aesthetics of affective adjustment in the U.S. and Europe. A co-editor of *Critical Inquiry*, she is also editor of *Intimacy* (University of Chicago Press, 2000); *Our Monica, Ourselves: The Clinton Affair and the National Interest* (New York University Press, 2001); *Compassion: The Culture and Politics of an Emotion* (Routledge, New York, 2004); and *On the Case* (*Critical Inquiry*, Chicago, 2007).

Sponsors: African & African American Studies, Franklin Humanities Institute, Romance Studies, Women's Studies, Literature, Art History and Visual Studies, SLIPPAGE:Performance, Culture, Technology

For more information: t.defrantz@duke.edu

SLIPPAGE
PERFORMANCE CULTURE TECHNOLOGY