

## **Thinking as a Way of Life CFP**

### **Graduate Conference in Cultural, Social and Political Thought**

**University of Victoria (Unceded Lekwungen Territory), April 26-27th, 2014**

In contrast to traditional notions of thinking as a practice of abstract contemplation, we suggest that thinking is always already an intervention into the social field within which it is necessarily embedded. Thinking is thus deeply political, carrying significant implications for how we live together. In this sense, we are called to reflect on, and perhaps challenge, the social, historical, and institutional boundaries that inform how we engage and relate to critical issues of our time. We are also called to venture beyond the comforts of traditional disciplinary arenas into less stable terrains, where new thought, new ways of life, and new worlds become possible. To this end, this conference invites submissions that creatively and irreverently explore how thinking involves the formation and cultivation of a 'way of life'.

It is in the spirit of the Cultural, Social and Political Thought (CSPT) program's 25th anniversary that we would like to reflect and challenge, once again, thinking as a way of life in a 21st century context. Since 1989, participants in the CSPT program have critically engaged with, and sought creative intellectual alternatives to, contemporary manifestations of power across an array of problematics and political sites. In response to dominant regimes of disciplinary knowledge production, the CSPT community has been committed to an inter-, multi-, and anti-disciplinary style of thinking that allows for the cross-pollination of ideas between communities of knowledge. As such, it has fostered an academic environment dedicated to thinking (at) the limits of traditional frames of analysis, sites of study, and hierarchical epistemes. It is through this practice of thinking that CSPT's critical potential lies, and through which it hopes to offer a contribution to emancipatory politics

Broadly, we invite proposals that explore the intersection between power and knowledge, and the ways thinking impacts how we live together. More specifically, we ask, what modes of thinking are required or made possible in relation to new

forms of capitalism, colonialism, biopolitics, heteronormativity, indigeneity, and technology? In what ways can inter- and multi-disciplinary research adequately address these shifting landscapes, especially when such work is, despite its efforts, often subject to those governing structures and disciplinary mechanisms that it seeks to destabilize? What are the structural and methodological conditions of possibility for thinking as an instance of political engagement today? Finally, what kinds of cultural, social, and political thought are of interest to those who are struggling to realize a world in which people are free to govern their own affairs? The theme of this conference, then, is at once critical and positive: we seek to explore relations of power in the hopes of thinking new ways of life and radical political formations.

This year's CSPT conference will integrate the work of critical thinkers within and outside of the university. Our aim is to foster a multimedia and multi-disciplinary environment within which academics, artists, and members of various communities can explore together the political landscape within which thinking takes place, and the relation of knowledge to other forms of power and practice. As part of the exploration of thinking as a way of life, we strongly encourage applicants to playfully experiment with the format of their contributions.

### Possible Topics

- Art, Aesthetics, Resistance
- Thresholds of Nature and Culture: Biopolitics, Posthumanism, Animality
- The City, the State, the Global, the University: The Space and Time of Politics
- Hacking Academia: Digital Technology, Network Sovereignty, and Coding Culture
- Zones of Autonomous Thinking: Safer Spaces, Grassroots Movements, Open Communities of Knowledge
- Epistemologies of Resistance, Methodologies of Capture
- The Restructuring and Corporatization of the University
- Critique and Co-optation
- Settler Colonialism, Decolonization
- Gender and Sexual Politics

- Civic and Political Dis/Engagement
- Subjectivity, Alterity, and Relationality

Please submit expressions of interest between 250-350 words to [thinkingwayoflife@gmail.com](mailto:thinkingwayoflife@gmail.com) by February 15th 2014. These could include papers, presentations, performances, installations, or other works. Depending on our financial resources, a limited number of travel grants may be available for participants, please indicate if you would like to be considered for these funds.

Supported by the Cultural, Social and Political Thought Program.