

**UNTETHERING QUEER: THINKING BEYOND THE NORMATIVE/ANTINORMATIVE BINARY IN QUEER  
POLITICAL, PERSONAL, AND PEDAGOGICAL LIFE  
LONG TABLE SESSION AT THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THEATRE RESEARCH  
CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS**

*The queer conviction that it is the antinormativity of certain practices or self-stylings that make them recognizable as political means that antinormativity stands, mostly unchallenged, as queer theory's privileged figure for the political.*

*The tautological character of the short loop that binds antinormativity to the political, however, invites us to think about the political usefulness of a queer theory untethered from its antinormative tendencies; that is, a queer theory that, for all the productive critical leverage the concept of antinormativity has given us, might not be antinormative at its definitional heart.*

—Annemarie Jagose, “The Trouble with Antinormativity” (2015:27)

While considerable work in queer theory has been founded on the assumption that antinormativity is a fundamental character of queering scholarship and practice, more recent work has begun to question this investment (see Duggan 2015; Halberstam 2015; Wiegman and Wilson 2015; Tongson 2014; Jacobson 1998; among others). This debate has become increasingly important in light of the recent US presidential election and the threat to basic civil rights it threatens, if not promises. (If not the end of the world, this is at least the end of the world as we know it.) In this open roundtable discussion, participants will consider the implications of denouncing antinormativity in activism, performance, and daily life. What do we lose if we, as queer theorists, are no longer fastened to the realm of the anti-normative? Furthermore, the roundtable will consider how antinormativity is often only tenable from a position of privilege: Who is given the freedom and liberty to refuse normativity without reprisal? Through this line of questioning, the roundtable will consider the intersections and divisions of activism, performance, and scholarship in relation to performing queer activism and queer theory.

**POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:**

- What do we lose if we lose antinormativity?
- Who performs antinormativity?
- How does queer theory in academia lose the ability to perform queerness (particularly if it is no longer invested in antinormativity?)
- How does a discussion on antinormativity/normativity in and of itself reinscribe binaries that queer theory seems to want to destabilize and denounce?

**PROPOSALS:** Those interested in participating are asked to send a short statement (250-500 words) with their stance on queer theory and anti-normativity, which will be shared online with other roundtable members three weeks before the conference. During the long table, participants will present concise, two-to-three-minute summaries of their stances.

**STRUCTURE:** Following the format of Lois Weaver’s “long-table discussion” “an experimental open public forum that is a hybrid performance-installation-roundtable-discussion-dinner-party designed to facilitate dialogue through the gathering together of people with common interests” (LADA 2014), this discussion will, literally, invite participants to the table. After the initial presentations, audience-participants who wish to join the conversation may gently tap a currently seated participant on the shoulder, and that participant will offer their place at the table to the audience-participant.

**DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS:** February 15, 2017

Please contact [laineyale@gmail.com](mailto:laineyale@gmail.com) with your proposal or any queries