

LECTURE SERIES

**Tuesday,
3rd October
2017**

12:15 - 13:15

Campus Biotech
Room 144.165
9, chemin des Mines
Geneva

On the poetics of disgust in naturalist fiction

Prof. Riikka Rossi

(University of Helsinki)

The lecture explores disgust in literature and focuses on naturalist fiction in particular. In the nineteenth-century, naturalist literature received adverse publicity as “disgust literature,” inciting moral indignation and accusations of indecency in reading audiences. By analyzing case studies in French and Finnish literature, I offer an overview to disgust-triggering topics in naturalism and decadence, to their natural, aesthetic and moral aspects and the constellation of emotions within this literary movement. I consider my fictional examples to be illustrative of the complexity of “negative” emotions. While disgust has sometimes been considered as a morally suspect emotion per se, it also unveils a “cathartic” potential; triggering disgust in art can be used for critical purposes. Literature not only depicts emotions but also adjusts our emotions and understanding of reality, thus shaping the emotional communities we live in ■

Swiss Doctoral School in Affective Sciences

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