

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Schwab: "Transspecies Selves"

University of California, Irvine

HOSTED BY LEIBNIZ SCIENCECAMPUS VISITING PROFESSOR
CLAUDIA SADOWSKI-SMITH (ASU)

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2:15–3:15 pm
H 10

Prof. Dr.
Gabriele
Schwab

Transspecies
Selves

Gabriele M. Schwab is Distinguished Professor at the University of California, Irvine. She holds appointments in the departments of Comparative Literature, Anthropology, English and European Languages and Studies. A recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Heisenberg Fellowship, her research ranges across critical theory, psychoanalysis, trauma studies, ecology, literature and anthropology, and 20th- and 21st century comparative literatures.

Monographs in English include *Subjects Without Selves: Transitional Texts in Modern Fiction* (1994), *The Mirror and the Killer-Queen: Otherness in Literary Language* (1996), *Haunting Legacies: Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma* (2010), *Imaginary Ethnographies: Literature, Subjectivity, Culture* (2012 Winner of the 2014 Choice Award for Best Academic Book), and *Radioactive Ghosts* (2020). She is also the editor of several collections, including *Accelerating Possession: Global Futures of Property and Personhood* (2006 with Bill Mauer); *Derrida, Deleuze, Psychoanalysis* (2007) and *Clones, Fakes and Posthumans: Cultures of Replication* (2012 with Philomena Essed). She is currently completing a monograph on Samuel Beckett's Poetics of the End Times and working on a new book project on Transspecies Imaginaries.

We might wonder whether we have reached a stage at which the massive intervention into the natural order of things forces us to extend our sense of species-being to include all living species.

In this talk, Schwab argues that such a shift would mean thinking of humans as trans-species beings, which does not refer to posthuman trans-species reproduction but the fact that humans are always already co-constructed in relation with other species. As corporeal, sensuous beings, humans share vulnerability and mortality with other species and are dependent on sustainable environments for their wellbeing.

The extent to which human capitalist economies have threatened the life of a sustainable planet by exploiting its resources generates a particular responsibility and obligation to care. We are, in other words, at a historical conjuncture where our ethics of care needs to include trans-species care and our ecologies of mind and personhood need to become grounded in a sense of transspecies selves.