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SOSIALE GERECHTIGHEID

**In collaboration
with the English
Department**



Invitation: Critical Conversation | Prof. Susan Spearey

Date: 11th February 2014

Time: 17:15-18:30

Place: The Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice, DF Malherbe House

RSVP: vannestel@ufs.ac.za

Mindfulness and the Erosion of the Humanities



Susan Spearey is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Brock University and an affiliated faculty member in the Interdisciplinary PhD in the Humanities, the interdisciplinary MA in Social Justice and Equity Studies and the Social Justice Research Institute. Her research focuses on post-conflict literature and culture, and on pedagogies of witnessing.

This talk explores the potential for mindfulness and related embodied awareness practices to enhance the ability of students and instructors in the Humanities to engage with and respond to different forms of crisis that emanate from the framing of post-secondary education at this moment in late capitalism. It investigates how the incorporation of mindfulness practices in the Humanities classroom potentially opens space for individuals and collectives to engage attentively and ethically with questions of power, social justice and transformative potential, and to loosen the hold of cycles of "compulsive becoming" that entrain learners to reproduce the logic of prevailing paradigms of social control. The talk takes as its point of departure a co-authored paper by David Fancy and Susan Spearey entitled, "Mindfulness and the Erosion of the Humanities," and seeks, by way of a critical conversation with attendees, to read the impact of the crises of late capitalism on post-secondary education in the global north—the contextual conditions on which the paper concentrates— alongside the transformation initiatives currently underway at the University of the Free State.

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