

[The Big No: C21 Spring 2017 conference at UW-Milwaukee](#)

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

February 1, 2017

Location:

Wisconsin, United States

Subject Fields:

Philosophy, Political Science, Humanities, Literature, Cultural History / Studies

The Center for 21st Century Studies invites proposals for papers and presentations for our Spring 2017 conference, **The Big No**, to be held April 27-29, 2017. **Deadline for proposals is February 1, 2017.**

Confirmed plenaries include **Joshua Clover**, **Katerina Kolozova**, **François Laruelle**, **Ariana Reines**, and **Frank B. Wilderson III**.

What does “no” say? Who and what says “no?”

No’s eruptive force transforms the argumentative landscape. From two-year old children to mature nation-states, the interruptive immediacy of naysaying can occur at surprising and inconvenient moments. The ability to refuse emerges early and maintains its appeal and power. In cultures of capitalist consumption, “no” has the power to defend and upend assumptions of order and propriety. From Thoreau to Gandhi to Marcuse, the will to nothing has provided a source of individual and collective creation.

Refusals dramatically reshape politics, nationhood, sovereignty, and land. Twice over the past 75 years the Greeks have famously declared their own version of No, “OXI”; the Brexiters aimed to withdraw from the European Union without proposing an alternative; Native Americans from across the continent have come together against DAPL in a collective refusal. The contexts of “No” involve political, economic, even physical risks, making naysaying an often difficult and complex act.

“No” can be a language of protest and overcoming. Its power operates across lines of disciplines and ideology, across modes of writing and the refusal to write. Negation can resist or avoid authority, or can identify and highlight forces which insist on forms of complicity and agreement. The lines between different forms—the conservative “no,” the creative “no,” the “no” of the striker or dissident—deny the clarity of lines of ideology or identity. “No” also brings about its own failures and dangers: of inaction, of regret, of retribution.

We invite proposals for papers and presentations. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Policies and programs of naysaying
- No as a refusal of patriarchy
- Queerness or refusals of gender

- The “No means No” movement
- Afro-Pessimism and social negation
- The feminist killjoy
- Non-philosophy and non-aesthetics
- Historically significant refusals
- Disidentification and nonsovereignty
- Disrupting hierarchies & taxonomies
- Rhetorics and narratives of naysaying
- Ressentiment and declination
- Activism, protest, and occupation
- Non-Anthropocene and nonanthropocentrism
- Disability versus nonability
- Refusing bureaucracy
- Bureaucratic refusal
- The unproductivity of saying no
- Naysaying and inaction

Send abstract (250 words), including your university affiliation, department, and position, by Wednesday, February 1, 2017 to Kennan Ferguson, Director, Center for 21st Century Studies at c21@uwm.edu.

Contact Info:

Kennan Ferguson, Director, Center for 21st Century Studies (C21)

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<http://www4.uwm.edu/c21/pages/events/conferences.html>