

Equal Opportunities International 2009 Track proposal

Proposed title: Hope, Fear, Shame, Anger, Disappointment and Pride: Emotions, Diversity and In/Equalities in Organisations

Proposed track chairs: *Please indicate name, affiliation, and contact details including emails.*

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Track outline:

Whilst there has been a veritable outpouring of academic work on emotions in recent organisational theory, there has been very little explicit theorisation or research on emotions, feelings, affect diversity and in/equalities. This stream starts to address this relative gap by examining how recent social theory on emotions might help understand many different aspects of the operations of inequalities and equalities work in organisations. Drawing inspiration from the recent work of Sara Ahmed on the cultural politics of emotions, it explores issues such as:

- the so-called backlash to equal opportunities by dominant groups;
- anxiety, nervousness, confrontation and defensiveness in diversity training;
- organisational diversity pride; leaders' 'passion' for and commitment to diversity; diversity awards and the 'glossification' and 'showcasing' of diversity (Prasad and Mills, 1997,);
- equality and diversity and white shame (Hunter, 2007)
- equality and diversity fatigue and weariness; the emotional labour of diversity workers; the hope for change; the disappointment and despair of continued inequalities;
- social, cultural, national and geographic conceptions of emotions and /inequalities

The stream will provide a forum for empirical and theoretical work; work in progress; and emotions but which move away from essentialising or de-politicising emotions.

Track questions:

How might recent work on emotions in organisations illuminate current thinking on inequalities and equalities in organisations?

How might thinking on emotions enhance current ideas about diversity and equality interventions in organisations?

How do emotional concepts and emotional practices vary across different national and cultural boundaries?

How might transnational feminisms and anti-racisms help us understand differing views on emotions and in/equalities and the work of diversity and equality workers?
How might research on emotions develop understanding of how inequalities and equalities work/operate in organisations?

Key words:

Emotion; Hope; Disappointment; Anger; Fear; Pride; Anxiety; Organisational processes; Inequalities; Diversity workers; diversity training