**SPA-ing with Politics: Equality, Difference and Division**

**May 23rd 2023, Reed Hall, University of Exeter**

**Organised by Bice Maiguashca (Politics), Nigel Pleasants (Philosophy/Sociology) and Katharine Tyler (Anthropology)**

This event is to mark the inauguration of our newly merged department of Social and Political Sciences, Philosophy, and Anthropology. We hope that the event will help further consolidate and celebrate our new intellectual community by exploring, reflecting on, and developing our shared commitment to, and interests in, social justice and decolonising the University. Our aim is to bring together our thoroughly interdisciplinary, methodologically pluralistic, and theoretically diverse new department. We are keen for this event to stimulate a generous and collegiate conversation around the ethics and politics of equality and difference.

**0930-1000:** **Arrival and coffee**

**1000-1015: Introduction**

**1015–1200**: **Roundtable 1: Examining ‘the colonial’ in relation to the social sciences and humanities**

This round table brings together an International Relations scholar and human rights activist, a political theorist and an anthropologist, each of whom will introduce the ways in which they think about and explore questions of the colonial and ideas of coloniality in their work.

Chair: Bice Maiguashca

1015-1030: Farah Mihlar, Politics, Oxford Brooks

1030-1045: Ross Carol, Politics, SPSPA

1045-1100: Katharine Tyler, Anthropology, SPSPA

1100-1200: Open discussion

**1200-1315: Buffet Lunch at Reed Hall**

**1315-1500: Roundtable 2: The University as the site of equality, difference and division**

In this panel we shift attention from the enmeshment of the colonial in our research directed outwith the University, to the University itself, as the contested site of coloniality, power and division; and knowledge equality, difference and diversity.

Chair: Katharine Tyler

1315-1330: Kirsten Walsh, philosophy, SPSPA

1330-1345: Charlie Masquelier, Sociology, SPSPA

1345-1400: John Heathershaw, Politics, SPSPA

1400-1500: Open Discussion

**1500–1530: Tea and Coffee**

**1530–1730: A discussion with Sophie Grace Chappell, Professor of Philosophy at the Open University**

Chair: Nigel Pleasants

Sophie Grace Chappell is a public intellectual making incisive interventions on urgent questions of inequality from the standpoint of a moral philosopher. Her main interests in philosophy are ethics, the philosophy of literature, the philosophy of sex and gender, ancient and mediaeval philosophy, epistemology, and philosophy of religion. Her most recent book is [*E**piphanies: an Ethics of Experience*](https://academic.oup.com/book/41459). Sophie Grace wrote Epiphanies with the support of a Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship, 2017-2020. Some idea of what it is about can be gleaned from [*here*](https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/epiphanies-experiences-and-ethics-sophie-grace-chappell/id1151965239?i=1000485619138). Sophie Grace is now pursuing a number of different writing projects, mostly on the ethics of virtue. The biggest thing she is currently engaged with is a new book called Trans Figured: How to survive as a transgender person in a cisgender world. A preview of some of the things that she hopes to say in this work can be found [*here*](https://iai.tv/articles/does-consciousness-have-a-gender-auid-2033?_auid=2020)

Our discussion with Sophie Grace will be organised around broad themes / questions that we are formulating in discussion with Sophie Grace. These might include some of the following:

**Epiphany and political Life:**

* What is the possible political value of your work on epiphanies and what are its implications for the theory and practice of politics?
* What is the role of virtue in social and political action and activism?

**Feminism and biography:**

* What brought you to feminism? Did it come about epiphanically, or have any epiphanic aspects? Where do you position yourself in feminist thought?

**Against Theory:**

Do you see any possible extensions or applications of your anti-theoretical stance in philosophy to thinking about and doing political theory and social science inquiry? What might an anti-theory stance look like in these disciplines? Is there too much theory in politics itself?

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**1930- : Dinner [somewhere]**