

Law and the Senses

University of Westminster
School of Law
London
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Call for Proposals

What is Law's relationship to senses? In a sense, Law, the anaesthetic par excellence, is constantly engaged in numbing the senses into commonsense; manipulating, channeling and controlling the sensible; inserting properties and forbidding contacts; dissimulating violence, regulating sounds and defining taste. However, senses are not static. Rather, they are shifting and elusive qualities, constantly reshuffled by socio-cultural and technological changes, always dislocating Law's normativity towards new potentialities. In this other sense, Law emerges from the senses, and whereas senses are a constant arena of legal machinations, they are also Law's constant blind spot and inescapable excess.

Is there then a legal sensing, an illegal sensing, or even perhaps a sensing beyond the Law? How does Law sense? Can Law hear, taste, smell, touch, see? Can Law indulge in sensual pleasures, or is it confined to the anaesthetic arena of common sense? Can senses be a tool to use, know and study Law better? Would this make Law more 'sensible', or instead more suffocating?

The conference Law and the Senses proposes to reflect critically on how law deals with senses, how law senses, how law makes sense. We invite you to think, discuss and question the sound of law, the tactile encounter with its forms, its bitter/sweet taste, its pungent smell, its perspectival gaze. We encourage you to investigate the sensing of law, the capacity for law to (make) sense, and the possibility for Law to sense differently. We welcome trans-disciplinary contributions, from legal, geographical, sociological, psychological, philosophical, political and cultural areas, as well as from the arts (exhibition and performance space is provided).

Con[inter]ference

This conference seeks to interfere with the standard conference format. We wish to shake such an often taken-for-granted scaffolding, not to propose 'better' models, but rather to produce interferences, noise and turbulence, out of which we hope creative encounters would emerge. This does not mean getting rid of the rules and internal regulations of conferencing altogether, but instead opening a fuzzier space for the conference to unfold, by making such constraints less rigid. There will be given no time for presentations, though the duty to prevent them from becoming infinite will remain with the moderator. We invite presentations conceived as a tool for stimulating a debate, rather than unilateral talks addressed to a passive audience. Therefore we kindly ask to refrain from merely reading out papers and rather trying to perform them through your voice and body, handing out material, using powerpoint, notes, other sensory stimulations and any other format you prefer.

Please send your abstracts by the 15th of March 2013 on nonliquetlaw@gmail.com

The conference inaugurates the *Non Liqueur* [The Westminster Online Working Papers] first online publication of the new series of papers on law and the senses, aiming to critically reflect on law and the senses. The series encompasses five issues dedicated to each sense: taste, smell, hearing, touch and vision.

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