



**GENDER, DIVERSITY
& INTERSECTIONALITY
RESEARCH CENTRE**

**CLOSING THE DOOR:
COMPLAINT AS DIVERSITY
WORK**

A lecture by

SARAH AHMED

18 FEBRUARY 2020 - KAAITHEATER - 20h



On the 18th of February 2020, we are happy to receive feminist writer, scholar and "killjoy" Sara Ahmed for the lecture "Closing the Door. Complaint as Diversity Work".

This talk draws on interviews conducted with staff and students who have made complaints within universities that relate to unfair, unjust or unequal working conditions and to abuses of power such as sexual and racial harassment. It approaches complaint as a form of diversity work: the ordinary and often painstaking labour of trying to transform institutions so they are more accommodating. Making a complaint requires becoming an institutional mechanic: you have to work out how to get a complaint through a system. It is because of the difficulty of getting through that complaints often end up being about the system. Sara Ahmed explores the significance of how complaints

happen “behind closed doors,” and shows how doors are often closed even when they appear to be opened.

20:00 Introduction by Sophie Withaecx (VUB, RHEA)

20:10 Lecture by Sara Ahmed

21:15 Q&A moderated by Iman Lechkar (VUB, Fatima Mernissi Chair)

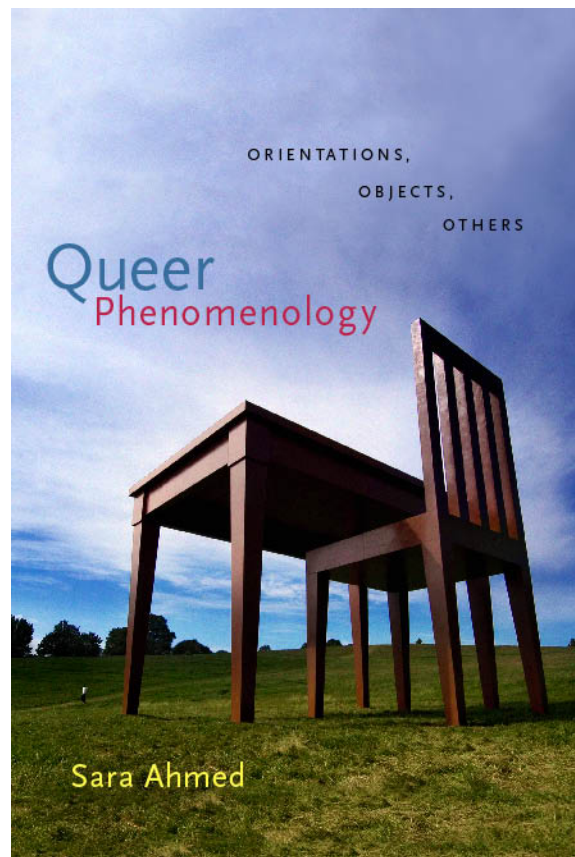
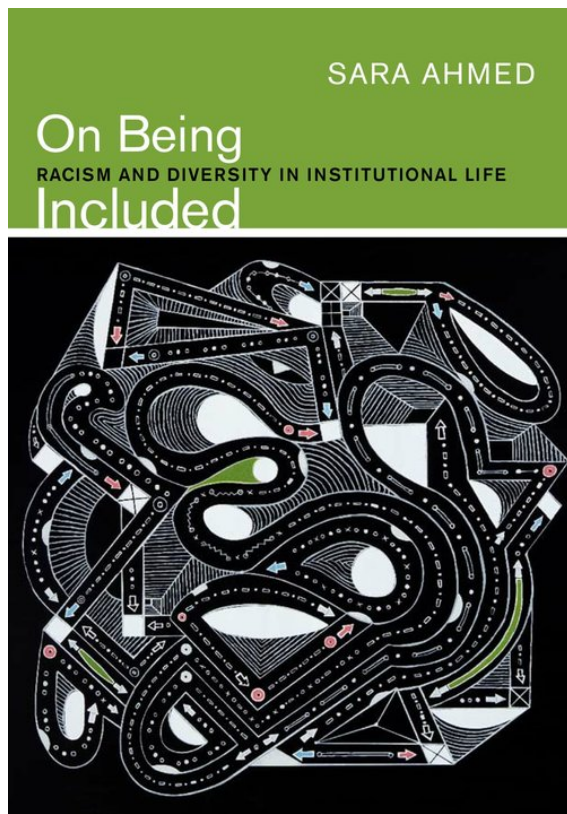
This event is co-organized by Crosstalks, RHEA, Fatima Mernissi Chair, Furia & Kaaitheater.

Tickets (7 euro) available at [Kaaitheater](#).

Sara Ahmed is a feminist writer and independent scholar, well known for books like "Living a feminist life" (2017), "On being included. Racism and diversity in institutional life" (2012), "Queer phenomenology" (2006) and "Strange encounters. Embodied others in post-coloniality" (2000).

You can find more information about her and her work on her blog: [/www.sarahmed.com](http://www.sarahmed.com).





"My name is Sara Ahmed and I am a feminist writer and independent scholar. I work at the intersection of feminist, queer and race studies. My research is concerned with how bodies and worlds take shape; and how power is secured and challenged in everyday life worlds as well as institutional cultures.

*Until the end of 2016, I was a Professor of Race and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London having been previously based in Women's Studies at Lancaster University. I resigned from my post at Goldsmiths in protest at the failure to deal with the problem of sexual harassment. I hope to keep participating in the project of making the problem of sexual harassment at universities more visible, for example, by working with the 1752 group. I argued in my book *On Being Included: On Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (2012) that we need to work on the university when we work at the university. Even though I no longer work at the university, I am still working on it. In a project on complaint that I have just started, the university has become my field."*



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