

TRASH!: HOARDING, BAD OBJECT-ORIENTATIONS, & PERFORMANCE

GNDR_ST 371 / PERF_ST 330



Buried Alive and Hoarders. Marie Kondo and the Minimalists. Big-screen TVs, fast fashion, and floating islands of plastic trash. The promises of decluttering, downsizing, and shrinking homes. From fantastic depictions of people overwhelmed with their accumulation of things to popular self-help books that promise freedom and joy in the form of a clean home, this course is concerned with the judgments we make about people and their relationships to their stuff.

Benjamin Zender

MW 4-5:50pm

Alvina Krause Studio
in Annie May Swift

In this course we will begin to unpack “abject object orientations” by investigating the “hoarder” as a pathological figure that emerges within the 20th century. By looking to depictions of the hoarder and other “material deviants” across performance art, film, and memoir we will describe the cultural logics through which speaking of a person’s orientation toward objects becomes a way of making ethical claims about them. Placing the objectified figure of the hoarder alongside depictions of the collector, the archivist, and the artist, students will theorize the ways that race, gender, class, and sexuality shape our judgments toward, and even help to produce, shared object orientations.