

I think Jeff Derksen went to New Westminster Elementary School. Our first meeting was over 10 years ago, he was reading at Honey Lounge, and my friend Melissa Guzman goaded me to take a picture of her wearing bunny ears next to Jeff. This picture is somewhere in my archive if you're interested. Recently we read poems side by side at Trinity Episcopal Church in Buffalo. His books of poetry and critical works include *Down Time* (1990), *Dwell* (1993), *Transnational Muscle Cars* (2003), *Annihilated Time* (2009), *The Vestiges* (2014), and *After Euphoria* (2014), amongst others. He is also one of the co-founders of the Kootenay School of Writing. Along with Sabine Bitter and Helmut Weber, Jeff formed the cultural research collective (focusing on the textures of cities and social-civic imaginations) Urban Subjects in 2004. From their website it reads: "Urban Subjects do not work on a consensus model," which is a fitting political tactic when turning to the subject of sincerity. For sincerity, as an expression of candid and direct speech, does not at all mean we will get along, let alone agree to disagree.

While in Bulgaria I recently wrote the following about the friend I was staying with:

*She just wants me to be myself. I've had these remote moments with her so far where she says these things that are so utterly sincere and real that I feel like if I were to respond at all, in any form, it could never be that sincere or real.*

And in another email:

*I will remind myself now that she has this immeasurable sincerity about her and I love her because of it.*

Despite, or perhaps because of, the compromises and contradictions in our lives, we professional intellectuals are fond of sincerity. Chris Kraus questions in her epistolary novel *I Love Dick*: [!]sn't sincerity just the denial of complexity? I've always wondered what Jeff would make of such a question. Yes, sincerity and direct speech can also be a denial of complexity. The remark is not, necessarily, advocating for insincerity (although it could be necessary sometimes); it is also compatible with the thought that one can be sincere about simple things like bits of mathematics and a show-tune that one hums in the shower. Amidst the stark neoliberalization of language and emotional attachments and the affective responses which transpire from such attachments, we become caught in this individualizing desire to locate and pinpoint, not so much sincerity really, but notions of what constitutes "authenticity" and "inauthenticity." It can't really be helped. There are those of us who can and do perform the discourse so well, saying the right things directly and forcefully. Such a performance often reads as sincere and, perhaps, goes unsuspected because of it, but let's be honest to ourselves for once, such entitlement always blinds those from how deep their complicity is within white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. And so we must pose the question: how do we both question and take seriously more sincere representations of alternative and autonomous socialities? Jeff reminds, echoing Sara Ahmed, how "instead of a model in which affect resides in an individual or object" our attentions should turn instead to "the way emotions *involve* subjects and objects, without residing positively within them" (*After Euphoria* 34). How, then, does sincerity also *involve* subjects and objects? To this end, join me in inviting Jeff to lead us in a talk and discussion on socializing sincerity.