Joking In Prognosis: Richard Pryor, Tig Notaro, and the Temporalities of Illness

Time plays a central role in both the performance of stand-up comedy and the experience of illness. Stand-up comedians work to hone comedic timing to order the delivery of their words just so. Patients mark time to note when a diagnosis is made and, in the case of terminal illness, how much time they might have until death. Drawing on Lochlann Jain’s notion of “living in prognosis” and Abou Farman’s writing on “terminality,” Dr. Merid discusses how performances by Richard Pryor and Tig Notaro illustrate how stand-up comedy can help us understand the relationship between time, timing, and serious illness.

April 1, 2019
4:00-5:30
GRIS 103
*Light refreshments provided*

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Co-sponsored with Critical Disability Studies