

# Geography Colloquium Series

Thursday, November 14th, 4 pm  
in Room 201 of the Department of Geography

## Danya Fast

Post-doctoral fellow, BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS,  
St. Paul's Hospital and Department of Geography, UBC Vancouver

### *Belonging on the Streets of Vancouver: An Urban Ethnography*

Based on my ongoing ethnographic work with young people who are entrenched in Greater Vancouver's street-based drug scene, this presentation will explore youth's understandings and experiences of their place in the city over time. Among youth, the "local" drug scene is produced in tension with a broader social spatial landscape of power and possibility, in which various remembered and imagined places are also implicated. In the context of this wider landscape-in-motion, involvement in the drug scene can be articulated as both a sense of belonging and dislocation, "being in the center of something" and "getting lost in the city." These understandings, experiences and affects intersect in compelling ways with the regimes of living youth enact on the streets over time. The value of ethnographic methods in exploring questions of place, power and possibility will also be discussed.



**Danya Fast** is a postdoctoral research fellow in the Department of Medicine at the University of British Columbia, with secondary affiliations at the Department of Geography, UBC, and the Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. Her doctoral work was based on five years of ethnographic fieldwork with street-entrenched youth in Greater Vancouver. Danya received a New Investigators Award from the Canadian Association for HIV Research for her work exploring young people's experiences with drug use and violence in the Vancouver setting. Her current project, which focuses on the gendered dimensions of place and "risk" among youth who sell sex in Vancouver, is supported by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research and the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research.