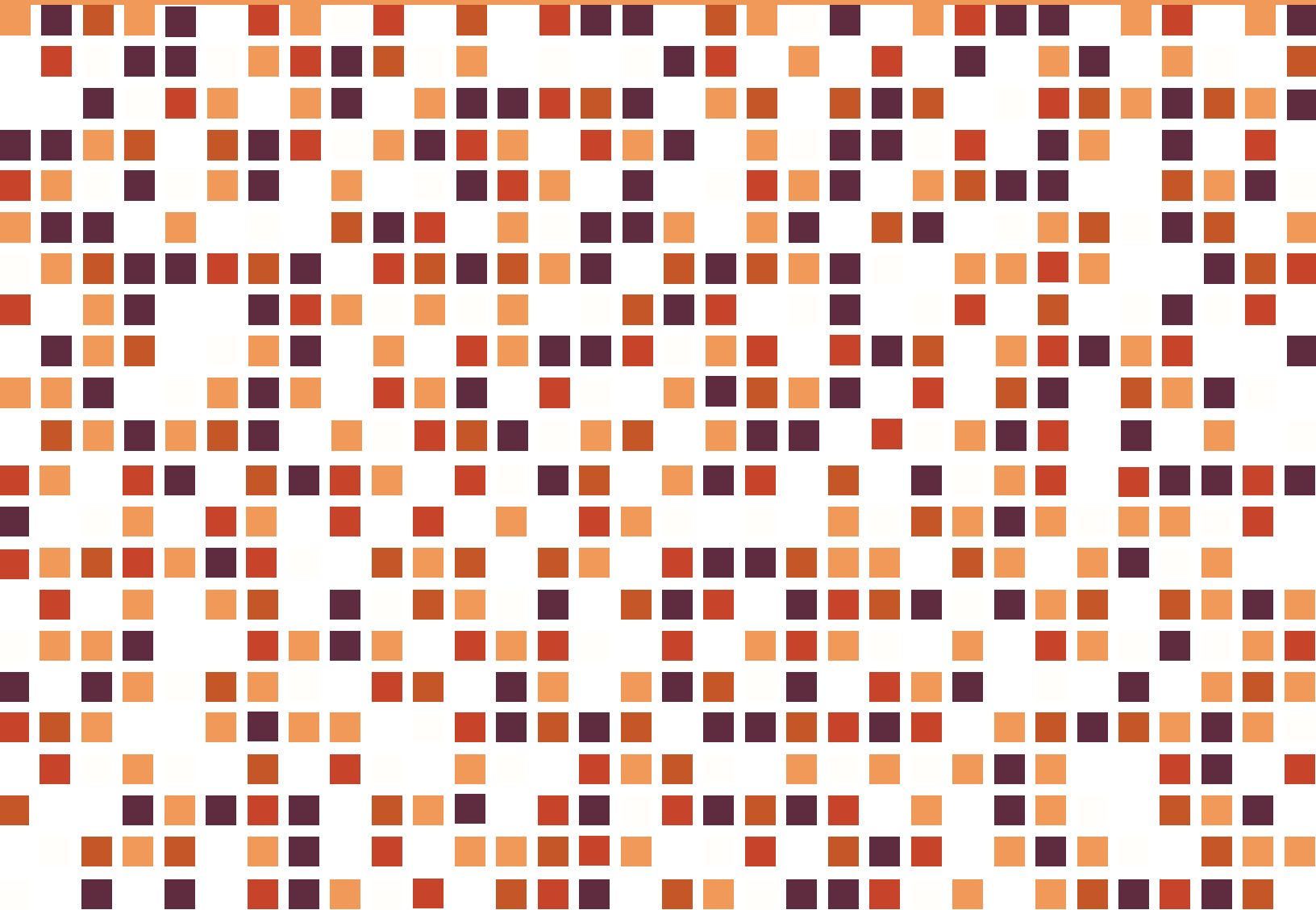


Our Year:
Center for the Study of Social Difference



2016-17 Annual Report

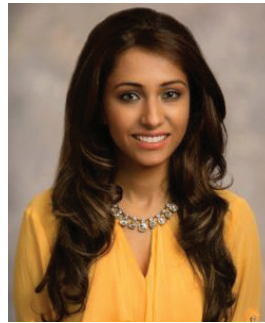
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCE ANNUAL REPORT



Rachel Adams
Director



Laura Ciolkowski
Associate Director



Meera Ananth
Director of Development



Terry Roethlein
*Communications
& Finance Manager*

Over the course of the year our working groups have promoted CSSD's mission by engaging in collaborative projects that address gender, race, sexuality, and other forms of inequality to foster ethical and progressive social change. The Center's work has two overarching themes: Imagining Justice and Women Creating Change.

2016-2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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RACHEL ADAMS
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LAURA CIOLKOWSKI
PATRICIA DAILEY
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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

It has been a year of exciting change and growth at CSSD. We continue to support a full roster of cutting-edge, collaborative, interdisciplinary research projects. Our faculty has been busy convening international working groups, organizing conferences and panels, and publishing articles, monographs, and edited books. Meanwhile, CSSD has been expanding its public profile, outreach, and development activities in anticipation of our 10th anniversary in 2018.

This fall, we welcomed a wonderful new addition to the Center's staff: our first Director of Development, Meera Ananth. Meera has been instrumental in collaborating with faculty to update the Center's strategic plan, hone our mission statement, and heighten our public profile. Most significantly, we are introducing a new rubric that organizes our projects into two idea streams, each of which reflects the overall mission and goals of the Center. Alongside our successful **Women Creating Change** initiative, we will organize a second cluster of projects under the banner **Imagining Justice**. **Imagining Justice** brings together scholars, activists, and artists on projects that envision new ways of fighting inequality and of promoting gender, racial, economic, and environmental justice in global and domestic contexts. **Women Creating Change** engages distinguished feminist scholars from Columbia and beyond in projects that focus on how contemporary global problems affect women and the role women play in addressing those problems.

Over the 2016-2017 year, CSSD fellows have generated the kind of innovative and relevant interdisciplinary research that is the signature of our projects. Highlights of our groups' activities this year include the culmination of our outgoing project, **Gender and the Global Slum**, with a two-day workshop on race, space, and social segregation. The **Bandung Humanisms** project organized a meeting of scholars from twelve countries in Singapore, where they discussed cultural movements from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The **Precision Medicine: Ethics, Politics, and Culture** project brought experts from Singapore, Switzerland, England, and the United States to address the uneven social implications of medical innovations for populations around the globe. The **Pacific Climate Circuits** group invited scholars from Australia and Hawaii, as well as the continental United States, to share their research on indigenous cultures. The working group on **Unpayable Debt: Capital, Violence, and the New Global Economy** collaborated with NYU's Institute for Public Knowledge to hold a conference on "Narratives of Debt."



Dorian Cambi, 2017

The **Reframing Gendered Violence** project convened a workshop on forced migration, while the working group on **Religion and the Global Framing of Gender Violence** held regular meetings to grapple with the problems around institutional funding, governance, and regional differences. **The Rural-Urban Interface** fellows worked with African collaborators on gathering life stories from women in Ghana and Kenya to enhance existing research on gender, poverty, and urbanization in these regions.

Next year we are pleased to welcome an innovative new project to be directed by Professor Jack Halberstam called **Queer Studies Here, There, and Elsewhere**. This project will consider the place of sexuality and gender in the spread of global capitalism and right-wing populism, as well as activist responses to these new forms of authoritarianism.

None of this would be possible without financial resources. President Bollinger generously provided funds to launch the Center; the University is committed to systematic fundraising to endow the Center with donor support; Project Directors actively seek funding from outside foundations and granting agencies. Nonetheless, our expanding work requires further support. To find out how you can become a friend of CSSD, or to make a financial contribution to our work, please contact Director of Development Meera Ananth at ma3652@columbia.edu. We welcome your interest.

Rachel Adams
Director, CSSD
Professor of English and Comparative Literature



Dorian Cambi, 2017

IMAGINING JUSTICE

Imagining Justice brings together scholars, activists, and artists on projects that envision new ways of fighting inequality and promoting gender, racial, economic, and environmental justice in global and domestic contexts.



BANDUNG HUMANISMS



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Bandung Humanisms is an interdisciplinary research project examining the workings of the progressive political, social, and cultural movement among nations of the Global South that refused to ally with either major power bloc during the Cold War. The working group, a collaboration between scholars at Columbia University and the University of California, Los Angeles, uncovers the post-colonial developing world's espousal of a radical brand of humanism and self-determination that gave rise to the Non-Aligned Movement of non-aggressor states. The working group traces the institutions, associations, writings, and artworks identified with the Bandung Humanisms movement, connecting them to current global struggles for social justice.

ACTIVITIES

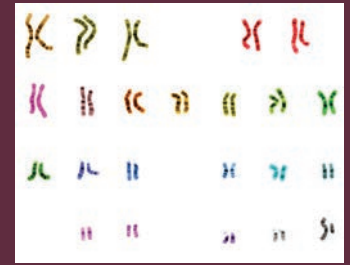
Named after the Indonesian city which hosted the 1955 Congress of Afro-Asian Nations, the Bandung envisioned forms of internationalism and humanism that took as a starting point the life worlds of those peoples and societies forcibly pushed to the margins of the world economic and political system. The Bandung Humanisms working group revisits the lost legacy of the Bandung by studying the journals, organizations, exhibitions, writers' congresses, film festivals, and international collaborations that characterized Bandung Humanisms. The project also explores the more recent and proximate constellations of Bandung thought that are, in fact, unthinkable without the cultural work and creative elaborations that preceded them. The project opens up key insights and questions about how humanist thinking, unencumbered by "Western" commands, can serve as a new cauldron of radical configurations of thought and action in a political landscape shaped by the economic and political forces of capitalism in its "globalization" phase. The working group activities have led to the development of a graduate course in the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia, titled: "From the Russian Revolution to the Legacy of Bandung."

The project concluded its work with the workshop "Bandung Humanisms: Towards a New Understanding of the Global South," jointly organized by Nanyang Technological University and UCLA and held in June 2017 at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Featuring scholars from Singapore, China, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, Lebanon, Poland, the Philippines, India, and Myanmar, the workshop investigated progressive cultural and intellectual movements among formerly colonized nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.



Top three photos by Dorian Cambi, 2016; fourth by Stathis Gourgouris, 2017

PRECISION MEDICINE: ETHICS, POLITICS, AND CULTURE



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Precision Medicine is an emerging approach to disease treatment and prevention that takes into account individual variability in genes, environment, and lifestyle for each person. This new field raises a myriad of cultural, political, and historical questions that the humanities are uniquely positioned to address. The Precision Medicine: Ethics, Politics, and Culture Project is the first of its kind to bring Columbia faculty from the humanities, social sciences, law, and medicine into dialogue with leading scholars from the United States and abroad to discuss how humanistic questions might enhance our understanding of the ethical, social, legal, and political implications of precision medicine research. The project also seeks to inform humanists about evidence, evaluation, and research outcomes from serious interdisciplinary engagement with this emerging medical field.

ACTIVITIES

The project devoted its first year to a series of public lectures followed by intensive working group meetings with prominent scholars addressing the historical, ethical, and social implications of precision medicine. Speakers came from Switzerland (Professor Aditya Bharadwaj, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies), the United Kingdom (Professor Jackie Leach Scully, Newcastle University) and Singapore (Professor Jacqueline Chin), as well as the United States (Professor Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, Stanford University; Professor Ruha Benjamin, Princeton University; and Professor James Tabery, University of Utah). Speakers addressed questions about the populations left out of genetic research undergirding precision medicine; sustainable rubrics for understanding race and genetic ancestry; how the use of genetic information changes our understanding of concepts such as the self, agency, health, embodiment, and ability; intersections between precision medicine and the movements for patients' and disability rights; how the history of medicine can inform emerging genomic-based research practices; relating current genomic research to the history of genetic discrimination, eugenics, and programs of racial cleansing; how precision is medicine represented by popular media; how popular conceptions of health, ability, and risk impact how medicine is practiced; and how to balance national research priorities for bio-enhancement in the face of existing health disparities for the poor and vulnerable? The Precision Medicine: Ethics, Politics, and Culture working group will continue to address these questions in the upcoming year by continuing its successful speaker series and workshops in collaboration with Columbia's Precision Medicine and Society Initiative.

PACIFIC CLIMATE CIRCUITS



Image from "Warm Waters" by Vlad Sokhin

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Eleanor Sterling, Chief Conservation Scientist,
American Museum of Natural History

Neferti Tadiar, Professor and Chair of Women's,
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Pacific Climate Circuits seeks to reframe the conversation about climate change, the Pacific Region, and Pacific Islanders. The group examines the political-economic systems culpable for climate change in the region, linking these systems to broader histories of colonialism and neoliberalism. Seeking solutions to the problem of climate change outside the typical hard sciences, the working group attempts to foreground key questions about the circulation of non-material forms (such as ideology, art, music, and the movement of human bodies through migration and immigration), and applies the lenses of race, class, gender, sexuality, and inequality to analyses of climate change in the Pacific Region.

ACTIVITIES

While the Pacific Islands have taken center stage in Western foreign policy agendas on climate change, the region is routinely misunderstood by politicians and policy makers. In meetings throughout the year, the working group addressed this problem by exploring the conceptual, methodological, and regional themes around climate change with a view toward opening up the ways climate change is studied and the modes in which solutions to the problem are imagined. Prominent domestic and international visiting faculty who were invited to share their research with the group this year included: Hokulani K. Aikau (Associate Professor of Native Hawaiian and Indigenous Politics, University of Hawaii at Manoa); Joshua Bell (Professor of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History, Department of Anthropology); Vicente Diaz (Professor of American Indian Studies, University of Minnesota); Katerina Teaiwa (Professor of Gender, Media and Cultural Studies, Australian National University); and Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua (Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Hawaii at Manoa). In the coming year, the group will continue to grapple with larger questions about the politics of climate change research, explicitly connecting questions of migration, sovereignty, indigenous rights movements, and current political actions to the study of climate change in the region.



UNPAYABLE DEBT: CAPITAL, VIOLENCE, AND THE NEW GLOBAL ECONOMY



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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Unpayable Debt: Capital, Violence, and the New Global Economy examines sovereign debt crisis over the last two decades in order to raise critical questions about the role of debt in contemporary capitalism; the relationship between debt, migration, and violence; and the emergence of new political and cultural identities, particularly among subordinated groups. The interdisciplinary working group, which includes scholars, filmmakers, and journalists, uses multiple methods and media to compare the emergence of debt crisis in recent and landmark cases such as Puerto Rico, Argentina, Greece, Spain, and U.S. cities like Detroit. The group considers how specific communities develop autonomous practices that challenge state and corporate discourses, and focuses on the politics of “information asymmetry,” that is, whether a lack of data and conceptual frameworks might make it harder for impoverished communities, peoples, and countries to mobilize politically.

ACTIVITIES

In addition to its research activities, the working group organized the conference “Narratives of Debt,” in collaboration with the Oikos working group at New York University’s Institute for Public Knowledge. Focusing on the case of Puerto Rico’s debt crisis, “Narratives of Debt” explored debt’s relation to intimacy, kinship, sovereignty, and history in other contexts. Conference discussion led to the creation of the #PRSyllabus, a resource to study Puerto Rico’s \$72 billion debt crisis in the context of over one hundred years of colonial governance by the United States. The #PRSyllabus was a major success, with 3,427 visitors and 6,622 views on the first day of its launch on May 1, 2017 at puertoricosyllabus.wordpress.com. The syllabus received the most downloads from the following countries: the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, Peru, Spain, and Argentina. Various sites made note of the syllabus, including the anthropology website SavageMinds.org.



All photos by Frances Negrón-Muntaner, 2017

WOMEN CREATING CHANGE

Women Creating Change is the Center's global initiative, engaging distinguished feminist scholars across Columbia's many schools to focus on how contemporary global problems affect women and the role women play in addressing those problems.

Each working group uses the resources of Columbia's Global Centers to develop international networks of scholars and activists working on pressing problems of gendered inequity.



Bottom right photo by Ray Marmolejo Le Garrec, 2016; others by Dorian Cambi, 2016.

REFRAMING GENDERED VIOLENCE



Omar Imam, 2015

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Reframing Gendered Violence opens up a critical global conversation among scholars and practitioners that recasts the problem of violence against women in a wide range of fields, both academic and policy-oriented, including: human rights, public health, journalism, law, feminist studies, literature, sociology, religious studies, anthropology, and history. The goal is to move the conversation in new directions, pointing to elisions and exclusions in many common-sense understandings of gender-based violence; to deepen the ways in which we engage with the manifestations and causes of such violence; and to interrogate the ways in which accusations of gender-based violence can sometimes be used to pathologize entire communities, societies or religious traditions, or to divert attention from more systemic and fundamental forms of abuse.



Dorian Cambi, 2017

ACTIVITIES

A community of scholars, artists and activists located at Columbia and in the regions where Columbia has established Global Centers, the Reframing Gendered Violence working group focused attention in 2016-17 on unpacking the term “gender-based violence” in two distinct arenas: religion and forced migration. The group’s fall programming aimed to explore the distorting effects of the preoccupation with violence against women (VAW), considering how a focus on VAW has encouraged prejudice against Muslim societies and also expanding the discussion of gender violence beyond Muslim contexts.

The group’s spring workshops explored the widespread and sometimes unexpected manifestations of gender violence in populations enduring forced migration. Juxtaposing migration from Syria and Central America, the group considered, for example, how the terms “refugee” and “migrant” frequently bear gendered meanings. The first is often used to describe vulnerable female subjects worthy of help; the second is used mostly in reference to men of color who are assumed to aspire to economic privileges in host countries. Inviting artists, journalists, and human rights activists into the conversation, the group asked how one can ethically represent, critique, and work to eradicate the gender-based violence that occurs in conditions of forced migration as well as in domestic settings.

In 2017-18 the group will hold four events focusing on gendered violence in a comparative and global context, including an examination of gendered violence on campuses, in LGBTQ communities, and in connection to climate change, the effects of which disproportionately affect marginalized communities.



Dorian Cambi, 2017



Gio Palazzo, 2017



Terry Roethlein, 2017

RELIGION AND THE GLOBAL FRAMING OF GENDER VIOLENCE



ZUMA Press, Inc./Alamy

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Religion and the Global Framing of Gender Violence seeks to bring together scholars, international experts, and local activists in different world regions to advance robust and research-based analyses of the role of religion in naming, framing, and governing the problem of violence against women (VAW) and gender-based violence (GBV). Given growing feminist concerns about an emerging “common sense” about the gender violence that is determining perceptions and policy in global institutions, the time is ripe for a project that mobilizes the collective experience, expertise, and creativity of an international group of critical feminist scholars, practitioners, and journalists. A fundamental goal of this project is to open a global dialogue on gender violence with the conviction that more nuanced analyses could lead to more effective ways to meet women’s actual needs and circumstances in different national contexts.

ACTIVITIES

Who pays a price and who benefits from the ways religion is used to frame global understandings of VAW/GBV? Who is empowered by particular definitions of VAW/GBV and what political and social alliances do they activate? How do the politics of international funding affect the ways religion and VAW/GBV are linked in various regions? The working group grappled with these and other questions in 2016-17, organizing the study of key issues and problems into three major research themes: Narratives and Framing of VAW/GBV; Governance and Resource Distribution; and Alternative Trajectories and Experiences.

Three Media Fellows have been selected to join the project in 2017-18: Yasmin el Rifae (Middle East and North Africa research associate at the Committee to Protect Journalists); Samira Shackle (freelance British journalist, writing mainly on politics, terrorism, and gender); and Nafeesa Syeed (National Security Reporter for Bloomberg News based in Washington, D.C.). After attendance at the group’s international workshop in Amman, Jordan (September 2017), and the completion of a 2-3 week residency in the region of the Middle East, Media Fellows will begin their work researching and producing innovative media stories in order to reframe understandings of religion and gender violence.

The working group will continue its comparative work on VAW/GBV in 2017-18, expanding networks with international scholars and journalists. As a follow-up to the first international workshop in Amman, Jordan, the group is planning a second workshop focusing on the Indian sub-continent, to be held in the region of South Asia.



All photos by Dorian Cambi, 2016

RURAL-URBAN INTERFACE: GENDER AND POVERTY IN GHANA AND KENYA, STATISTICS AND STORIES



Creative Commons

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Rural-Urban Interface project represents the workshop phase of an interdisciplinary, regional, consortial, Africa-led research endeavor, focusing on the experience of women, youth, and men who inhabit the social and physical space of the rural-urban interface. The working group pays particular attention to the feminization of poverty in migrant populations and looks at ways to combine qualitative knowledge with quantitative knowledge in order to highlight the real, impactful capacity of situated stories, narratives, and oral histories articulated by actual participants in these large-scale transformations. Bringing together humanities and social sciences colleagues at the Universities of Ghana-Legon and Nairobi as well as at Columbia and other New York-area institutions, the working group creates productive collaborations among disciplines, combining the study of statistics with language-sensitive learning techniques and addressing the role of translation in interpretive social-scientific work.

ACTIVITIES

To produce statistical averages for policy is a necessity, but it is widely known that such techniques are existentially impoverished and must therefore be modified by a more personalized approach. In the long term, the Rural-Urban Interface project seeks to further this sort of modification by listening to life experience narratives in the local mother tongues and to study the nuanced translations produced by humanities-trained research assistants drawn from University of Ghana-Legon and University of Nairobi. The working group's collaborators in Ghana and Kenya have now completed the second year of the pilot phase of the research. This phase was focused on gathering the actual narratives and empirical details, which will enable the larger group to attend to the interplay of stories and statistics in knowledge making.

Phase 2 of the project will continue to situate key questions in the African context, addressing the interaction of space, gender, and political economy; the role of translation in interpretive social-scientific work; and the interplay of stories and statistics in knowledge making and the use of knowledge in policy. The primary task of Phase 2 is to generate research that opens channels for policymakers and other actors to access regional rural power, to negotiate urbanization by exploring the relationship between the stories of those most directly affected by development, and to gain an understanding of the specific consequences of urbanization in this region.



GENDER AND THE GLOBAL SLUM



DIRECTOR

Anupama Rao

Associate Professor of History, Barnard College

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

How are gender relations impacted by material impoverishment and social segregation? Why do women suffer disproportionately from the social hazards of urban informality? This working group addresses the global slum as the product of a complex interplay between the political economy of urban space and the spatialization of social difference, especially gender/sexuality. Gender and the Global Slum explores new aspirations around gender and consumption, the gender of poverty, new formations of informal labor and sex work, and emergent sites of violent conflict as these are remaking gendered relations of power. The group aims to make a distinctive set of interventions in thinking about concepts like precarity, subalternity, remaindered life, and fugitivity.

ACTIVITIES

Concept Histories of the Urban, a two-day workshop held in September 2016 and co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Science and Society, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and the Heyman Center for the Humanities, was the culminating workshop of the three-year project. An experiment in interdisciplinary and inter-regional comparisons and connections, the workshop focused on relating urbanizing processes outside of the West with the historical experience of the United States. Conference participants explored, in addition, the rich relationship between race, space, and social segregation. The conference demonstrated the importance and value of a key concept such as “space” to thinking about fundamental issues in the humanities and social sciences.

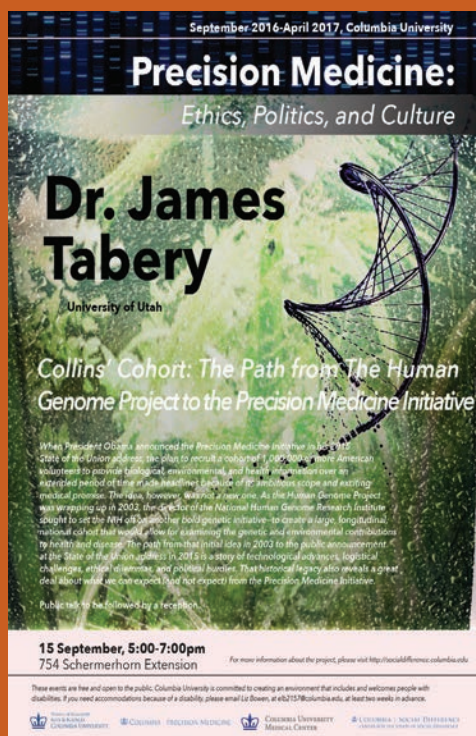


PUBLIC EVENTS, CONFERENCES, AND NEW PUBLICATIONS



Is Gender Violence Governable? International Feminist Regulation Columbia University, October 13, 2016

How can scholars and activists engage critically with the terms, assumptions, funding streams, policies, and politics around violence against women (VAW) and gender-based violence (GBV)? In a panel discussion co-sponsored by the Religion and the Global Framing of Gender Violence working group, Dubravka Žarkov, Associate Professor of Gender, Conflict and Development at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague; Rema Hammami, Associate Professor of Women's Studies at Birzeit University, Birzeit, OPT; and discussant Janet Halley, Royall Professor of Law at Harvard Law School grappled with the question of what is left out in the analysis of VAW/GBV when problems both in war and in peace are framed in particular ways that become a kind of common sense.



Dr. James Tabery: Collins' Cohort: The Path from The Human Genome Project to the Precision Medicine Initiative Columbia University, September 15, 2016

President Obama's announcement in 2015 of the Precision Medicine Initiative made headlines because of its ambitious scope and exciting medical promise. The idea, however, was not a new one. As the Human Genome Project was wrapping up in 2003, the director of the National Human Genome Research Institute sought to create a large, longitudinal, national cohort that would allow for an examination of the genetic and environmental contributions to health and disease. In his public lecture, co-sponsored by the Precision Medicine Project, Dr. James Tabery, Adjunct Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Internal Medicine and Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Utah, argued that the path from 2003 to President Obama's announcement in 2015 is a story of technological advances, logistical challenges, ethical dilemmas, and political hurdles. This story finally reveals a great deal about what we can (and cannot) expect from the Precision Medicine Initiative.

China and Africa at a Crossroads: Revisiting the Legacy of Bandung Humanisms

Columbia University, October 24, 2016

This public conversation, hosted by the Bandung Humanisms working group, focused on the China-Africa connection from the 1960s to the present in light of the legacy of the Bandung conference and its institutional consequences. The program featured Rebecca Karl, Associate Professor of History at NYU; Jamie Monson, Director of African Studies at Michigan State University; Stephanie Rupp, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at CUNY-Lehman; Barry Sautman, Professor in the Division of Social Sciences, Hong Kong University of Science & Technology; Hairong Yan, Anthropologist in the Department of Applied Social Sciences, Hong Kong Polytechnic University; and Duncan Yoon, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Alabama. Featured scholars were in conversation with Columbia faculty members Howard French, Associate Professor of Journalism; Stathis Gourgouris, Professor of Comparative Literature, ICLS; Lydia H. Liu, Wun Tsun Tam Professor in the Humanities; and Mahmood Mamdani, Herbert Lehman Professor of Government, Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, International Affairs, and Anthropology.

The Institute for Comparative Literature and Society Presents

China and Africa at a Crossroads

Revisiting the Legacy of Bandung Humanisms



Oct. 24th, 2016 1-5:30pm
 Heyman Center for the Humanities
 Common Room
 free and open to the public

Please join distinguished scholars:

Rebecca Karl
 New York University

Jamie Monson
 Michigan State University

Stephanie Rupp
 City University of New York, Lehman College

Barry Sautman
 Hong Kong University of Science & Technology

Hairong Yan
 Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Duncan Yoon
 University of Alabama

In conversation with Columbia faculty:

Howard French

Stathis Gourgouris

Lydia H. Liu

Mahmood Mamdani

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
 Weatherhead East Asian Institute
 weai.columbia.edu

INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES
 Columbia University in the City of New York
 ias.columbia.edu

Jointly organized by the Bandung Humanisms Initiative of the Center for the Study of Social Difference (CSD) and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society (ICLS) with cosponsorship from the Weatherhead East Asia Institute (WEAI), the Heyman Center for the Humanities, and the Institute for African Studies (IAS).


More Questions than Answers? Statistics and Stories

Columbia University, April 21, 2017

This presentation and conversation about the Africa-led research endeavor Rural-Urban Interface: Gender and Poverty in Kenya and Ghana featured project directors Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (University Professor in the Humanities) and Reinhold Martin (Professor of Architecture), in conversation with Ben Baer (Professor of Comparative Literature at Princeton) and Juan Obarrio (Professor of Anthropology at Johns Hopkins University). The Rural-Urban Interface project mixes approaches drawn from the humanities and social sciences in order to help create productive collaborations among disciplines and to highlight the impact of stories, narratives, and oral histories in illuminating and inflecting the interpretation of other types of data. This public program, which introduced the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of the project, concluded with video presentations and work in progress by Professor Helen Yitah and Professor Aloysius Denkabe of the University of Ghana, and Professor Wanjiru Gichuhi of the University of Nairobi.

More Questions than Answers? Statistics and Stories

A discussion of work in progress on
"The Rural-Urban Interface: Gender and Poverty in Kenya and Ghana, Statistic and Stories"



A conversation with:

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
 University Professor in the Humanities, Columbia University

Reinhold Martin
 GSAPP (Architecture), Columbia University

Ben Baer
 Comparative Literature, Princeton University

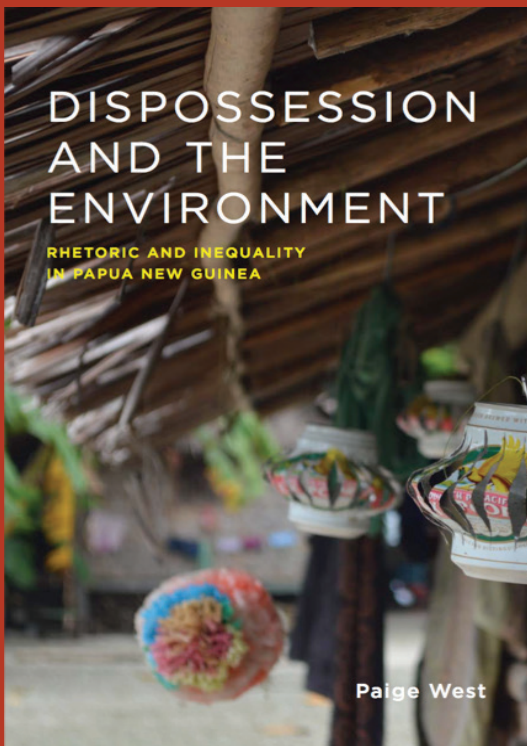
Discussant: Juan Obarrio
 Department of Anthropology, Johns Hopkins University

Presentation by:

Helen Yitah, Department of English, University of Ghana
 Aloysius Denkabe, Department of English, University of Ghana
 Wanjiru Gichuhi, Population Studies and Research Institute, University of Nairobi

Friday, April 21, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
207 Knox Hall, Columbia University

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New Publication

Dispossession and the Environment: Rhetoric and Inequality in Papua New Guinea

Dispossession and the Environment: Rhetoric and Inequality in Papua New Guinea (Columbia University Press, 2016) by Paige West, project director for the Pacific Climate Circuits working group, explores how representations of Papua New Guinea's (PNG) alleged "savagery" operate as a mode of dispossession in domains like tourism, conservation, and resource extraction. The book explains how Western corporations and governments repeatedly invoke rhetoric that casts PNG as a primitive place. This rhetoric enables specialists from industries centered on tourism, environmental conservation, and petrochemical development to "hollow out" the country's sovereign agency and replace it with their own interests. ***Dispossession and the Environment*** was awarded the Columbia University Press Distinguished Book Award.

THE INSTITUTE FOR COMPARATIVE LITERATURE & SOCIETY PRESENTS:

THE WORLD AFTER THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION



HARRY HAROOTUNIAN (NYU)
WANG HUI (TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY, BEIJING)
SUSAN BUCK-MORSS (THE GRADUATE CENTER, CUNY)

WILL JOIN COLUMBIA FACULTY IN A PUBLIC CONVERSATION TO
REFLECT ON THE MULTIFARIOUS LEGACIES OF
THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

**APRIL 21, 2017
COMMON ROOM - HEYMAN CENTER
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM
NO REGISTRATION NECESSARY**

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WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE
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THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCE
THE INSTITUTE FOR COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND SOCIETY
THE HUANG AND LIN FUND FROM THE PROGRAM IN
CHINESE LITERATURE & CULTURE
THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE FOR COMPARATIVE
LITERATURE AND SOCIETY
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The World After the Russian Revolution

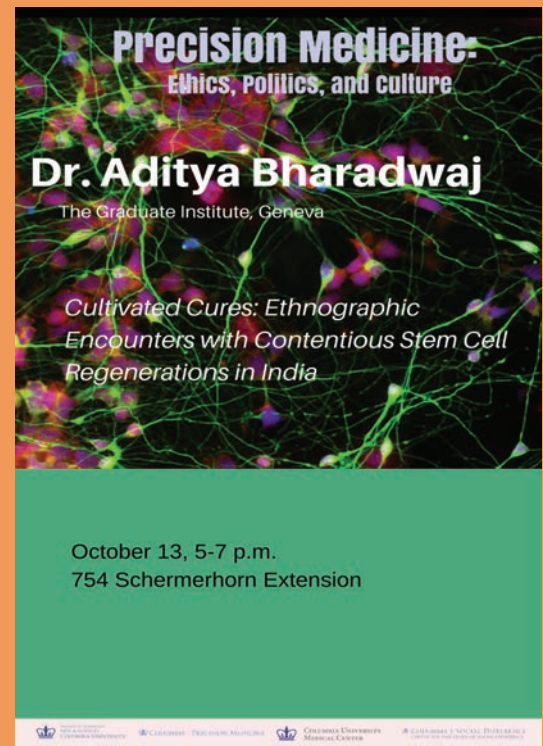
Columbia University, April 21, 2017

The 100th anniversary of the Russian revolution in 2017, in the wake of the recent 60th anniversary of the 1955 Bandung Conference on Afro-Asian cooperation, provided an important occasion to reassess the revolutions of the past for a better understanding of the contradictions of global capitalism in our own time. Key questions included: How did the Russian Revolution give rise to distinctive vocabularies of the political universal that traveled and took shape in distinctive locales? What challenges did this pose for thinking political subjectivities through labor, migration, war and social upheavals? How do such global movements emend the theory and history of Marxism? This public program, hosted by the Bandung Humanisms working group in collaboration with the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, the Harriman Institute, the Heyman Center for the Humanities, and the Department of History at Columbia University, featured distinguished scholars Wang Hui (Tsinghua University, Beijing), Susan Buck-Morss (The Graduate Center, CUNY), and Harry Harootunian (NYU) in conversation with Columbia faculty Stathis Gourgouris, (Classics, English, and ICLS), and Bruno Bosteels, (Latin American and Iberian Cultures and ICLS).

Dr. Aditya Bharadwaj: Cultivated Cures: Ethnographic Encounters with Contentious Stem Cell Regenerations in India

Columbia University, October 13, 2016

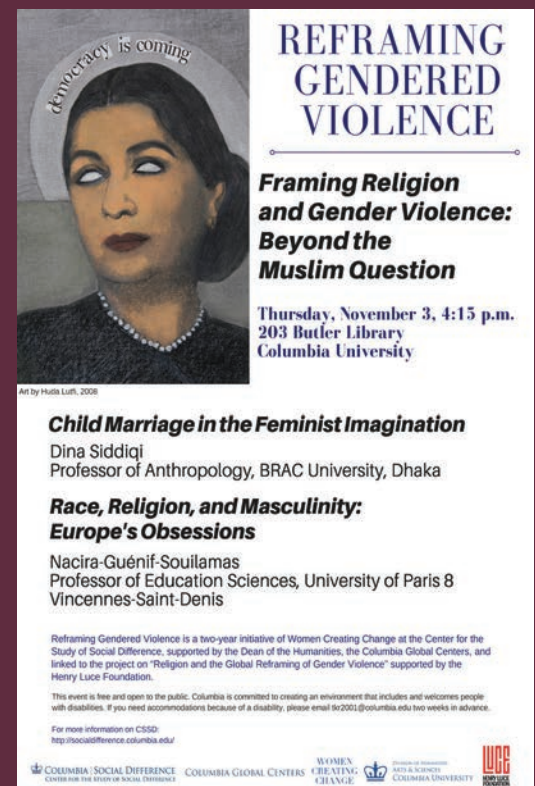
In his public lecture, co-sponsored by the Precision Medicine Project, Dr. Aditya Bharadwaj, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology of Development at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, addressed how we might understand the scene of chronic and progressively pathological affliction as a site for witnessing the anatomy of a cultured and cultivated cure from within the emergent field of regenerative medicine. Dr. Bharadwaj explored how this sort of approach allows us to see affliction as paradoxically regenerating in the face of curative operations that can be imagined as health. This new way of conceptualizing "health" offers fascinating insights into the emerging world of stem cell therapeutics.



Framing Religion and Gender Violence: Beyond the Muslim Question

Columbia University, November 3, 2016

Religion is regularly but selectively linked to gender violence. In addition, particular religious traditions are frequently assigned blame for promoting "cultures of violence." In this public program, featured speakers Dina Siddiqi (Professor of Anthropology at BRAC University, Dhaka) and Nacira-Guénif-Souilamas (Professor of Education Sciences, University of Paris) explored the ways in which the appeal to religion as cause reproduces colonial and racialized differences. They asked, Why and when is religion invoked in global responses to GBV? What roles are attributed to religion? How are new understandings of religion engineered through governance? What categories of religion are seen as credible in anti-violence work? Who pays the price and who benefits from the ways in which religion is used to frame understandings of GBV?



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WGSS WOMEN'S, GENDER, & SEXUALITY STUDIES
COUNCIL GRADUATE PROGRAMS

SPRING 2017 | **Keywords:**
interdisciplinary roundtable conversations

JUSTICE

Featuring:

KATHRYN KOLBERT
Constance Hess Williams Director of the Athena Center for Leadership,
Barnard College

CARLA SHEDD
Assistant Professor of Sociology, Columbia University

JENNIFER WENZEL
Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature and
Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University

Moderator:
RACHEL ADAMS
Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University
and Director, Center for the Study of Social Difference

THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2017
4:30-6:30 PM
Butler Library 203, Columbia University

Keywords: Interdisciplinary Roundtable Conversations
Inaugurated in 2010, Keywords: Interdisciplinary Roundtable Conversations was inspired by the innovative interdisciplinary scholarship promoted by the Center for the Study of Social Difference. Currently a collaborative effort of CSSD and the WGSS Council, the Keywords series draws participants together from a wide range of disciplinary homes in order to explore the various ways we think about fundamental critical/theoretical ideas and to generate new vocabularies and new methodologies.

Columbia University and Barnard College are committed to creating an environment that includes and welcomes people with disabilities. If you need accommodations because of a disability, please email 602001@columbia.edu, at least two weeks in advance.

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Keywords Interdisciplinary Roundtable Conversation: Justice

Columbia University, March 23, 2017

Inaugurated in 2010, Keywords: Interdisciplinary Roundtable Conversations was inspired by the innovative interdisciplinary scholarship promoted by CSSD. Currently a collaborative effort of CSSD and the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Council at Columbia, the Keywords series draws participants from a wide range of interdisciplinary homes in order to explore fundamental critical/theoretical ideas and to generate new vocabularies and new methodologies. This year's program, addressing the keyword "Justice," featured Rachel Adams, CSSD Director and Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University; Kathryn Kolbert, Constance Hess Williams Director of the Athena Center for Leadership, Barnard College; Carla Shedd, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Columbia University; and Jennifer Wenzel, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies, Columbia University.

Precision Medicine

Ethics, Politics, and Culture

Dr. Ruha Benjamin
Princeton University

*Can the Subaltern Genome Code?
Reimagining Innovation and Equity in the
Era of Precision Medicine*

November 10, 5-7 p.m.
754 Schermerhorn Extension

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY | COLUMBIA | THE NEW MUSEUM | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY Medical Center | COLUMBIA | SOCIAL DIFFERENCE | CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

Dr. Ruha Benjamin: Can the Subaltern Genome Code? Reimagining Innovation and Equity in the Era of Precision Medicine

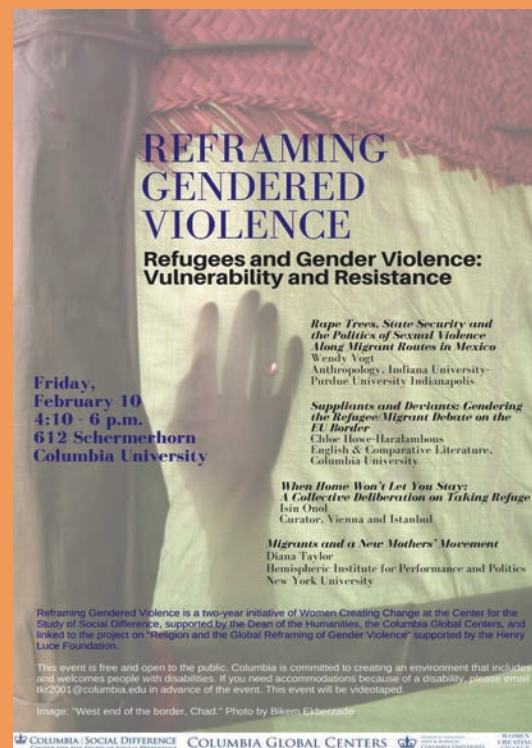
Columbia University, November 10, 2016

In her talk, co-sponsored by the Precision Medicine Project, Dr. Ruha Benjamin, Assistant Professor of Sociology and African-American Studies at Princeton, situated precision medicine within the broader phenomenon of big data. She examined how power and inequality shape what we know about human difference, drawing on her ongoing investigation of the way racial, caste, and national distinctions impact genomic science.

Refugees and Gender Violence: Vulnerability and Resistance

Columbia University, February 10, 2017

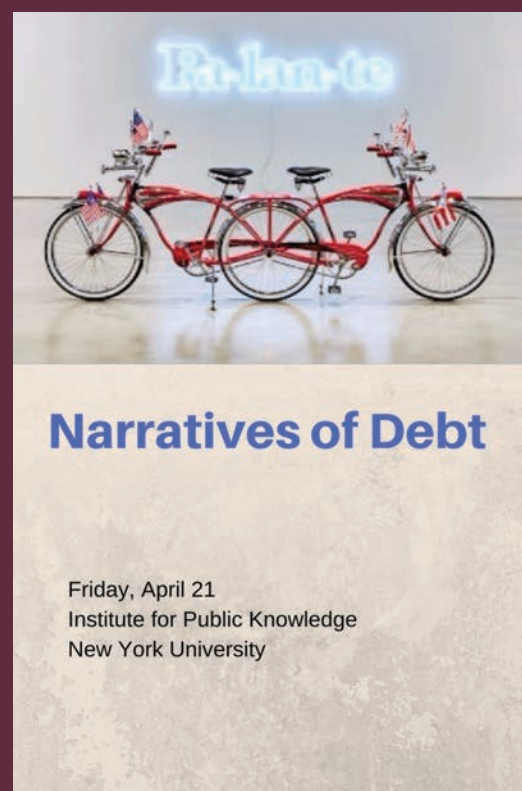
In the first of two public panel discussions on the subject of Refugees and Gender Violence organized by the Reframing Gendered Violence working group, featured speakers addressed questions of vulnerability and resistance in connection to refugee communities in Mexico, Central America, Turkey, and Greece, among other places. Wendy Vogt (Professor of Anthropology, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis) discussed state security and the politics of sexual violence along migrant routes in Mexico; Chloe Howe-Haralambous (Graduate Student, English & Comparative Literature, Columbia University) shared her work with Syrian refugees on the Greek island of Lesbos; Isin Onol (Curator in Vienna and Istanbul) talked about an exhibition she curated with refugee artists called "When Home Won't Let You Stay: A Collective Deliberation on Taking Refuge"; and Diana Taylor (Director, Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, NYU) spoke about her work with migrants in Mexico and Central America.

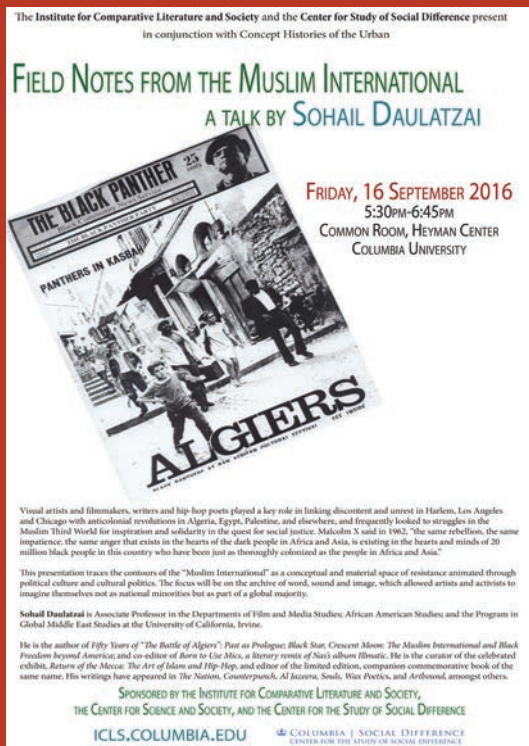


Narratives of Debt

New York University, April 21, 2017

CSSD's Unpayable Debt working group and the Oikos working group at New York University's Institute for Public Knowledge hosted "Narratives of Debt," a day-long event focusing on the case of Puerto Rico's debt crisis. The conference, which reflected the interdisciplinary approach of the CSSD working group, featured a wide range of scholars, artists, and activists, including journalist and documentary photographer Huascar Robles, artist Miguel Luciano, and faculty in Anthropology, Latino and Caribbean Studies, Classics, Social and Cultural Analysis, and Literature. Narratives of Debt will be followed up in 2018 with a second conference in order to continue to study the relationship between debt and questions of intimacy, kinship, sovereignty, and history in other contexts.





Concept Histories of the Urban

Columbia University, September 16-17, 2016

This two-day interdisciplinary workshop, organized by the Gender and the Global Slum working group and co-sponsored by the Center for the Study of Science and Society, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and the Heyman Center for the Humanities, gathered faculty from the humanities and social sciences in order to explore the relationship between race, space, and social segregation. In sessions focusing on "Violence and Visibility"; "Architecture and Humanitarianism"; "Media as Method"; and "Constructing the Urban," among others, participants demonstrated the importance and value of space to thinking about key issues in the humanities and social sciences. The workshop also included a public talk, "Field Notes From the Muslim International" by Sohail Daulatzai, Associate Professor of Film and Media Studies and African American Studies at the University of California, Irvine.



Bandung Humanisms: Towards a New Understanding of the Global South

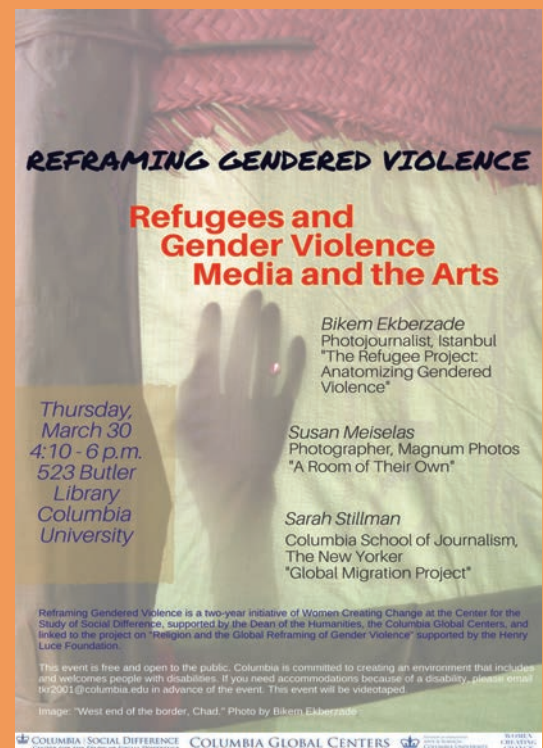
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, June 19, 2017

Jointly organized by Nanyang Technological University, Columbia University, and UCLA, this Bandung Humanisms workshop investigated the progressive cultural and intellectual movements among the formerly colonized nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The workshop revisited the creative collaborations from Hanoi to Havana, from Beijing to Beirut in pursuit of self-determination and racial equality, examining these transnational linkages from the perspectives of both global political and social history and comparative literature and cultural studies. Featuring scholars from Singapore, China, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, Lebanon, Poland, the Philippines, India, and Myanmar, the workshop provided a forum for participants to share research findings in a range of fields, including: international relations, sociology, literary criticism, cultural studies, history, and sociology.

Refugees and Gender Violence: Media and the Arts

Columbia University, March 30, 2017

In the second and final public panel discussion on Refugees and Gender Violence organized by the Reframing Gendered Violence working group, featured participants addressed questions of gender-based violence through their work in media and the arts. Photojournalist Bikem Ekberzade shared photographs of forced migrations in forgotten conflict zones such as Kosovo and Afghanistan, illustrating the stories of women stranded midway on their journeys toward refuge. Sarah Stillman, a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and Director of the Global Migration Project at the Columbia School of Journalism, spoke thoughtfully on the ways that narrative can affect our understanding of gendered violence against refugees. Susan Meiselas, president of the Magnum Foundation and author of acclaimed books such as *Carnival Strippers* (1976) and *Nicaragua* (1981), built on the themes introduced by Ekberzade and Stillman, detailing the challenges and discoveries of her latest project, *A Room of Their Own* (2017), devoted specifically to victims of standard violence.



Precision Medicine, Embodiment, Self, and Disability

Columbia University, March 9, 2017

As a form of genomic science, precision medicine holds out the promise of new classifications of bodily anomaly (including disease and disability) and new possibilities for intervention and normalization. Its advocates argue that precision medicine will lead to improvements in the efficacy, efficiency, and economy of healthcare services. Beyond its practical impact, however, the transition to precision medicine is likely to transform the professional and public imaginaries of the body, the normal self, and disability. In her lecture, Dr. Jackie Leach Scully, Senior Lecturer at the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, and a member of the Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences Research Centre, Newcastle University, UK took up some of the critiques that disability studies and bioethics have long brought to the genomic project, and examined their relevance for a future of precision medicine. Dr. Scully explored how genomic research and healthcare inform the cultural constructions of normality and disability, and asked how researchers might influence those constructions in ethically robust ways.





New Publication Vulnerability in Resistance

Vulnerability in Resistance (Duke University Press, 2016), grew out of the CSSD workshop Rethinking Vulnerability and Resistance: Feminism and Social Change. Edited by Judith Butler, Maxine Elliot Professor of Comparative Literature and Critical Theory at the University of California, Berkeley; Zeynep Gambetti, Associate Professor of Political Theory in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Bogaziçi University; and Leticia Sabsay, Assistant Professor in the Gender Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science, the collection of thirteen essays offers a feminist account of political agency. Contributors explore occupy movements and street politics, informal groups at checkpoints and barricades, practices of self-defense, hunger strikes, transgressive enactments of solidarity and mourning, infrastructural mobilizations, and aesthetic and erotic interventions into public space that mobilize memory and expose forms of power.



Will Precision Medicine Be for “All of Us”? The “Good Citizen” in an Age of Disparity *Columbia University, April 20, 2017*

Precision medicine research relies on the massive collection of biospecimens, electronic health records, and other sources of behavioral and environmental data. In support of this effort, the “All of Us” Precision Medicine Initiative aims to enroll one million volunteers from a broad spectrum of the U.S. population into long-term prospective studies. In her lecture, Dr. Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, Senior Research Scholar and medical anthropologist at the Stanford University Center for Biomedical Ethics addressed this initiative, discussing shifts in subjectivities from “patient” to “consumer” to the “good citizen” in the context of precision medicine, and how the consumption of genetic information creates new modes of being in the management of health and risk.

New Publication
A Room of Their Own

A Room of Their Own (Multistory, 2017) by Susan Meiselas, a member of the Reframing Gendered Violence working group, chronicles the experience of residents in a women's refuge in Black Country, a multi-ethnic, post-industrial region in the West Midlands, UK. After Meiselas was invited to photograph the residents she developed a collaborative project with the women who were willing to share their stories.



New Publication
Listening to Images

Tina Campt's **Listening to Images** (Duke University Press, 2017) was originally conceived in the CSSD project she co-directed called Engendering the Archive. Throughout the book, Campt tunes in to the affective frequencies inherent in various photographs of the black diaspora. Images range from late nineteenth-century ethnographic photographs of rural African women to postwar passport photographs in Birmingham, England and 1960s mug shots of the Freedom Riders.



LISTENING TO IMAGES / TINA M. CAMPT

GIVING AND IMPACT

In 2016-17 philanthropic support allowed us to sponsor graduate students, academic research and travel, public events, seminars, and working groups. Here are some examples of what gifts made possible:

Unpayable Debt: Capital, Violence, and the New Global Economy

Unpayable Debt examines the role of debt in contemporary capitalism and its relationship to migration and violence.

"To date, the working group has begun to create a dynamic network of scholars in various parts of the globe focused on comparative debt studies and produced fundamental and accessible teaching and research resources. Next year, our group will experiment with new digital platforms to share research in print, audio, and visual interfaces; expand our teaching resources; and blend popular narrative forms with scholarship to engage a young global audience. Unpayable Debt began to make possible a broad mapping of debt in the United States, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Europe and to examine debt not only as an economic phenomenon but in relation to community and family relations, political organization, artistic production, and social innovation. Once our work begins to be published, the working group will have a significant impact on comparative debt, and American, Caribbean, and social movement studies in several ways."



Francis Negrón-Muntaner, Project Director, Unpayable Debt

Reframing Gendered Violence



Reframing Gendered Violence explores the problem of violence against women through a wide range of fields, deepening the ways we engage with the complex causes and manifestations of violence in contemporary society.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of this project was the workshop on 'Refugees and Gender Violence' that we organized at Columbia and in the Columbia Global Center in Istanbul. These workshops brought together students, faculty, artists, journalists, and activists from several parts of the world. Because of philanthropic support we were able to bring together the stories of gender-based violence on the U.S.- Mexico border with those emerging from the European refugee crisis. Our discussions already impacted the work of several journalists. We will disseminate our insights about definitions of gender based violence to NGOs and international organizations, which will provoke a rethinking of the gendered nature of terms like 'refugee,' 'migrant,' and 'asylum-seeker.'"

Marianne Hirsch, Project Co-Director, Reframing Gendered Violence

Our Vision

Research

Diversify the scope and impact of our research projects.
Increase the number of projects and the number of faculty affiliated with the Center.

Community

Connect with our community through an increased number of public events.
Engage with community leaders through the Women Creating Change Leadership Council.
Collaborate with new areas of Columbia and faculty across campus.

Visibility

Communicate with our constituents and our community.
Publish work related to the findings of our research.
Teach the next generation of activists through coursework.

Sustainability

Raise funds for our research and programming.
Grow our endowment to sustain the activities of the Center.

Your Support

Your gift to the Center for the Study of Social Difference:

- Sustains our future
- Fortifies our research
- Supports our students

"When I was first introduced to Women Creating Change, I was very impressed by the interdisciplinary approach to researching issues that women impact as well as issues that impact women. In our current global environment it is extremely important that we understand the influence of women on the economic, political, and cultural forces that shape our surroundings. Our programs seek to incorporate academic research about women and other underrepresented groups in the classroom and to better inform global decision making. Our faculty leverage donor support in impressive ways to produce extraordinary global projects. Please join us in supporting this dynamic research and outreach."

Ann Kaplan, Columbia University Trustee Emeritus
Partner, Circle Wealth Management





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2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT