

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

*The Northeastern University Program in Women's, Gender, and
Sexuality Studies and
the Northeastern Humanities Center present:*

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The rise of right-wing movements across the world has significant impact on gender and sexual identities. The appeal of right wing, authoritarian, and nationalist movements to “tradition” and “shared values” often resuscitates patriarchal social formations and ideologies oppressive of women and sexual minorities. Such movements also foment fear of and hostility toward racial, national, ethnic, or sexual “others.” In presentations and conversations through the day, twelve speakers will bring the lenses of feminist theory and practice to bear on areas of the world including Colombia, El Salvador, the Philippines, Russia, and Turkey, among others; repressive political rhetorics including neoliberalist rhetoric in India and anti-Muslim rhetoric in the United States; gendered violence; European anti-gender movements; and displaced and refugee subjects.

Panel 1: Authoritarianism & Gender

Kevin Moss, Middlebury College

Russia Will Save Europe From Gender

Right wing forces across Europe have been pushing back against what they label “gender ideology” or “gender theory” in challenges to marriage equality, abortion, reproductive technologies, gender mainstreaming, sex education, sexual liberalism, and transgender rights. While in much of Europe these are often covertly church-backed mobilizations in opposition to EU policies and Brussels, in Russia the picture is very different. The “traditional values” endorsed by those who oppose gender equality and LGBT rights are fully and openly embraced by the state, by the Russian Orthodox Church, and even by state universities and the Russian Academy of Sciences. Especially since Putin’s return in 2012, traditional values have become the national idea of Russia, deployed internally as a populist ideology to unify Russia, and externally as a kind of exceptionalist-messianic pose to present Russia as the savior of Europe and the leading defender of true European values (defined through the traditional heteronormative family). Thus the anti-gender position is at the heart of Russia’s self-identification in opposition to the decadent West, as well as at the heart of Russia’s geopolitical strategy to unite like-minded traditionalist forces behind Russia (thereby both gaining international status as a world leader and destabilizing the EU by supporting right-wing dissenting factions in Europe).

Kevin Moss is the Jean Thomson Fulton Professor of Modern Languages and Literature at Middlebury College, where he is Chair of the Russian department and teaches courses both in Russian and in Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies. With a PhD in Slavic Studies and

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

Russian Literature from Cornell, he has studied Russian gay literature and culture since the early 90s. In 1997 he edited the first anthology of gay Russian materials in any language, *Out of the Blue: Russia's Hidden Gay Literature* (Gay Sunshine Press). He has written on films with queer characters from countries across Eastern Europe, on gay pride parades in Croatia, and on the prose of Evgeny Kharitonov and Gennady Trifonov. Recently he has collaborated with colleagues from the EU on a study of anti-gender campaigns in Europe.

L. Cole Parke, Political Research Associates

LGBTQ Assimilation and the Rise of Authoritarianism

Heteropatriarchy and misogyny, alongside White supremacy and capitalism, function as central pillars of the Right and key ingredients to the rise of authoritarianism. Those who dare to subvert “traditional” hetero relationship structures, gender roles, and the gender binary are seen as major threats to the maintenance of this formula, and are therefore targeted by the Right through a myriad of violent and oppressive tactics. Whether resistance is their intent or not, by the very nature of their existence, queer people and trans people effectively challenge the fundamental roots of right-wing power, and represent some of our greatest hopes for liberation. However, the pattern of assimilation by marginalized groups is well established, and as the LGBTQ movement gains mainstream acceptance, our potency as resisters is rapidly dissipating. The emergence of high-profile gay men within the Alt Right further reveals the potential for LGBTQ people to not only abandon critical opportunities for subversive resistance, but to actually aid and abet the rise of authoritarianism.

L. Cole Parke works as a research analyst at Political Research Associates, a social justice think tank dedicated to tracking, analyzing, and resisting the Right Wing. Cole has degrees in theology and conflict transformation, and has been working at the intersections of faith, gender, and sexuality as an activist, organizer, and scholar for more than a decade. Their research and writing examines the infrastructure, mechanisms, strategies, and effects of the Religious Right on LGBTQ people and reproductive rights, both domestically and internationally, always with an eye toward collective liberation.

Betul Eksi, Northeastern University and Elizabeth A. Wood, MIT

Masculinism as a Political Strategy of Governance: Order and Chaos in the 21st Century Turkey and Russia

Since they came to power in 1999 and 2002 respectively, Vladimir Putin and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan have relied on a hidden and sometimes outspoken masculinism as a strategy of rule. They have projected their power through the creation of masculine avatars, performances of exaggerated masculine prowess, and domination over one’s subordinates in ways that are both seen and not seen by their followers. One aspect of this masculinism has been the claim to create order against the forces of disorder both in the past (especially a discrediting of the 1990s) and in the “outside” world in the form of homosexuality and abortion, but also pluralism and ethnic, religious, and sexual diversity more broadly. Ironically, however, in their reliance on such a global rightist agenda, they have also sown more chaos, fostering insecurity and undermining

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

democratic institutions. This in turn allows them to argue that their masculine leadership is more needed than ever.

Betul Eksi is a Post Doctoral Research Associate at the Global Resilience Institute (GRI) at Northeastern University, where she received a PhD degree in sociology. She is also a former Humanities Center Post Doctoral Fellow at Northeastern University. As a political sociologist and a gender scholar, Betul has two main streams of research. She has conducted ethnographic research on political masculinities, the police, and political transition in Turkey. As one of the Co-PIs of a multidisciplinary project on sanctuary cities and immigration in the U.S., funded by the GRI, she explores perceptions and experiences of safety, inclusion, and resilience.

Elizabeth A. Wood is a Professor of Russian and Soviet History at MIT, where she also directs the Russian Studies Program and the MIT-Russia Program, which she co-founded in 2011. She has an A.B. from Harvard in Russian History and Literature, while her PhD is from the University of Michigan in Soviet History. Her books include *The Baba and the Comrade: Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Indiana University Press, 1997); *Performing Justice: Agitation Trials in Early Soviet Russia* (Cornell University Press, 2005); and *Roots of Russia's War in Ukraine* (coauthored) (Woodrow Wilson Center/Columbia University Press, 2016). Recently she has been working on Vladimir Putin's hypermasculinity and his scenarios of power as well as returning to questions of 1917 and the ambivalence of women's emancipation.

Josen Masangkay Diaz, University of San Diego

"The Epitome of Misogyny and Fascism": Reframing Rodrigo Duterte's Drug War

A 2016 photograph taken by Filipino photojournalist Raffy Lerma captured Jennilyn Olayres cradling the dead body of her partner, Michael Saron, showcasing another casualty of Rodrigo Duterte's bloody drug war. Since assuming the presidency in 2016, Duterte has brought a hardline approach to the executive office. His strongman style of governance, reminiscent of Ferdinand Marcos's 1970s dictatorship, has been characterized by a distinct paternalism, through which he has named the goal of his administration as the protection of the country and its children from a new amalgamation of destructive elements. Duterte's notoriety has also taken shape through the suppression of his most vociferous critics, his casual endorsement of sexual assault, and most recently, his instruction to Philippine military officers to shoot women rebels of the New People's Army in their vaginas. Commenting on the latter, Emmi de Jesus of Gabriela Women's Party, a leftist feminist organization in the Philippines, explained that Duterte "has further presented himself as the epitome of misogyny and fascism terribly rolled into one." Taking into account the multifariousness that constitutes the reemergence of authoritarianism in the Philippines, I use this presentation to analyze the visual representation of Duterte's drug war to illustrate what de Jesus has described as the inherent interconnectedness between misogyny and fascism. I argue that a meditation on visuality helps reframe Duterte's power not only as producing death but especially as setting the conditions for life, where Filipino women and children are not simply collateral damage but the producers of a life-giving labor upon which Philippine society depends.

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

Josen Masangkay Diaz is an Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies and Affiliated Faculty in Women and Gender Studies at the University of San Diego. Her teaching and research interests include transpacific studies, Cold War authoritarianism, and Filipino and Filipino American cultural studies. Her book manuscript in progress, *Mediating Empire: The U.S.-Philippine Cold War, Martial Law, and Configurations of Filipino America*, traces the emergence of a post-1965 Filipino American subjectivity at the intersections of Philippine authoritarianism and U.S. liberalism. Her work is published in *Kritika Kultura* and the *Journal of Asian American Studies*.

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

1:00 pm – 2:40 pm

Panel 2: Gendered Violence & Displacement

Moderator: Amy Farrell, Northeastern University

Susan B. Church, Demissie and Church

The Myth of Impartial Asylum Law and Its Continuing Harm Against Female Latin American Asylum Seekers

Unprecedented and unrelenting violence has forced asylum seekers from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to come to the United States. Women and teen girls often endure the most horrific and inescapable violence including rape, assault, gang-recruitment as “girlfriends”, and trafficking for sex by gang members. But what has America, a signatory to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, done in response to this human tragedy? Often the United States response re-victimizes the asylum seekers by imprisoning the women and children in “baby jails” and now, under the new administration, separating women from children. Presumably, the law would allow for these women fleeing violence to apply for asylum if they made it safely to the United States. This talk will analyze the particular burden that women face in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and the frustrating response of the courts to such claims for asylum.

Susan B. Church is a trial and appellate attorney focusing mainly on immigration law and criminal defense. In November 2005, Attorney Church established her own firm, Demissie & Church with her current partner, Attorney Derege Demissie. At Demissie and Church, Attorney Church advocates for immigrants with criminal convictions facing deportation and immigrants seeking immigration benefits in the United States. Refugees from El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, and Nicaragua form a significant portion of her work as an Attorney. She also represents immigrants seeking lawful permanent residence, citizenship requests, and immigrants facing deportation in court. In 2001, Attorney Church received the "Detention Panel Attorney of the Year" award from the Political Asylum Immigrant Representation project. A longtime supporter of progressive political causes, she was named the Attorney of the Year by the National Lawyers Guild in 2014. Attorney Church also successfully represented the “Occupy Boston” protestors as the lead attorney. In 2015 she received the PAIR Project pro bono attorney of the year award. From 2012-2018 she has served as a Board member of the American Immigration Lawyers’ Association of New England, taking the title of Chair in 2016-2017. Attorney Church has also been recognized for her pro bono work by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, receiving the Adams award in 2017. Also in 2017, Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly named her Attorney of the Year. In 2017 she successfully sued President Trump for his anti-immigrant travel and visa processing ban on Muslim immigrants from seven affected countries, obtaining a Temporary Restraining Order from the Federal District Court. She is also a frequent lecturer at Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education programs, American Immigration Lawyers Association of New England, Boston Bar Association, and the Mass Bar Association. Attorney Church has also appeared as a guest commentator on national television and radio.

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

Rupal Oza, Hunter College, CUNY

The Dilemma of Consent: Sexual Subjectivity in Rape Narratives

How do we think about consent in the contemporary moment? What does consent mean? How does it circulate? I want to explore the ways in which consent is understood and mobilized in rural Haryana drawing on empirical work I have been conducting over the past two years. I ask what is the sexual subject that is evoked by consent? I argue that sexual subjectivity is a source of deep anxiety and thus motivates efforts to undermine consent in rape cases and presents a dilemma for feminist theorizing and organizing around sexual violations.

Rupal Oza is an Associate Professor in the department of Women and Gender Studies, Hunter College, and the Earth and Environmental Studies Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. Her work focuses on socio-political transformations in the global south, the geography of the right-wing politics, and the conjuncture between gender, violence, and political economy. Her first book, *The Making of Neoliberal India: Nationalism, Gender, and the Paradoxes of Globalization* was published in 2006 by Routledge, New York and by Women Unlimited, India. She was part of the Hunter Women's Studies Collective who wrote the fourth edition of *Women's Realities, Women's Choices* (2014, OUP). She has several articles in peer reviewed journals on a range of issues: human rights in an age of terror and empire, rethinking area studies, special economic zones in India, and realigned geographies after 9/11. She has just completed an article on wrestling women in rural Haryana and is working on a book length project on the after-life of sexual assault.

Serena Parekh, Northeastern University

Gender and the Refugee Crisis: Three Perspectives

In this talk, I examine different ways of considering gender in relation to the global refugee crisis. I argue that the "refugee crisis" is likely different than what most people think it is. Much of what refugees experience as harmful has to do with the policies that Western states have put in place to "rescue" refugees. I then explore two ways of discussing gender in relation to the crisis. The first seeks to compare the suffering of female refugees to male refugees, while the other argues that it's really European women who are vulnerable to the harms posed by male (Muslim) refugees. I suggest that the first perspective is unhelpful, and the second is wrong. Instead, I suggest that if we care about the safety and integrity of women - like all parties claim we do - we focus on the ways in which the refugee and asylum policies of Western states, along with our practices of aiding refugees, contribute to the vulnerability of women. This, I hope, will be a way to combat the discourse on the right that "vulnerable" (European) women must be protected from "dangerous" (Muslim) men.

Serena Parekh is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Northeastern University in Boston, where she is the director of the Politics, Philosophy, and Economics Program and editor of the American Philosophical Association Newsletter on Feminism and Philosophy. Her primary philosophical interests are in social and political philosophy, feminist theory, and continental philosophy. Her most recent book, *Refugees and the Ethics of Forced Displacement*, was published with Routledge in 2017. Her first book, *Hannah Arendt and the Challenge of Modernity: A Phenomenology of Human Rights*, was published in 2008 and translated into

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

Chinese. She has also published numerous articles on social and political philosophy in *Hypatia*, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, and *Human Rights Quarterly*.

Elizabeth Swanson, Babson College

“When I am Found Dead”: Toxic Masculinities and the Production of Global Precarity

This talk traces the global spectrum of hegemonic masculinities and their relation to international humanitarian law in order to illuminate the profoundly gendered—and often deadly—repercussions of new rules governing the treatment of asylum seekers and displaced persons under the Trump administration.

Elizabeth Swanson is a Professor of Literature and Human Rights at Babson College in Wellesley, MA. Author of *Beyond Terror: Gender, Narrative, Human Rights* (Rutgers UP, 2007), Swanson specializes in issues of gender and representation in the context of human rights and their violation. Co-editor with Alexandra Schultheis Moore of *Theoretical Perspectives on Human Rights and Literature* (2012), *Teaching Human Rights in Literary and Cultural Studies* (MLA 2015), and *Witnessing Torture: Perspectives from Torture Survivors and Human Rights Workers* (Palgrave 2018), Swanson has also published book chapters and journal articles on literature and human rights in such venues as the *International Journal of Human Rights*, *Humanity*, *Callaloo*, and *South Atlantic Quarterly*.

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

2:50-4:15

Panel 3: Governmentality & Gender

Moderator: Kathrin Zippel, Northeastern University

Fatema Ahmad, Muslim Justice League

Co-Opting Muslim Women: Gender and Soft Surveillance

Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) is a campaign driven by national security, intelligence, and federal law enforcement agencies that purports to steer people off pathways to “radicalization” or “extremism.” CVE typically recruits trusted community members (local organizations, teachers, health professionals) to engage in soft surveillance of Muslims. The status of Muslim women is utilized by proponents of CVE to advance and mask the discriminatory practices that CVE legitimizes.

Fatema Ahmad is the Deputy Director of the Muslim Justice League, an organization that educates, organizes and advocates for human and civil rights that are violated or threatened under national security pretexts. She’s a former engineer turned community organizer with experience fighting racism and islamophobia in North Carolina with Muslims for Social Justice and the American Friends Service Committee.

Helena Alviár Garcia, Universidad de Los Andes, Harvard Law

Gender Lessons from Transitional Justice: The Colombian Peace Process

In October 2016, by a very slim difference, the Colombian peace agreement was rejected in a referendum vote. This loss surprised many, including Colombian government officials, members of the negotiation team and the FARC guerrilla. For all of them, failure was not an option. In their minds, the Colombian population, exhausted from years and years of violence, had no reason to oppose peace. In addition, the essential building blocks of transitional justice were a part of the pact’s architecture: reconciliation, reparation, and special tribunals to replace traditional criminal law, as well as legal reforms to promote political participation and address agrarian policy. Nevertheless, the opposition was able to successfully build upon fears about the rebirth of the nation as an effective handing over of the country to the left not only in economic terms but also as an end to traditional gender roles and the elimination of the family. This presentation aims to take stock of the gender content of the peace agreement. The goal will be to unveil what was lost for women in the rewriting of the treaty after the NO won as well as to come to terms with the successful right wing backlash to the redistribution of power and resources across gender lines.

Helena Alviár Garcia studied law at Universidad de los Andes and holds a Master’s and Doctorate in law-SJD-from Harvard Law School. She served as the Dean of the Facultad de Derecho at Universidad de Los Andes in Bogota, from 2011 through 2016, and is a Full Professor at the same institution. Since January of 2017 she has been a visiting professor at Harvard Law School. Professor Alviár has taught at universities in Europe, the United States, and Latin America. She has published extensively in the areas of feminist theory, property, law and development, social and economic rights, and transitional justice.

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

Mieke Verloo, Raboud University

The Emergence of an Anti-Gender Equality Project in Europe?

In Europe, opposition to feminist politics and gender+ equality policies currently materializes in a wide range of forms. There is variation along many dimensions: geographically; at what stage of the political process the opposition occurs; variation in which actors are most prominently engaging in these activities and whether actors are part of formal political power systems or not; what repertoires of action are used; what visions of gender equality are opposed: and which oppositional mechanisms are in focus. The question addressed in the talk will be whether these various oppositional activities can be seen to be part of a larger project that threatens the feminist project, and what that implies.

Mieke Verloo is a Professor of Comparative Politics and Inequality Issues at Radboud University in the Netherlands, and Non-Residential Permanent Fellow at the IWM, Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna. She is the winner of the 2015 ECPG Gender and Politics Career Achievement Award. She was scientific director of large research projects on gender equality policymaking in Europe (see <http://www.mageeq.net> and <http://www.quing.eu>). She has extensive consultancy and training experience on gender mainstreaming and intersectionality for several European governments and institutions. Her latest publication is the edited volume on *Varieties of Opposition to Gender Equality in Europe* published by Routledge (2018). Her recent work is on the complex relationship between democracy and gender+ equality.

Gender and the Rise of the Global Right:

Friday, March 23, 2018

Panel Abstracts & Panelist Bios

About the Moderators

Berna Turam is a Professor of Sociology at Northeastern University, and Director of the International Affairs Program. She has an abiding interest in conducting research on state-society interaction, particularly on the interaction between ordinary Muslim people and the state. She is the author of *Between Islam and the State: The Politics of Engagement* (Stanford University Press, 2007), and *Gaining Freedoms: Claiming Space in Istanbul and Berlin* (Stanford University Press, 2015) and the editor of *Secular State and Religious Society: Two Forces at Play in Turkey* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). She co-edited a special issue, entitled “Secular Muslims?”, in *Comparative Studies of South America, Africa and the Middle East*. Currently, Turam serves on the advisory board of the project entitled “Understanding the Perceptions of Science in Muslim Societies.” She is also the co-PI of a newly funded collaborative project on sanctuary cities and safe places.

Amy Farrell is a professor at Northeastern University’s School of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Her research seeks to understand arrest, adjudication, and criminal case disposition practices. Professor Farrell is the co-author of *Not Guilty: Are the Acquitted Innocent*, published by New York University Press in 2012 (with Daniel Givelber) and co-editor of *Deadly injustice: Trayvon Martin, race, and the criminal justice system* published by New York University Press, 2015 (with Devon Johnson and Patricia Warren). She also co-authored a report for the National Institute of Justice on hate crimes against immigrants in the U.S. and is currently conducting research on youth and Latino/a experiences of bias motivated crime victimization. She oversees a program to collect data on human trafficking investigations for the U.S. Department of Justice and has studied and published research about how local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies identify, investigate, and prosecute human trafficking cases. She recently completed projects examining labor trafficking victimization in the US and assessing the effectiveness of state anti-trafficking law reform efforts.

Kathrin Zippel is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Northeastern University and has published on gender politics in the workplace, public and social policy, social movements, welfare states, and globalization in the United States and Europe. Her book *The Politics of Sexual Harassment in the United States, the European Union and Germany* (Cambridge University Press) won several awards. Her current research explores gender and global transformations of science and education. In her forthcoming book, *Women in Global Science: Advancing Careers Through International Collaboration* (Stanford University Press), she argues that global science is the new frontier for women, providing both opportunities and challenges as gender shapes the dynamics and practices of international research.