

Oxford Women's Leadership Symposium

Dr Brenda Seevers
Professor, New Mexico State University, US

Fostering Independence and Equality: An Economic Empowerment Model

Empowerment is recognized as a crucial component for alleviating poverty, social exclusion and reducing health disparities. Helping women build capacity with information and practical skills helps to broaden their range of choices as well as gives them a voice in their households and communities. In 2008, a low-budget grassroots empowerment project for HIV-positive women was started in West Nile Uganda. "Lifestitches" was created to assist women in the development of technical and entrepreneurial skills to support themselves and their families. Expansion projects have diversified technical skills and knowledge to include sewing, baking, bicycle repair and mango production. The structural aspects of the model, which include empowerment, sustainability and participatory evaluation are discussed in the context of an established paradigm. A demographic/socioeconomic outcome tool using locally relevant short-term and long-term economic indicators was developed. Initial findings support the effectiveness of this model to address poverty among vulnerable women in developing countries as well as the identification of some barriers to participation. The success of the model is discussed in terms of its' sustainability and growth and transferability to other local communities. Issues for success and replication addressed include understanding the uniqueness of each community, establishing local support, and the realization of the necessity for modification and diversification.

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Dr E. Anne Christo-Baker
Associate Professor, Purdue University North Central, US

Women in the C-Suite: Perspectives on Women Corporate Leaders in US Organizations

Women currently comprise 46.8% of the US Labor force and hold a majority (51.4%) of managerial, professional, and related jobs (Catalyst, 2014). However, they are underrepresented at the executive level: They make up only 14.4% of executive officers, 16.9% of board seats, 8.1% of top earners, and 4.8% of CEO's (Catalyst, 2014). Clearly, a gap exists between women in middle levels of organizations and their representation at higher echelons of organizations. This paper will serve as a prelude to proposed volume that will explore factors and trends that contribute to the dearth of women leaders in senior leadership and executive positions in the corporate world.

Patterns of ascent to leadership positions, the role and effectiveness of micro and macro level interventions such as formal programming, mentoring, coaching, succession planning, and large systems change efforts will be explored. Furthermore, leadership styles of executive women and their effects on organizational performance and profitability will be examined. The

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theoretical lenses for analysis will incorporate social role theory, role congruity theory, and theories of leadership effectiveness.

It is expected that findings will contribute to theory building particularly in the emerging models of women's executive leadership and provide frameworks for future research agendas.

Ms Shirley Wilcher

Executive Director, American Association for Access, Equity and Diversity

Affirmative Action and Gender: A Lesson in Benefits and Curious Contradictions

This paper explores the historical relationship between the women's community in the United States and its natural allies, racial and ethnic minorities, in the quest to achieve equal opportunity in education, employment and government contracting. An issue that exemplifies this relationship and its contradictions and conflicts that have existed since slavery and the women's suffrage movement, is the question of affirmative action and its legal status under the United States Constitution.

In the summer of 2016 the U.S. Supreme Court is projected to hand down a decision regarding the constitutionality of taking race into account as a factor in higher education admissions. Abigail Fisher, a Caucasian woman who applied for admission to the University of Texas at Austin and was rejected, has challenged the constitutionality of using race in the admissions decisions made by the University.

This is the second time that the Court will have taken up the Fisher case – an unusual action, and constitutional scholars, lawyers and the news media are questioning the future of affirmative action where a number of Justices of the Court have expressed concerns about it. This is also the fourth time that a woman has been the lead plaintiff in a major affirmative action case brought to strike down race-based considerations in admissions.

The question that will be examined is why have the most prominent plaintiffs in a majority of the cases leading to the current Fisher case been women? As the paper will discuss, women have been the primary beneficiaries of affirmative action since it was aggressively used in the 1960s to integrate selective colleges and universities, and subsequently in employment as well. Will the natural coalition between women and minority groups (soon to be part of the majority) be undermined by the prominent role of women in the anti-affirmative action movement? Will women be adversely affected if the Court strikes down race-based affirmative action or will the standard of Supreme Court review in gender cases, arguably more lenient than in race-based affirmative action cases, shield women from the loss of a means to promote equal opportunity for them? What should the women's legal rights community and political leaders be expected to do in light of these questions?

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This paper will recommend that the historical coalition between these groups coalesce and that the women's community must be the most vocal opponent to efforts to undermine equal opportunity programs for underrepresented minorities. Moreover, while women have made substantial gains in employment and education, there remains a gender gap in both areas and they will continue to benefit from efforts to promote diversity and inclusion for all groups that have been historically excluded by law and tradition.

Dr Vanaja Menon Vadakepat

Associate Professor, New York Institute of Technology, US

Excelling in Academics: Are Arab Women in the UAE more Dedicated to Learning?

Past researches expose that historically men have outperformed women in studies. Still, several communities hold biased opinions on women's skill in scholarly contributions. Since it has been apparent that women's role in the professional realm is limited in the Arab society, their commitments to study and cognitive ability in writing assignments and research are too underestimated. Corroborating the recent reports on the UAE women's performance in science subjects and the Emiratis' expectation that they may reverse the gender gap in the academic world, this pilot study aims to explore whether the UAE women are performing well in producing successful academic projects that meet with the professional quality in their studies. The main research instrument is a matrix designed to measure the scores recorded in the instructors' assessment rubrics for the 200 written reports randomly selected from an equal number of both male and female Arab students from a leading MBA school in Abu Dhabi. Sentiment analysis was used to appraise the emotional involvement of Arab women to excel in report writing. The opinion mining was administered by a questionnaire. Findings reveal the need to alter the perception of gender diversity in students' commitment and contribution to quality research. The findings hopefully encourage more women empowerment in the Arab world, leading them to get admissions in top-tier institutions with scholarships.

Renana Pilzer

PhD Candidate, Shalom Hartman Institute, Israel

Women's Leadership Development

My name is Renana Ravitsky-Pilzer, and I propose to hold a lecture at the Symposium. I have done extensive fieldwork concerning women leadership development and shaping the next generation of Jewish religious feminism. My PhD, on which I am currently working, focuses on gender and ritual and within its framework I examine and compare birth and identity rituals for boys and girls in Jewish society. I am a co-founder of a very unique Jewish orthodox synagogue, based on equality, and its co-manager for the last 14 years. I feel privileged being able to intertwine my educational work, my communal activity and the research I am conducting.

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In my current position, I am a part of the managing staff of a religious feminist High School for girls in Jerusalem. The school belongs to Shalom Hartman Institute (a pluralistic center of research and Jewish education). The school has been commissioned by the Ministry of Education to develop a feminist curriculum and experience its implementation in a religious school. Under my leadership, a unique and original curriculum has been developed, aiming at educating the girls to become well informed and articulate young women, equipped with general and Jewish knowledge, being able to take part in religious and spiritual rituals in the public sphere, confident in their body and soul and dedicated to communal and social involvement.

In order to reach these goals we attempt to find a way to integrate modern feminism with commitment to our ancient, patriarchal and occasionally discriminative Halacha (Jewish law); to combine education for self-empowerment and leadership with good manners, humility and acceptance of authority; to provide high level learning together with an intensive engagement with Jewish values. We believe our students are the future of feminism. Right now, they live in a sort of social bubble, or a laboratory: seemingly equal, leaving criticism outside. Within the school there is no glass ceiling nor obstacles – the sky is the limit. When getting outside its walls, they might be frustrated and amazed at the "real" world, but we hope they will be challenged to fill in the gap and change the world, especially the communities they live in, and have to tools to do so. We do our utmost to provide them with the right tools to succeed.

Decisions as to school's policies are taken according to feminist concepts as well: questions of the degree to which the students take part in formulation of policy, procedures of decision-making, management availability, attitude towards teachers during pregnancy and after giving birth and even the school's look and social activities – are all thought of through a feminist lens. We deal a lot with defining what is feminism, or our own feminism, learning about the different feminist currents, choosing the appropriate contents for each of our programs. The big question we are facing is: can feminism be liberal, cultural and radical at the same time and in the same place?

I will most willingly arrive to the symposium and share with you the fascinating challenges we are facing and the experience we accumulate in our fieldwork.

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Orly Benjamin
Professor, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Assuming an 'Adult Worker'- Changing 'Gendered Moral Rationalities' and Poverty among Israeli Welfare-to Work Participants

European and North American feminist economists alike have challenged the assumption that job remunerations can cover single mothers' breadwinning needs. A particularly important British critique argued that Welfare to Work (WTW) policy not accompanied by occupational skill development, employment opportunities, and childcare services, cannot alleviate poverty

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because women's community-anchored 'gendered moral rationalities' prevent their labor market participation. Against this critique, not enough is known about whether and how mothers' 'gendered moral rationality', is changing to maximize labor market remunerations. Ethnic diversity of the type that exists among the participants of an Israeli WTW project provides an opportunity for a systematic clarification of the topic and sheds light on changing understandings of mothering as salient to the process. Despite distinct social citizenship in various countries operating WTW policies, our qualitative account indicates the economic benefits of WTW as contingent upon the services embedded therein.

Dr Marie Melanie Javier
Professor, Central Philippine University, Philippines

A Gender-Based Demography of a Most-At-Risk Population of the Philippines

This study investigated several demographic features of a Most At-Risk Population (MARP) of Iloilo City, Philippines, specifically, the Commercial Sex Workers (CSWS) according to their gender distribution. These features are: age, civil status, number of children, educational level, vocational training and migration. A take-all sample of all registered 131 CSWs who worked as masseuses, Guest Relations Officers (GRO) and dancers in the city was taken. Frequency distribution was used to describe data, while Chi-square was used to determine relationship between gender and the demographics. The survey shows that the registered CSWs of Iloilo City are mostly females. The higher distribution for the females are in having one child, high school graduates, and having vocational training. The higher distribution of the males are for age bracket 20-29, single, no children, no vocational training, and high school undergraduates and as migrating workers. Among the demographic variables, only vocational training and migration were significantly related to gender. In conclusion, more women than men go into this livelihood, exposing them to a greater risk than the men. A high school education coupled with sought vocational training are not enough to provide women with an alternate livelihood. Among women, child support may be a motivator to engage in this livelihood. Compared with the men, the women are more stationary in their practice of their profession.

Asli Ermis
PhD Candidate, University of Oxford, UK

Women's Careers and Domestic Division of Labour: An Example of Turkey

Turkish women have increased their higher educational attainment starting from the 1980s while there has been a simultaneous decrease in their labour market participation. This has been majorly a result of internal migration and thus, the emergence of new urban women with lower qualifications having difficulties to be a part of the labour market. As the informal economy created by this phenomenon is among the main concerns in the literature regarding Turkish women's work, there is one issue that has been neglected: Turkish women's career

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path in the high prestige occupations. This study finds that within the “hierarchy elevator”, Turkish women are concentrated in the medium section, excluded from the low prestige jobs based on tradition and from the higher prestige jobs due to statistical discrimination also the expectation that their careers will be discontinuous as a result of family-related reasons.

The findings of this research shows that women’s probability to be in both male jobs overall and prestigious male jobs increases with rising educational level, as being married decreases this possibility. While the number of children affect women’s overall participation in jobs dominated by men negatively, for prestigious male jobs, having one child has a positive influence compared to having no children. This result implies that the division of domestic labour creates even a heavier burden at times compared to childcare (even though there is still a significant lack of support towards mothers at work) also considering that the most common reason for women not attending the labour market is “being a housewife”, there is a remarkable level of highly educated women outside the labour market and part-time jobs are not offered for prestigious occupational positions. Based on these findings, the domestic division of labour patterns in the Turkish households are elaborated. It is found that women’s share in traditionally time-consuming and regular “feminine” housework decrease with neither women’s employment status nor increasing wage (unlike childcare tasks that shift to family members or paid help), thus I eliminate resource bargaining and time availability explanations on women’s double burden.

Men’s attitudes (whether they argue women should work or not) and behaviour (their involvement in traditionally “feminine” housework) regarding support towards women’s work are analysed using bivariate probit model to test gender ideology explanation. Although attitudes and behaviour of men are correlated, a majority of them have positive attitudes towards female employment while they are not as supportive in practice. The Southern European welfare regulations accounting family as the social safety net, traditional social structure and domestic division of labour patterns with a conventional gender discourse prevent women’s participation in the top-prestige jobs that are dominated mostly by men. The potential solutions to overcome the barriers in the way of improving women’s careers would be reinforcing men’s status in the private sphere alongside with women’s state in the labour market, providing generous child benefits and increasing women’s attainment in higher education further.

Danielle Gilmore
Independent Researcher, US

Loving Ourselves to Death: The Juxtaposition of Fat Acceptance and Poor Health in African American Women

Rose Fife

Professor, Indiana University School of Medicine, US

Efforts to Improve Outreach to Hispanic Patients in Indianapolis

Arwa Elsanosi

PhD Candidate, Georgetown University, US

Legalization of Pornography: Women, Agency and Self-Victimization

The sexual revolution of the 1960s brought about heated and complicated debates on prostitution, pornography, and sexuality. In the United States of America, the legalization of pornography was based on the First Amendment of the United States' Constitution, which protects freedom of speech and expression. Despite pornography being legal in America, it remains to be a social taboo. This paper finds that most women involved in the porn industry who want to quit, use or believe the argument of unawareness, coercion and/or abuse as means to justify their involvement in pornography. This paper argues that the inconsistency between the social status and the legal status of pornography leaves no exit-option for pornographic actresses except through self-victimization; the legalization framework failed to lift the social taboo perspective of pornography as an occupation. To demonstrate the aforementioned argument, the paper examines the debate on the legalization of pornography in the United States and Denmark, and analyzes the "objectification and abuse" anti-pornography argument that raises questions about agency and generalizations. Lastly, the paper explores the effect of this argument on society, and consequently on retiring pornographic actresses. This paper concludes that the society normalizes the existence of pornography, yet it rejects pornographic actresses as women with agency. Consequently, former-porn actresses who fail to demonstrate remorse or regret are often shunned from being reintegrated within society, and thus have a disadvantage in accessing potential financial resources and livelihood means.

Dr Yachien Huang

Assistant Professor, Tamkang University, Taiwan

En-gender(ed) Politics: Getting to Know Congresswomen through the Lens of the Best-selling Tabloid Newspaper in Taiwan

This study investigated the quantity and quality of representation of Taiwanese congress members in the Apple Daily, the most popular Taiwanese tabloid newspaper.

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492 articles on 75 congressmen and 33 congresswomen were examined in the aspect of 'tone', 'theme', 'length', and 'section allocation'. Results showed that congressmen received proportionately more coverage than their female counterparts and significant gender differences appeared in 'theme'. 'Relationship' was the theme where widest differences between sexes were found.

It was also found that the articles were highly concentrated on several individuals. The top-five-most reported congressmen and congresswomen claimed 65.3% and 69.9% of overall coverage in their sex group respectively. The gender difference in 'theme' intensified among the top-five-most-reported congress members, indicating that the tabloid newspaper was particularly interested in exploiting relationship stories of some congresswomen and that gender representation in tabloids was highly case-sensitive.

Moreover, qualitative analysis on the tabloid coverage of two separate relationship scandals revealed that the narrative tended to be more forgiving to male politicians, highlighting 'men errors' and their 'genuine emotional weakness'; whereas female politicians were reproached for setting a bad example and depicted as scheming, lack of integrity and a danger to social morals.

Dr Ariel Mitchell
Assistant Professor, Xavier University, US

The Role Balance Experience of Black Female Counselor Education Doctoral Students Maintaining Full-Time Employment and Significant Relationships

This qualitative phenomenological research study explored the role balance experience of five Black female counselor education doctoral students who were balancing education, full-time employment, and significant relationships. Purposeful and snowball sampling were used to elicit participants who met these criteria: enrolled as a full-time doctoral student, employed full-time (30 or more hours weekly), and involved in a self-defined significant relationship.

The participants in this study individually provided insight into their respective perceived role balance experiences of balancing education, work, and significant relationships. The primary research question for the study was: "What is the role balance experience of Black female counselor education doctoral students maintaining full-time employment and significant relationships?" A review of the literature examining the roles of Black women in U.S. society, Black women and significant relationships, and Black women in higher education provided the foundation for the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person and via Face time to collect data. Interviews were recorded and transcribed by a third party provider. The transcription and initial analysis was sent to each respective participant for member checking and a follow-up interview was scheduled to address any participant concerns or questions. The data were open coded and then clustered into themes. A cross-case analysis was completed

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and themes were merged into superordinate themes. Superordinate themes were used to answer the primary research question.

Three superordinate themes emerged: past influences present, struggle to have it all, and how to balance.

Dr Lia A. Steele-Marcell
Associate Professor, Philander Smith College, US

Wise Woman, Shawoman, Witch, and MEdicine Woman: Hag or Healer ?

The research objective here is to begin an exploration that will culminate in a book length Feminist, mythic, and Jungian analyses of the popular images, myths, and fictional depictions of the Wise Woman, Shawoman, Witch, and Medicine Woman as horrific hags who terrify and maim, rather than the healers who comfort and make whole those in need. In essence, why does the kindly, beautiful grandmother become the brutal, ugly hag when she has the power to heal beyond a hug? For the Conference, the focus will be on current popular images found in international award winning films, serving as a template for subsequent chapters. These images will be compared to historical sources in myth and fiction to illustrate the patriarchal and matriarchal lenses through which they were created to see if the hag comes from the patriarchal lens while the healer comes from the matriarchal lens. Ultimately, the intention is to strip away the patriarchal trappings of the Hag to reveal and reclaim the matriarchal wisdom, knowledge, and power of the Healer for current and future generations.

Dr Agnes Lam
Assistant Professor, University of Macau, Macau

How the Idea of Harmony Family allows Domestic Violence in Macau

This paper examines how the idea of harmony family becomes a propaganda that suppresses women from voice out domestic violence and allows family abuse happen. The study will use survey data, in-depth interviews, content analysis on newspaper reports to illustrate the causal effect between the idea of harmony family and a dominate social ideology that suggest women that reports domestic violence are actually the ones who destroy family harmony but not the victims of domestic abuses. According to the government policy consultation paper, this ideology was the major reason that led the Macau Government to shift its draft law of domestic violence from defining domestic violence as public crime to private crime in the year of 2013 and 2014. The implications of how harmony family becomes a phase of female suppression in the social context and how it violates human rights will be discussed in this paper.

Ms Lotika Singha

PhD Candidate, University of York, UK

Bottom → Up Learning: Feminist Implications of the Job Histories and Work Practices of White British Women Working as Domestic Cleaners

Labour Force Survey data from 2011 to the first quarter of 2015 shows that Two-thirds of women likely to be working as domestic cleaners and recruited to the Labour Force Survey sample between January 2011 and April 2015 were British nationals of White ethnicity. A third of these women were self-employed. A higher proportion of the self-employed women had no dependent children and over a third had A-level or vocational qualifications or a higher-education degree/diploma. Given the problematic role of housework in feminist analysis of women's emancipation, it is important to understand why these women are working in this area rather than doing 'proper' work.

Based on the job histories and work practices of 25 White British women working as self-employed domestic cleaners in the North East, North West, and the Midlands, in this paper, I argue that these women's experiences of paid domestic cleaning challenge received notions of contemporary malestream 'proper' work. The data are drawn from a larger cross-cultural doctoral research project (UK and India) that questions whether paid domestic work can be reconciled with feminism. In both countries the data were collected through semi-structured interviews with two groups of women (cleaners and academic users of cleanings services with an interest in feminism/gender issues). The White British cleaners were mostly located via their internet adverts (on GumTree and Yell.com); a few were approached through snowballing or one of their customers. The interviews revealed fluidity in the meanings of work and education, and limitations in the top-down understandings of 'good' and 'bad' jobs, being a 'managed' versus 'self-directed' worker, notions of mundaneness, isolation and busyness in paid work versus (paid) housework, and working with contracts. My paper will conclude that the rejection of 'proper' work by some White British women and their selective adoption and adaptation of malestream business practices have significant implications for feminist engagements with gender and class inequalities not just in the basement but also at higher levels in the hierarchical world of both paid and traditionally unpaid women's work.

Dr Michaela Mudure

Docent, Technical University, Czech Republic

From Discontent to Empowerment: Upon a New Power Model

This paper is the result of years of experience and discontent with certain approaches to women's militancy and women's activism. Women's power as leaders does not consist in replacing a master wearing trousers with a master wearing skirts, both of them equally

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hierarchical and insensitive, and calling for submission from their subordinates. Gender research as well as women's studies research has neglected the issue of power. Such questions as: What is power? What does power consist of? – have not been given yet a comprehensive, a convincing, and an all-encompassing answer from a woman's perspective. Several researchers such as Judith Abwunza, Valerie Malhotra, Penn Wendwerker, Susan Hazen-Hammond, or Pauline Staff have explored women's power in various cultures and different historical periods. The problem is that they start analyzing the factual realities and insist very little on what power is but rather on how it is exercised.

Consequently, grass roots organizations, women activists can still not rely on a theory of power from women's perspective. Women's movement has widely copied the patriarchal model of power and only changed the leader's gender considering that this is enough.

This paper tries to give an answer to these questions relying on the Deleuzian model of rhizomic power or on other forms of reciprocal empowerment be they mutualist or commensualist, or inspired from woman's pregnancy. This paper analyzes all these different models of power and proposes a both-and model of empowerment which rejects oppressive hierarchy and exclusivism. We cannot talk about an authentic empowerment of women if women only copy the old hierarchical model of power. The issue of power must be addressed from women's perspective if we want women to mean something in society and if we want them to make a change.

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Olabola Omisore

Phd Candidate, Eastern Mediterranean University, Cyprus

The Media and the Future of Feminism in Nigeria: a Self-reflexive Study

This paper examines the relationship between the media and the future of feminism in Nigeria. The development and contemporary state of feminism in Nigeria as well as my personal experience are used as the bases of the prediction. It looks at the patterns of media coverage of women activities. The paper analyzes the role of cultural practices and their influence on the general visibility of women in Nigerian media cutting across politics, public service and civil rights movements.

The paper posits that cultural violence permeates Nigerian media landscape on two levels; my own personal experience as a journalist reveals that women are heavily marginalized in the operations of media agencies and the production of media narratives; the second level deals with the coverage of pro-feminist events and individuals in Nigeria.

Using the political economy theoretical framework, it examines the opportunities (or a lack of it) available to Nigerian women in the field of politics and civil liberty movements in relation to how Nigerian media reports on the activities of women in public service.

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Conclusively, the paper submits that the future of feminism is bleak in Nigeria and recommends Liberal Feminism as a feminist paradigm for Nigerian societies in future; this is because Liberal Feminism could be easily adapted to the dominant cultural practices in Nigeria.

Dr Naumana Kiran
Assistant Professor, University of the Punjab, Pakistan

Politics of Colonial India: Women of North West Frontier Province (Presently Called Khyber Pakhtunkhawa) and Balochistan

North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan were two politically deprived and economically backward regions of the British Empire of India. NWFP could get status of full province only in 1956 and Balochistan Region could never get status of full province during the colonial rule. The political activity started in these two provinces of Pakistan during the last years of the British colonial period. The focus of this paper would be on how political consciousness spread among the females of these two provinces? Why could awareness spread among the women of NWFP faster and quicker than the women of Balochistan? Whereas social set up in both the areas had a lot of similarities. Finally, it will seek how important role was played by the women of these two Pakistani provinces in the mass movements of the time, especially in the Pakistan Movement.

An important element of the paper would be its source material which includes the files of the Gold Medalists, available at archives of the Pakistan Movement Workers Trust. A lot of the workers of the Pakistan Movement including women had been awarded with the Gold Medals as symbol to recognize their services. These files not only provide first-hand knowledge of the services of the common women but also an evidence of their contribution in the struggle for independence. The newspapers are another important source material which brings to light such facts regarding women's participation in the Pakistan Movement which had been overlooked by the historians on the Pakistan Movement. Biographies and autobiographies of women workers are another important source material. Some interviews will also be conducted in this regards.

Dr Donna Akers
Associate Professor, University of Texas at Arlington, US

Patriarchy & Progress: US Cultural Genocide of Native Americans

In this paper, I argue that the destruction of woman-centered Native American societies in the US was a primary goal of the dominant white society. The ideological constructs of male domination undergirded the colonial project of cultural genocide of Native American societies culminating in the late 19th century projects of 'civilization' and 'education'. This paper explores

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specifically how this attack on gender and gender roles was undertaken and the tools and ideology used to obliterate the power, identity, and freedom enjoyed by Native women under their traditional socio-cultural systems. I conclude that the US used Christianity, capitalism, and force to ruthlessly impose Native female subjugation on captive populations in internment camps and 'boarding schools'.

Observers

Dr Won Hee Jun

Assistant Professor, Keimyung University, South Korea

Ms Lydia Mutare

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