

The Sophie Davis Forum on Gender, Conflict Resolution and Peace cordially invites you to

Gendering Asylum & Violence at the Mexico-US Border

Keynote speaker: **Dr. Juanita Sundberg**, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia

Monday, February 18, 10:30-12:00 Room (2)5701 Faculty of Social Science

Entering the United States of America without inspection – through areas between official ports of entry – is an option pursued by countless individuals. Many seek to leave behind the oppression and violence stemming from inequalities built into political economic systems. Others seek asylum for reasons recognized by international conventions, such as persecution on the grounds of “race, religion, nationality, [and] membership of a particular social group or political opinion.” Currently, thousands of Central Americans arriving at the US southern border are seeking asylum for domestic and gang violence, which means they are targeted for being (identified as) members of particular social groups. In the face of such petitions, Attorney General Jeff Sessions overturned previous rulings in June 2018, transforming domestic and gang violence into “private” or “personal” matters. Sessions’ decision now states, “the applicant [for asylum] must show that the[ir] government condoned the private actions or demonstrated an inability to protect the victims”. This presentation outlines the significant yet differing gendered implications of this redefinition of US asylum law for men, women and gender non-conforming individuals from Central America. Such gendered implications of being denied asylum are expanded and intensified, I argue, if and when men, women and gender non-conforming individuals opt to enter the US through areas between official ports of entry. Crossing through such areas presents widely known dangers, including death by hyperthermia or drowning. Using testimonies gathered by social justice and legal organizations, I detail the very specific forms of gendered violence facing men, women and gender non-conforming individuals. My analysis suggests the Trump administration’s decision to render gendered forms of violence as “private” affairs works to amplify and reproduce the violent implications of normative gender in patriarchal, white supremacist societies .

Dr. Juanita Sundberg is an Associate Professor at the Department of Geography, University of British Columbia. Her work brings the insights of feminist political ecology and the sensibilities of an ethnographer to bear on nature conservation, border security, and militarization. Dr. Sundberg’s work seeks to foster conversations between feminist geopolitics, critical race theory, Indigenous theory, more-than-human geographies, and Latin American Studies. Her current project examines the environmental dimensions of United States’ border security policies in the United States-Mexico borderlands.

This event will take place in English and will be video recorded

Participation is free, but seating is limited. Please RSVP at :

<https://borderswallpossibilities.eventbrite.com> by February 11, 2019 .

For full program see <https://en.davis.huji.ac.il/book/sophie-davis-learning-community> for other inquiries contact: Dr. Tal Nitsan, tal.nitsan1@mail.huji.ac.il



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