REFLECTIONS ON DISPOSSESSION

Critical Feminisms

24 & 25th October 2014
Senate & Court Rooms, Senate House, Malet Street WC1E 7HU

Brenna Bhandar | Eddie Bruce-Jones | Charmaine Elliot
Sara Farris | Jon Goldberg-Hiller | Alyosha Goldstein
Avery F Gordon | Feyzi Ismail | Sarah Lamble | Anna Lau
Nirmal Puwar | Jordana Rosenberg | Leticia Sabsay
Denise Ferreira da Silva | Patricia Tuit | Rafeef Ziadhah

This two-day symposium explores the relationship between the material, cultural, psychic and symbolic dimensions and effects of dispossession. Building on a range of critical feminisms, the papers, collective discussions and keynote addresses will take forward and build on the rich and dynamic traditions of black, indigenous and post-colonial feminisms, queer theory and materialist feminisms.

Themes include: migrant women workers and European nationalism; indigenous dispossession of land, labour and status in Canada, Hawai‘i, and Palestine; sexual subjects and propriety; affect, emotion and the production of racial subjects; and much more...
DAY ONE
FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER

09:15 - 09:45  Registration, Senate House
09:45 - 10:00  Welcome and Opening Remarks
               By Nimer Sultany and Brenna Bhandar, Senate Room
10:00 - 11:30  Panel 1. Judicial Framings of Race and Sexuality: Colonial and
               Orientalist Inheritances
               Chaired by Rahul Rao, Senate Room
               Leticia Sabsay, ‘From being sexual to having sexual rights:
               Translation as a form of dispossession’
               Alyosha Goldstein, ‘The Jurisprudence of Domestic De-
               pendence: Settler Colonial Possession and Adoptive Parents
               vs Baby Girl’
11:30 - 11:45  Tea & Coffee, Senate Room
11:45 - 13:00  Panel 2. Carceral Spaces and Regimes of Exile in the Settler Colony
               Chaired by Rafeef Ziadah, Senate Room
               Jon Goldberg-Hiller, ‘Prison and Place: Carceral Reform
               and Indigenous Dispossession in Hawai’i’
               Brenna Bhandar, ‘Regimes of Exile: Identity, Property, and
               the Status of First Nations women in Canada’
13:00 - 14:00  Lunch (provided), Jessel Room
14:00 - 15:30  Panel 3. Nation, Race and Class: Women, Migrants and
               Asylum Seekers
               Chaired by Alyosxa Tudor, Court Room
               Rafeef Ziadah, ‘Journeys of Dispossession: Palestinian Refu-
               gees from Syria Confronting Fortress Europe’
               Sara Farris, ‘Dispossessing the Private Sphere? Civic Inte-
               gration Policies and Colonial Legacies’
15:30 - 16:00  Tea & Coffee, Jessel Room
16:00 - 17:30  Panel 4. Transformative Aesthetics and Radical Praxis
               Chaired by Brenna Bhandar, Court Room
               Denise F. da Silva, ‘Notes Towards a Black Feminist Poetics’
               Jordana Rosenberg, ‘Creepy Reading: Materialist Aesthetics
               for the Present’
DAY TWO
SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER

10:30 - 12:00 Keynote One, Court Room
Chaired by Nirmal Puwar, Court Room

Avery F. Gordon, ‘Some Reflections on Dispossession’

12:00 - 13:30 Lunch (not provided)

13:30 - 15:30 Roundtable Sessions

I. Austerity and War: Dispossession at Home and Abroad
Convened by Feyzi Ismail, SOAS G3

II. Women of Colour and Health: Where are we now?
Convened by Charmaine Elliot, SOAS 4426

III. Slow Death: Examining Cumulative Dispossession in Prisons and Police Custody
Convened by Eddie Bruce-Jones & Sarah Lamble, Brunei B102

IV. Making Space for Dispossession: To put a person out of possession
Convened by Nirmal Puwar, Brunei B104

V. Creative Resistance: Refugee Youth presents Women’s Circle
Convened by Anna Lau, Brunei B111

15:30 - 16:00 Tea & Coffee, Jessel Room

16:00 - 17:30 Keynote Two, Court Room
Chaired by Diamond Ashiagbor

Patricia Tuit, ‘Law, Dispossession and the University of London’

17:30 - 19:00 Drinks Reception, Jessel Room
I. Austerity and War
Dispossession at Home and Abroad
Convened by Feyzi Ismail, SOAS G3
Participants: Lindsey German, Author and Convenor of Stop the War Coalition
Kiri Tunks, Teacher and Activist
Janice Shallice, Anti-War Campaigner
Mary Evans, LSE Centennial Professor, Gender Institute
Shadia Edwards-Dashti, Student Activist

This roundtable comprises activists, authors and academics who are engaged in analysing the effects of austerity and war on the poorest, and on women in particular, and who are also engaged in organising against austerity and war.

The roundtable will facilitate a dialogue examining the links between the austerity agenda in the West and the logic of imperialist war – the same governments imposing austerity at home are those imposing war abroad.

The roundtable also considers the effects of dispossession produced by austerity and war – how societies in the West are being ravaged by cuts to welfare, and how societies suffering imperialist wars are being ravaged by the imperatives of capital and geopolitics.

But the bitter experience of austerity is beginning to produce new movements with new strategies attempting to counter austerity, and producing new alliances in the process.

There is also renewed anger against dispossession in Palestine, and the need for renewed efforts to build anti-war opinion across the West over intervention in the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

The question of dispossession at once brings forth the question of resistance, and this roundtable considers what the effects of dispossession mean for strategies – both in the West and beyond – for ending austerity and war.
II. Women of Colour and Health

*Where are we now?*

Convened by Charmaine Elliot, SOAS 4426

While most of us take our health for granted when we are well, when ill-health strikes either ourselves, or those close to us it becomes the most important issue in our lives.

Unfortunately, it is also then that we find structural inequalities reach even into healthcare, prevention and treatment. This roundtable will facilitate a dialogue around black women and both physical and mental health, how we participate in healthcare, and how we benefit or are disadvantaged by it.

III. Slow Death

*Examining Cumulative Dispossession in Prisons and Police Custody*

Convened by Eddie Bruce-Jones & Sarah Lamble, Brunei B102
Participants: Harmit Athwal, Institute of Race Relations
Chryssy Hunter, London Met & Bent Bars Project
Neena Samota, StopWatch & Reclaim Justice Network
Amrit Wilson, Freedom Without Fear Platform

Instances of violence in the context of the criminal justice system are most visible when regarded as spectacular or unusually extreme. Such spectacular violence also becomes the subject of prompt theoretical and political engagement.

It is much less likely that we engage, as scholars and activists, with forms of violence that, while less newsworthy, are constant and pervasive. This roundtable attempts to reorient the conversation about forms of violence and dispossession towards everyday life in prisons, detention and other custodial settings.

By focusing on the banalities of violence, this stream seeks to describe and analyse the fabric of life under the weight of carceral thinking and reveal the structural nature and cumulative effects of institutional dispossession in the criminal justice system.
IV. Making Space for Dispossession  
**Sensing Racialised and Gendered Materialities**  
Convened by Nirmal Puwar, Brunei B104  
Participants: Mariam Motamedi-Fraser, Goldsmiths School of Sociology  
Yasmin Gunaratnam, Goldsmiths School of Sociology  

Intrinsic to this panel will be the question of how we make academic and creative work on dispossession. In the round table the analytical discussion will be interwoven with short film screenings.

The very materiality of bodies within the architecture of sound, word, objects, noise and silence will be foregrounded. Yasmin Gunaratnam will refer to her extensive range of methodological projects on *Death and the Migrant* (the title of her latest book) in relation to dispossession.

The situated attempts to intervene in state violence, war and memory will be explored by Nirmal Puwar through the project *Noise of the Past*. Mariam Motamedi-Fraser will discuss how different sensory methodologies mediate conceptions of what Shirin Neshat’s film *Turbulent* is ‘about’.

V. Creative Resistance  
**Refugee Youth presents Women’s Circle**  
Convened by Anna Lau, Brunei B111  
Participants: Fatma Ali, Asha Mohamed, Hinda Mohamed

We are a group of vibrant young radical women who originate from all over the world. Through our weekly sessions we have been on a personal and challenging journey exploring issues that are close to our hearts such as femininity, gender issues, roles of men and women, the media’s portrayal of women, the feminist movement, beauty, sexualisation of women, and equality. We share a great passion in making change, raising awareness and challenging the issues that deeply affect women.

This year we launched our film at the Refuge in Films Festival leading into a dialogue where women can share and collaborate. This is our journey and we hope to involve many women to unite, make change and celebrate the movement of women. Through an interactive workshop we would be exploring issues that are close to our hearts and also screen the film we made, *Our Journey*. 
Brenna Bhandar is Senior Lecturer at SOAS School of Law. She is co-editor with Jon Goldberg-Hiller of *Plastic Materialities: Legality, Politics and Metamorphosis in the work of Catherine Malabou*, and co-editor of the Routledge book series *Law and the Post-Colonial: Ethics, Politics and Economy*.

Eddie Bruce-Jones is a visiting lecturer in Public International Law at Kings, and lecturer in Law at Birkbeck. Eddie’s research includes human rights law, refugee law, comparative anti-discrimination law, prison policy, and legal anthropology.

Charmaine Elliot has worked in mental health in inner-London for five years. She has a keen interest in mental health in ethnic minority communities and women, and has published papers on the impact of female genital mutilation and psychological wellbeing. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Clinical Psychology.

Sara Farris is a Lecturer in Sociology at Goldsmiths. She is author of Max Weber’s *Theory of Personality: Individuation, Politics and Orientalism in the Sociology of Religion*. Sara is International Book Review Editor for *Critical Sociology* and Corresponding Editor for *Historical Materialism*.

Jon Goldberg-Hiller is a professor in the Department of Politics at the University of Hawai‘i. He is the author of *The Limits to Union: Same-Sex Marriage and the Politics of Civil Rights*, and co-editor with Brenna Bhandar of *Plastic Materialities: Legality, Politics and Metamorphosis in the work of Catherine Malabou*.

Alyosha Goldstein is the author of *Poverty in Common: The Politics of Community Action during the American Century* and Professor of American Studies at the University of New Mexico.

Avery F Gordon is a writer, educator, radio producer, Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara and Visiting Faculty Fellow at the Center for Research Architecture.

Feyzi Ismail is an activist and Senior Teaching Fellow at the Department of Development at SOAS. Her research interests include NGOs and social movements, politics and development in Nepal and South Asia and alternatives to neoliberalism, and imperialism.

Continued overleaf.
SPEAKERS (CONTINUED)

Sarah Lamble is a lecturer in Law at Birkbeck and co-editor of the Social Justice Book Series with Routledge.

Anna Lau works with Refugee Youth and their project, Women’s Circle.

Nirmal Puwar is the co-director of the Methods Lab, author of Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place. Nirmal is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Goldsmiths.

Jordana Rosenberg is Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and the author of Critical Enthusiasm: Capital Accumulation and The Transformation of Religious Passion.

Leticia Sabsay is a lecturer in the Gender Institute at the LSE, and author of Sexual Borders: Urban Spaces, Bodies and Citizenship.

Denise Ferreira da Silva is author of Towards a Global Idea of Race and co-editor of the book series Law and the Postcolonial: Ethics, Politics and Economy. She is Director of the Centre for Ethics and Politics at QMUL.

Patricia Tuitt is Professor of Law, Executive Dean and Director of the Teaching Laboratory at Birkbeck. Her two monographs are entitled Race, Law, Resistance and False Images: Law’s Construction of the Refugee.

Rafeef Ziadah is a Palestinian performance poet, human rights activist and Post-doctoral Research Fellow at the School of Politics, SOAS.

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Designed by Keumars Afifi-Sabet