



GENDER, DIVERSITY & INTERSECTIONALITY RESEARCH CENTRE

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

The university should be a safe space for its students and staff members. Recent news has made clear that the VUB is not a safe space for everyone. Complaints at the university, and elsewhere, are not given enough recognition and attention, and responses to complaints are often lacking or come too late. The first known complaint with regards to this case, dates from over 10 years ago. During Genderweek 2020, Sarah Ahmed discussed how reports of transgressive behaviour are handled at universities and how this often leaves the complainant disoriented. Unfortunately, the current case is not a new story. Raising awareness about the ethical code of the university and providing bystander trainings are important, but we acknowledge that this is insufficient. It is high time to critically examine existing power structures at the university, and within our society, and to provide more effective procedures that respond adequately to complaints of any form of transgressive behaviour at work, including discrimination and racism.

The lecture by Sara Ahmed on transgressive behaviour in the workplace that was held during Genderweek 2020 can be rewatched on the website of [VUB Crosstalks](#).

At RHEA, several researchers are working on topics of transgressive behavior and gender-based violence. If you are interested in reading more into these topics, we recommend you the following work of [Dounia Bourabain](#) (2020). 'Everyday sexism and racism in the ivory tower: The experiences of early career researchers on the intersection of gender and ethnicity in the academic workplace.' *Gender, work & organization*, 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12549>. Some other RHEA members who are doing research on transgressive behavior and gender-based violence are [Eva Vergaert](#), [Marijke Roosen](#), [Sophie Withaecx](#), [Lisa Feirabend](#) en [Els Leye](#).

On Tuesday 15 February a [demonstration](#) will be organised at VUB, giving a clear message to the university that transgressive behavior should not have a place in our university, and society as a whole, and to show support to victims.

IPV PRO & POL CONFERENCE

Intimate Partner Violence: impact, processes and policies in Belgium

IPV PRO&POL



This is a BRAIN-BE (BELSPO) research project together with partners from the University of Liège, Université Catholique de Louvain, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (RHEA) and het Nationaal Instituut voor Criminalistiek en Criminologie. The aim of the research project is to study intimate partner violence from a dual approach: on the one hand the project focuses on the complexity of underlying processes in intimate partner violence and on the other hand, it looks at the perspective of public policies developed in this area. During the conference the different workpackages of this research project will be presented.

Location: Online.

Time: 17/02/2022, 10.00-16.30.

You can find more information [here](#).

GENDERWEEK 2022: SAVE THE DATE!

GENDERWEEK

Machteld De Metsenaere lecture on

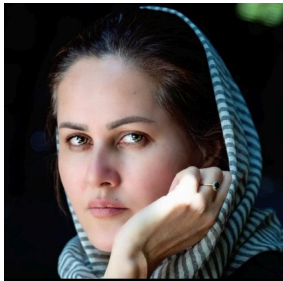


Below you can find the first events that have been confirmed, so you can already save the date.

Stay tuned for more information on the Genderweek via our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), [Instagram](#) and our new [LinkedIn](#)!

Monday 7/03

MACHTELD DE METSENAERE LECTURE ON FILM, GENDER AND POLITICS IN AFGHANISTAN: REFLECTIONS FROM DIRECTOR SAHRAA KARIMI



Sahraa Karimi, Afghan film director and first woman to lead the Afghan Film Organization, will give an online lecture on the experiences of artists in Afghanistan and the protection of their artistic freedom, incorporating her own life experiences, as she herself fled Afghanistan. Afterwards, a discussion with **Gie Goris** will address the pivotal role that film and art can have within political and societal change.

The Machteld De Metsenaere lecture is an annual lecture organized by RHEA in honour of prof. em. Machteld De Metsenaere. For years, Machteld De Metsenaere was a driving force behind the first university Centre for Women's Studies (Centrum voor Vrouwenstudies) at the VUB, and later at RHEA. The Machteld De Metsenaere lecture takes place during the annual Genderweek.

This online event is organized in partnership with the Fatima Mernissi Chair, VUB Crosstalks & Kaaitheater.

Location: Online.

Time: 7/03/2022, 18.00-20.00.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

Tuesday 8/03

FILMSCREENING 'HAVA, MARYAM, AYESHE': SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION ON ARTISTIC PRACTICE AS A PLATFORM FOR POLITICAL CHANGE



Three Afghan women from different social background, living in Kabul, are facing a big challenge in their lives. Hava, a traditional pregnant woman whom no one cares about, is living with her father and mother in law. Her only joy is talking to the baby in her belly. Maryam, an educated TV news reporter, is about to get a divorce from her unfaithful husband, but finds out she is pregnant. Ayesha, an 18-year old girl accepts to marry her cousin because she is pregnant from her boyfriend who disappears after hearing the news. Each of them has to solve her problem by herself for the first time.

In the last decade, the Afghan film industry has gained a lot of recognition. The contribution of female directors and staff has been essential to this development. **Sahraa Karimi** played a prominent role in this evolution, and in a short time she has put Afghan cinema on the map. With the fall of Kabul in August 2021 this all came to an abrupt end. On International Women's Day **Mahdieh Fahimi** and Sahraa Karimi will talk about the importance of women's participation – both socially and culturally – in a patriarchal society fragmented by decades of violence and political instability.

This online event is organized in partnership with the Fatima Mernissi Chair, VUB Crosstalks, Bozar & Kaaitheater.

Location: Paleis voor Schone Kunsten - Bozar.

Time: 8/03/2022, 19.00-21.30.

Tickets are 8 euro standard, and 6 euro for -26 years and can be found on the [website of Bozar](#).

Wednesday 9/03

FEMINIST AND QUEER SOLIDARITIES WITH PALESTINE



In light of the inter-university lecture series 'Palestine: Entangled histories and other ways of seeing ecologies, resistance and solidarity within a settler colonial situation' a lecture on feminist and queer solidarities in Palestine will be held by **Haneen Maikey** and **dr. Mikki Stelder**. Haneen Maikey is a Palestinian activist working against Israeli apartheid by engaging queer and feminist politics. Mikki Stelder is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Amsterdam/University of British Columbia. Stelder's dissertation 'Queering Occupation: From Zionist Sexual Politics to Palestinian Decolonial-Queer Imaginaries' (2018) discussed the uses of Zionist sexual politics for Israel's settler colonial project; Palestinian anticolonial-queer politics; and the limits and challenges of transnational solidarity. This lecture will discuss how the Israeli state mobilizes gender and sexuality within the context of occupation. What can a queer and feminist perspective bring to our understanding of settler-colonialism, not just in the context of Palestine, but also in light of Belgium's own colonial past? And, what are the implications

for transnational and internationalist feminist and queer solidarities with Palestine?

This event is part of a lecture series on Palestine in partnership with UGent, UA, ULB and KULeuven and is supported by the Global Minds Fund.

Location: Online.

Time: 9/03/2022, 10.00-12.00.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

Wednesday 9/03

WOMXN IN ACADEMIA



Womxn in Academia is an open and informal group of people who identify as womxn and work in academia. We come together regularly to share experiences of working in an environment that is dominated by white men, discuss daily tactics of how to deal with issues of motivation and belonging, or discrimination, harassment or invisibilization, and support each other in our work at the university. When needed and possible, we organize meetings on particular issues that need policy attention.

As part of VUB Gender Week we are organizing a Womxn in Academia gathering to:

- (1) share experiences of working as womxn in academia during the global pandemic;
- (2) discuss the aim and organization of the Womxn in Academia group.

Location: Online.

Time: 9/03/2022, 14.00-15.30.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

Wednesday 9/03

BYSTANDER WORKSHOP "ACT AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT" FOR STUDENTS



The #metoo movement has broken the silence on harassment and shown its prevalence in all spheres of society. According to the results of a recent large-scale study, two-thirds of the Belgian population (aged 16 to 69) have experienced some form of sexual violence during their lifetime. Harassment and sexual violence are present in universities and educational settings. This has not only become clear the recent week, but has been previously shown in various studies. Beyond policies and making more effective reporting mechanisms, one tool that has proven to be effective when it comes to harassment prevention is bystander intervention training.

The workshop is hosted by external training **Juliette Sanchez-Lambert**, one of the authors of the book "Its not that grey" and is open to all students of all genders.

This event is organized by the VUB Equality Team.

Location: Online.

Time: 9/03/2022, 17.00-18.30.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

Thursday 10/03

BUILDING FEMINIST CITIES: AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH TO MOBILITY



Our cities in general, including stations and concepts on mobility, are often designed by men. There is little consideration for women as mothers, workers or carers. The urban streets are at times a place of threat rather



than community. But what would a more inclusive metropolis in general, and a station specifically, look like?

Canadian academic **Leslie Kern** will give the keynote in this colloquium on intersectionality and mobility. In her book 'Feminist City, Claiming Space in a Man-made world' through history, personal experience and popular culture, she exposes what is hidden in plain sight: the social inequalities built into our cities, homes, and neighborhoods. Afterwards we go into conversations with architects, zooming into case studies of 3 European cities: Brussels, Amsterdam and Vienna.

This event is organized in partnership with Europalia, deBuren and KVS.

Location: KVS.

Time: 10/03/2022, 19.00-21.30.

Registration for this event is needed via [the website of KVS](#).

Friday 11/03

WOMEN IN SCIENCE DAY 2022: GENDER-FAIR RECRUITMENT IN ACADEMIA



During this afternoon, we want to provide a 360° view on how to improve gender balance during recruitment processes in academia and how to consider implicit bias. After the meeting, participants will be better equipped to take part in gender-fair recruitment, be more aware of what is at stake from different viewpoints, and get tips and tricks about what works and what not work for them.

Target audience: young researchers, supervisors and faculty members (male & female), selection committees, diversity teams of universities and research funding agencies.

Meet our excellent speakers from FWO, FNRS, Belgian universities, and more, and get challenged by our motivated students!

This event is organized in partnership with BeWiSe and funded by FWO and FRNS.

Location: Universitaire Stichting.

Time: 11/03/2022, 12.00-17.00

Registration for this event is needed via [the website of BeWiSe](#).

RHEA RESEARCH WEBINARS

MUSLIM MEN IN FLANDERS' PRISONS - ELIAS WOODBRIDGE



After the terrorist attacks in France (2015) and Belgium (2016), radicalization in Belgian prisons gained tremendous international attention in the public and political debate. In this ethnographic research we aim to explore how the radicalization discourse impacts current policies and experiences in prison by focusing on 1) the changing role of religion and Islam in particular in current prison policies (macro-level); 2) how Islam is regulated

and experienced by prison actors (prison officers, governors and social service actors) (meso-level); 3) how Islam is experienced by Muslim prisoners (micro-level). Although this research starts from radicalization discourses, it will not solely aim to encompass the experiences of radical Muslims but of all prisoners who identify as Muslim.

Prison and Muslim masculinity frameworks are used in order to understand how masculinity impacts the above mentioned policies, experiences and interactions. This research makes use of traditional ethnographic (participant observation and semi-structured interviews) and novel methodologies such as digital storytelling. Moreover, the multidisciplinary approach will enrich different research strands within anthropology, criminology, political science, and minority studies.

Location: Online.

Time: 21/02/2022, 13.00-14.30.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

(c) Cambridge University. (2019). Muslims leaving prison talk about the layers of their lives [Foto]. <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/features/muslims-leaving-prison-talk-about-the-layers-of-their-lives>

SOCIAL REINTEGRATION OF FEMALE RETURNEES AND THEIR CHILDREN - HANNAN JAMAÏ



Since June 2019, 12 Belgian women and 30 children have returned from the Kurdish detention camps in northeast Syria. Once they reach Belgium, the women/mothers are taken to prison and the children are either fostered by their families or in youth institutions. They each have to find their place in the society from which they were and, in some cases, still are estranged.

With the use of ethnographic and arts-based methods, an attempt is made to understand social (re)integration processes and practices from the perspective of the children and family members. Using narrative life storytelling and geographical life storytelling, lived emotions and experiences can find a place, enabling reflection and rich narratives about their relations to society (neighborhoods, media) and reintegration services (health and youth care, social and legal services, education). This seminar will outline some of this work.

Location: Online.

Time: 28/03/2022, 13.00-14.30.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

GENDER UNDER ATTACK: AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF SYRIAN REFUGEE WOMEN - DUHA CEYLAN



As a result of the conflict in Syria, since 2011, millions of refugees were forced to migrate to various destinations such as Turkey, Jordan, and Europe for safety. Current studies mainly focus on routes and drivers of refugee migration, focusing on 'male' refugees. However, female refugees receive little to no attention; meanwhile, Syrian refugee women are still represented through media. Two compelling images appear when Syrian refugee women are discussed in media; the Western media demonstrates Syrian refugee women as victims, while the Arabic media blames Syrian refugee women for destroying the traditional Syrian family. Therefore, my research aims to integrate the voices of Syrian refugee women by understanding how their online representation contradicts/overlaps with their offline self. Moreover, the research aims to understand how digital connectivity and

social media play a role in shaping offline/online everyday practices.

Location: Online.

Time: 25/04/2022, 13.00-14.30.

This event is free, but registration is needed via [our website](#).

AGENDA

Keep it organized!

IPV PRO & POL Conference - Intimate Partner Violence: impact, processes and policies in Belgium

Thursday 17/02/2022

Time: 10.00-16.30

Location: Online

Muslim men in Flanders' prisons with Elias Woodbridge

Monday 21/02/2022

Time: 13.00-14.30

Location: Online

RHEA research webinar

Machteld De Menezes Lecture on Film: Gender and Politics in Afghanistan: reflections from director Sahraa Karimi

Maheen Ali Mutsaers Lecture on Film, Gender and Politics in Afghanistan: reflections from director Samira Rahimi

Monday 7/03/2022

Time: 18.00-20.00

Location: Online

RHEA Genderweek

Filmscreening 'Hava, Maryam, Ayeshe': screening and panel discussion on artistic practice as a platform for political change

Tuesday 8/03/2022

Time: 19.00-21.30

Location: Bozar

RHEA Genderweek

Feminist and queer solidarities with Palestine: lecture by Mikki Stelder and Haneen Maikey

Wednesday 9/03/2022

Time: 10.00-12.00

Location: Online

RHEA Genderweek

Womxn in academia

Wednesday 9/03/2022

Time: 14.00-15.30

Location: Online

RHEA Genderweek

Bystander workshop "act against sexual harassment" for students

Wednesday 9/03/2022

Time: 17.00-18.30

Location: Online

RHEA Genderweek

Building feminist cities: an intersectional approach to mobility - Colloquium with Leslie Kern, Apolline Vranken and others

Thursday 10/03/2022

Time: 19.00-21.30

Location: KVS

RHEA Genderweek

Women in science day 2022: gender-fair recruitment in academia

Friday 11/03/2022

Time: 12.00-17.00

Location: Universitaire Stichting

RHEA Genderweek

Social reintegration of female returnees and their children with Hannan Jamaï

Monday 28/03/2022

Time: 12.00-17.00

Location: Online

RHEA research webinar

Gender under attack: an analysis of media representations of Syrian refugee women with Duha Ceylan

Monday 25/04/2022

Time: 12.00-17.00

Location: Online

RHEA research webinar

YOUR NEWS IN THE NEWSLETTER?

If you have some interesting RHEA-related news that you would want to include in our newsletter or you would like to organize an event in collaboration with us, do not hesitate to contact us at rhea@vub.be



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