

Gender, Symbolic Reparations and the Arts: Exploring and Disrupting Narratives of Gender Based Violence within Transitional Justice

Call for Papers

Deadline for abstract submissions: 16 October 2017

Proposal Guidelines:

Paper proposals should include a title, 300-word abstract, institutional affiliation and contact information. Please submit proposals via email at h.scanlon@uct.ac.za and jody.metcalf@alumni.uct.ac.za by 16 October 2017.

Conference dates: 7-9 February 2018 at the University of Cape Town, South Africa

Organisers: Helen Scanlon (University of Cape Town) and Jelke Boesten (King's College London)

Coordinator: Jody Metcalfe

The AHRC/Global Challenges Network 'Debating, Performing and Curating Symbolic Reparations and Transformative Gender Justice in post conflict Societies' will be holding a conference, "Gender, Symbolic Reparations and the Arts: Exploring and Disrupting Narratives of Gender Based Violence within Transitional Justice" hosted by the Justice and Transformation Programme at the University of Cape Town 7-9 February 2018.

The field of memory and transitional justice is booming, but little attention is paid to how symbolic reparations might help unsettle harmful gender norms, promote gender sensitive human rights, and contribute to transformative gender justice. Much of the violence women suffer in conflict precedes conflict and persists afterwards. The post-conflict moment could then be a moment in which "transformative" justice might be enacted, a perspective and practice that explicitly aims for long-term social change. This is also the objective of "symbolic reparations". Reparations aim to repair past wrongs, as well as help build sustainable peace.

Apart from public recognition and state-sponsored memorials recognising the role of women and the harms done to them as a way to break with a male-centred narrative of conflict and victory, we also believe in the importance of bottom-up cultural products more broadly such as literature, theatre, visual arts, or interventions in the public space. A feminist perspective upon post-conflict commemoration, top-down and bottom-up, official as well as counter-narratives, is urgently needed.

With this in mind, speakers are asked to explore ways in which post-conflict symbolic reparations –recognition of harms done through, for example, memorials, museums, poetry, arts or media- can contribute to debating and unsettling harmful gender norms that may have contributed to specifically gendered harms in conflict. Presentations could include reflections on existing memory projects from a gender perspective, analysis of gender and symbolic reparations, the absence of women in commemorative projects, counter narratives, visual or oral representations of gendered memory, the struggles for symbolic reparations, questions of representation and voice, or other relevant questions.

Please note that this is a competitive call for abstracts and only limited funding for travel and accomodation is available.