

# Higher Education in The Asian Century: Does Expansion Mean Inclusion?

Thursday 21st January, 2016

2-4pm

Room 104, Fulton Building, University of Sussex

The Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER) and The Sussex Asia Centre co-present this open seminar comprising three presentations raising questions about whether higher education, the globalizing political economy of neo-liberalism, the growth of the 'Asian Century' and social inclusion and justice collide or co-exist.

## **From Protest to Peace-building? Higher Education and Social Justice in Myanmar**

Lynne Heslop, Director of Education, British Council, Myanmar

Myanmar's universities have been at the centre of political protest and pro-democracy movements, building on a tradition of student activism dating back to Burma's independence and emergence from colonial rule. But as the country starts to open up, and after decades of repression and isolation, do universities in Myanmar have a new role in building democracy, peace and greater social justice? How are universities addressing inequalities related to language, identity, gender, poverty and conflict? Lynne Heslop analyses the extent to which new and reformist policy directions in higher education in Myanmar respond to a context affected by conflict and social inequalities, and discusses the implications for the agency of universities in Myanmar as institutions that can contribute to democracy, peace-building and social justice.

## **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Sri Lankan Universities: Contradictions and Complicities**

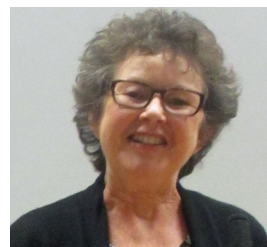
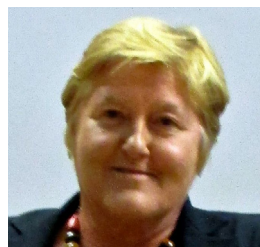
Professor Maithree Wickramasinghe, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka / Visiting Professor, CHEER

Sri Lankan universities have shown increased statistics in women's access to and participation in higher education over the last few decades. Whilst commendable, the situation is complicated by the dearth of women in higher education leadership, the decreasing numbers of male students enrolling in universities, and the under and unemployment of university graduates. Relying on available literature as well as her own research and experience, Professor Wickramasinghe highlights the generalities and specificities of SGBV within Sri Lankan universities, including the practice of 'ragging', sexual harassment, transactional sex, sexual blackmail, assault and intimate partner violence both on campus and outside.

## **Women in Higher Education Leadership in South Asia: Rejection, Refusal, Reluctance, Re-visioning**

Professor Louise Morley & Dr Barbara Crossouard, CHEER, University of Sussex

As higher education institutions globally become increasingly performative, competitive and corporatised in response to neoliberal rationalities, the exigencies of higher education (HE) leadership are being realigned to accommodate its value system. In their presentation, Professor Morley and Dr Crossouard draw on recent British Council-funded research to explore women's engagement with leadership in HE in South Asia. A potent affective economy will be described - leadership was associated with affects such as aggression, competitiveness, impropriety, stress and anxiety, in ways that were intensified by highly patriarchal and corporatised HE cultures.



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