

CORTH "Meet and greet" Doctoral Forum Program



Wednesday 8th March 2017
Art C 233
University of Sussex

15:00 – Welcome and update from Maya

15:15 - An update from existing students about their work, including Gill Love, Lavinia Bertini, Wezi Mwangulube and MaryFrances Lukera

16:00 - Introduction from CORTH governors Carrie Llewellyn (BSMS), Hayley Macgregor (IDS) and Maria Moscati (LPS) who will talk a little bit about their work

16:15 - An update from Lenka, Zuhra and Devanik who are our new members

16:45 - Planning future activities

Nibbles and drinks!

CORTH "Meet and greet" Doctoral Forum Report

www.sussex.ac.uk/corth

A brief report of what we discussed at the "Meet and greet" CORTH Doctoral Forum that took place on Wednesday 8th March 2017 at the University of Sussex.

This was a very interesting and lively forum held on an important day, International Women's day, which we celebrated starting off the forum with some dancing and singing!

It followed an introduction by Maya where she thanked the doctoral forum for being such a dynamic space of knowledge exchange. She also congratulated with Padmini, Sajida and Bronwen, CORTH members recently graduated, on their VIVA and new jobs. Well done! She also introduced the new CORTH websites and some interesting resources recently added

(<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/corth/index> and <http://www.birthdebate.com/>)

Doctoral Research Update

Wezi Mwangulube (IDS) - Wezi has started writing up her thesis on HIV and education after a fieldwork in rural Malawi. Her research looks at how HIV education is developed, implemented and experienced at junior secondary school level in Malawi. She investigates: how policymakers decide and develop curricula around HIV to be taught in schools; how teachers manage and talk about sexual education in a conservative context and culture; how resources developed within students' families play out in the class. Wezi theoretical approach and research questions have changed and been shaped by the data collected in the field and she suggests to allow change to happen.

MaryFrances Lukera (LPS) - MaryFrances is about to submit her thesis and it is great seeing her approaching such a great goal! Her research focus on sexual reproductive health among sex workers in Kenya (see <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/webteam/gateway/file.php?name=maryfrances-lukera-report-on-sexuality-sexual-reproductive-health-rights-and-the-law-corth-workshop-march-2016.pdf&site=447>). Working with NGOs, she investigates the challenges of implementing constitutional and human rights on the ground. The new Kenyan constitution (2010) recognises international human rights treaties and represents an important space for advocacy for sex workers' rights. On the ground, in fact, sex work and sex workers are criminalised and a proper implementation of the law in this context should bring to guarantee sex workers' reproductive and health rights.

Lavinia Bertini (Global studies) - Lavinia has just started writing her thesis after 15-months fieldwork in Brighton and Hove. Her research investigates practices and discourses of obesity management in the UK, focusing on the experiences of relevant social actors (GPs, practice nurses and weight-loss groups' participants and leaders). In this presentation, she focused on four main reflections: 1) stigma attached to the term obesity as experienced by health professionals and how it entangles with organisational and emotional factors in obesity management 2) the importance of understanding obesity in terms of fatness and culture of body image 3) analysis of intersection of gender, age and generation in experiences of body size 4) importance of integrating health inequalities and structural violence with a biopolitical approach

It followed a brief presentation by Amaran Cumarasamy about CORBIS 2nd Annual Sussex Global Health and Development Conference (<https://corbissussex.org/2017-conference/>).

CORTH Governors

Our governors Maria Moscati (LPS) and Hayley McGregor (IDS) have briefly presented their research related to CORTH. Maria research interests are comparative family law, same-sex dispute on parenting and she is investigating it looking at England, Ireland and Italy. Hayley research looks at chronic illness, HIV and informal providers of care in South Africa.

New Members

Lenka Zahradkova (Global Studies) is a visiting PhD student from Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. At Sussex she is supervised by Maya Unnithan and her research focuses on reflections of matriliney in childbirth practices among the Khasis of Northeast India. She came back from her fieldwork recently - in December 2016, and in her presentation she introduced her research outline, fieldwork context, and the main concepts she would like to focus on, such as matriliney vs. patriarchy, gender and kinship dynamics, and notion of shame or ritual pollution.

Zuhra Bahman (Global Studies) is a new member who joined Sussex in January. Her research focuses on urban Afghan women's experiences of maternity and reproduction and it is based on her fieldwork in Kabul. She is interested in conceptualisation of risk, physical bodies and reproductive systems in terms of temperament of hot and cold, experience of pregnancy loss, gift exchange and visitation circles as spaces for performance and exchange of information. She would like to link her research with the wider debates around Muslim women as well as radicalisation.

Devanik Saha (IDS) - is a MA student in Gender and Development in International Development Studies. His research interests are maternal health, intersectionality and reproductive health in India. He is also a writer for media outlets in India on gender, feminism and health issues.

Nehaal Bajwa is a PhD student in Education who started this September; her research focuses on the narratives and practices of 'involved' fathers in early childhood in Pakistan.

Future Events

Finally, we discussed some future events to organise at CORTH. Bridging some common research interests, Nehaal and Lenka proposed a reading group on cultures of care and the family (for instance, family mapping and practices) in both minority and majority world contexts, which Maria Moscati's previous research - on mediation between same-sex unions and the law in Italy - ties into. They will also be organising an event on the role of men and masculinities in reproduction, with more information on this coming soon!

Report created by Lavinia Bertini (PhD Candidate in Social Anthropology and Associate Tutor, University of Sussex) and Lenka Zahrádková (CORTH's visiting ERASMUS PhD student, Department of Ethnology, Charles University in Prague)