



THE DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN'S & GENDER STUDIES
FEMINIST RESEARCH SPEAKERS SERIES FALL 2018 PRESENTS

GLOBALIZING TRANSGENDER: Vernacularization and Trans Politics in India

a lecture by **Dr. Aniruddha Dutta**

Friday, December 7, 14:00 - 15:30

Senate Chamber (3-26 Arts & Convocation Hall)

ABSTRACT

"Transgender" has emerged as an increasingly visible identitarian and political category in the Indian public sphere. Spreading initially through elite LGBT networks and transnational media, it has since become a legally recognized rubric of identification. I will explore how the globalizing transgender category intersects with discourses of gender-sexuality that become positioned as more regional or local. In South Asia, transgender intersects with communities and identities such as hijra or kothi, which are subsumed as national or regional variants of the transnational transgender rubric even as they sometimes contest, contradict or transform the dominant senses of the term. I theorize this process as vernacularization, revising its usual sense as the local adaptation of cosmopolitan discourses to rather denote the subordination of categories as "local" or "vernacular". I argue that vernacularization functions as a contested process through which hegemonic transnational epistemologies of gender may be both established and undermined.

BIOGRAPHY

Aniruddha Dutta is an Assistant Professor in the departments of Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies and Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Iowa. Dutta's research interests lie in globalization, development, gender, and sexuality, particularly the institutionalization of gender and sexual identity politics in India. Their current book project, *Globalizing through the Vernacular: The Making of Gender and Sexual Minorities in Eastern India*, explores the role of seemingly peripheral or "local" communities, networks, and subcultures in the globalizing expansion of liberal democratic discourses of gender/sexual identity and rights, studying how this process transforms, reconfigures, or reproduces structural hierarchies of language, class, caste, and citizenship.



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF ARTS

Department of Women's and Gender Studies