

INVITED SPEAKER



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The Ethics of Representations: A Case Study of the Representations of Female Acid Attack Survivors in India and Bangladesh

Abstract:

Representations have always been part of the history of humankind. It is an omnipresent entrepreneurship. They created enemies and saviors to “justify” the domination of one civilization by another or, more recently, neo-imperialist sanctions. They promote false generalized ideals that permeate societies and communities shaping our imagination about those, for example, who can speak and those who cannot, those who can be scientists and those who cannot, and even those who represent and those who are represented. Women and disabled people have very often faced the overwhelming negative consequences of negative representations that imply lack of capabilities and the imposition of restrictive spaces of mobility and expression. According to Anita Ghai (2017) women with disabilities are the most oppressed individuals in Indian society (if not in all societies). Arts and media are the main sources of propagation of representations as well as their criticism. In this paper I will explore the representations of female acid attack survivors in India, focusing in how non-disfigured/disabled artists represent these women, their ethics, and how survivors represent themselves. I am, therefore, analyzing the issue of female disfigurement, through the lenses of ethics, aesthetics, gender and disability studies.

Biography:

Dr. Gisele Cardoso de Lemos obtained the Ph.D. degree in Religious Studies (2015) from the Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Brazil, with a dissertation titled: “Conceptual Recreation and Postcoloniality: ‘Science’ and ‘Religion’ in the work of the Indian Writer Amitav Ghosh.” She was a research fellow at the Universidad Nacional de Rosario, Argentina, in 2006, and at Jawarhalal Nehru University, India, in 2013. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department at Texas A&M University, USA. Her dissertation is titled “Acid Aesthetics: Disfigurement, Gender-Based Violence, and Indian Cultural Production.” Gisele Cardoso de Lemos has articles published in refereed journals in Portuguese and in English and has presented papers in several international conferences. Her main interests are: Women’s and Gender Studies, Disability Studies, South Asian literatures, Postcolonial Studies, and Ecocriticism.