**"Transnational Feminist Dialogues in Times of the Neoliberal University"**

**27.05.2021: Dismantling Knowledge Asymmetries and Power Relations in Gender Studies**

Exhibitors:

Maria do Mar Pereira (University of Warwick)

**Title:** Unruly bodies or productive minds?: 'Old' Epistemic Inequalities in 'New' Performative Universities

**Abstract:** Contemporary academia continues to be shaped by the profound epistemic and professional inequalities - of race, gender, etc. - which have been powerfully dissected by feminist, postcolonial and other critical scholars for decades. However, the manifestation and negotiation of those inequalities have arguably changed significantly in recent years, amidst large-scale transformations in the nature and conditions of academic labour. In this paper, I draw on ethnographic research to ask how the emergence of academic cultures of performativity – focused on productivity as goal and as criteria of value – complicates longstanding academic hierarchies. I will show that in many countries the changing political economy of academic labour creates paradoxes for feminists and other critical scholars, raising extremely difficult but very urgent questions about our entanglement in cultures of performativity and our ambivalent investments in authority. I will argue that thinking openly about those difficult questions invites us to rethink key aspects of contemporary feminist conversations about academic power relations.

**Bio:** Maria do Mar Pereira is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Warwick, and the Deputy Director of Warwick's Centre for the Study of Women and Gender. She has published two award-winning books – *Doing Gender in the Playground: the Negotiation of Gender and Sexuality in Schools* (in Portuguese) and *Power, Knowledge and Feminist Scholarship: an Ethnography of Academia*. She tries (often unsuccessfully) to juggle all of the above with sanity, parenting and involvement in feminist activism.

Teresa Kulawik (Södertörn University)

**Title:** Velvet Borders: Theorizing the Second Other in European Gender Studies

**Bio:** The lecture explores the velvet border in European gender studies three decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain. While the edgy East–West divide of the early years has certainly been refined within a field now established as transnationally European, a West-centric skew continues to permeate feminist knowledge production within a geopolitical space in which the positionality of Eastern Europe has transmuted from the Second World to the second Other of Europe. The presentation recasts genealogies of academic and transnational feminisms and is related to the book: Borderlands in European Gender Studies. Beyond the East-West Frontier

**Bio:** Teresa Kulawik is professor of Gender Studies at Södertörn University, with a PhD in political science from the Free University Berlin, Germany. She was research leader and cofounder of the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies (CBEES) between 2006 and 2011. She was a visiting professor at the Humboldt University in Berlin, Warszawa University, Potsdam University, Technical University of Berlin and visiting scholar at Columbia University. She is a specialist in comparative gender studies and published extensively on welfare state formation in Sweden and Germany. For some time she also investigates Poland and the former Second World. Her current research examines the intersections between public knowledge regimes, expertise and policy making, body/bio politics as well as feminism

and citizenship from a longterm perspective. More recently she explores the borderlands between post/decolonial and postsocialist scholarship. Recent publications include:

Co-edited with Zhanna Kravchenko, Borderlands in European Gender Studies: Theorizing the East-West Frontier, London: Routledge (Advances in Feminist Studies & Intersectionality).

Co-edited with Rosalind Cavaghan „Experts, Idiots and Liars: The Gender Politics of Knowledge and Expertise in Turbulent Times“, special issue of Social Politics. International Studies in Gender, State and Society, Oxford University Press, 2020, Vol. 27, n° 4.