

# JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES

protection sans syndicat walmartisation salaire minimum famille  
monoparentale travailleuses domestiques programme discriminatoire  
travail refusé statut de résident permanent servitude guerres  
d'agression impérialistes contrôler les ressources immigrantEs et  
migrantEs politiques de l'immigration travailleurs étrangers temporaires  
baïsser les salaires migrantEs sans statut précarité  
des femmes autochtones communautés détruites  
maltraitées ignorées femmes autochtones tuées et disparues  
précarité logement éducation santé âgées handicapées racisme sexisme  
corps des femmes marchandise patriarcat capitalisme solidarité  
précarité pauvreté inégalité austerité austerité emplois mal-payés  
walmartisation salaire minimum famille monoparentale travailleuses  
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walmartisation salaire minimum famille monoparentale travailleuses

**Samedi le 8 mars**

**Assemblée publique**

**13:00 h**

**Collège Dawson**

**4001 de**

**Maisonnette, O.**

**Salle 4C.1**

**Samedi le 8 mars**

**MANIFESTATION**

**15:30 h**

**Carré Cabot**

**(Atwater &**

**Ste-Catherine;**

**Métro Atwater)**

**Bienvenue à toutes et tous**

Le Comité 8 mars des Femmes  
de diverses origines  
est un groupe de  
Travail du  
GRIPQ-Concordia



# le 8 mars 2014



## Le Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques

Comité 8 mars – Femmes de diverses origines - le 17 février 2014

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### SOLIDAIRES CONTRE LA PRÉCARITÉ:

### BRISONS LA CAGE DE VERRE DE L'INSÉCURITÉ !

**Ce 8 mars**, nous déclarons notre solidarité avec les plus pauvres et les plus vulnérables d'entre nous. Nous descendrons dans la rue afin de dénoncer la PRÉCARITÉ et l'insécurité imposées par un système basé sur les inégalités économiques, sociales, et politiques. Nous rejetons les stratégies de diversion gouvernementales suscitant la peur autour de l'identité culturelle, et nous nous focalisons sur les conditions vécues par la vaste majorité d'entre nous. Ensemble, nous briserons l'immense cage de verre du capitalisme et du patriarcat.

Au Canada et partout dans le monde, la plupart des femmes se retrouvent au bas de la pyramide des inégalités. De plus, les politiques de nos gouvernements contribuent à élargir davantage l'écart entre les nantis et les démunis en fournissant aux capitalistes une main-d'œuvre bon marché toujours plus vulnérable et flexible.

Au Québec, au Canada et comme partout, on nous impose la précarité à plusieurs niveaux, comme faisant partie de l'ordre mondial établi.

### Qu',9en pensez-vous?

#### What do you think?

- Let us know your thoughts about the bulletin.
- Que pensez-vous de notre journal?
- We encourage you to send in your stories and articles for upcoming newsletters in any language by the 25th of every month to:

adisun3@gmail.com

- Écrivez - nous à

adisun3@gmail.com

**LA PRÉCARITÉ AU TRAVAIL** - Des emplois sous-payés, à temps partiel, sans bénéfices et protection, non-syndiqués, la **Walmartisation** du secteur des services occupé par les femmes en majorité. Le nombre de femmes travaillant au salaire minimum, occupant un emploi à temps partiel (70%), et cheffes de familles monoparentales dépasse largement celui des hommes. Encore aujourd'hui, au Canada, pour chaque dollar gagné par un homme, une femme ne gagne que 0.70\$.

Autres conditions précaires : les travailleuses domestiques se voyant refusées la protection de la CSST, car leurs activités ne sont pas considérées comme un " vrai travail". Les femmes, surtout philippines, venant au Canada en vertu du programme discriminatoire et raciste des Aides familiales, peuvent se faire refuser le statut de résidente permanente si elles tombent malades, ou si elles ne réussissent pas à compléter deux ans de service chez leur employeur dans le temps prescrit.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ CAUSÉE PAR LES GUERRES IMPÉRIALISTES ET LA SOIF INSATIABLE DES SOCIÉTÉS TRANSNATIONALES** pour contrôler les ressources de la planète laissant derrière pauvreté et désastres environnementaux. Des millions de personnes sont obligées de migrer pour survivre.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ DE LA MIGRATION aggravée par les changements dans les politiques d'immigration et d'accueil de réfugiés.** Le chômage est déjà deux fois plus élevé chez les immigrantEs que chez les personnes nées au pays (15% plutôt que 7.5%), les diplômes et les qualifications acquis à l'étranger ne sont pas reconnus, rendant des milliers d'immigrantEs spécialisées plus vulnérables.

Page suivant...



Entretemps, les politiques de recrutement visent une main-d'œuvre plus précaire encore et moins apte à revendiquer ses droits. Depuis 2008, le Canada reçoit plus de travailleuses étrangères temporaires que d'immigrantEs permanentes, une tendance qui se maintient. Plusieurs immigrantes se voient obligées de prendre la clandestinité, et elles deviennent une proie facile pour les agences et les employeurs cherchant à faire baisser les salaires. Nous appuyons donc la demande de régularisation des migrantEs sans statut.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ DE LA SÉCURITÉ PHYSIQUE ET DE LA MATERNITÉ** Les changements des politiques d'immigration et de l'accueil des réfugiés ont un impact dévastateur sur les femmes. Celles-ci deviennent davantage dépendantes de leurs conjoints et aussi plus vulnérables aux abus et à la violation de leurs droits parentaux. Surtout, si elles viennent au Canada en tant qu'épouse parrainée. L'oppression et la violence affecte aussi la sécurité physique des femmes *queer* et trans. Le libre choix en matière de reproduction est constamment menacé.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ DES FEMMES AUTOCHTONES** au Canada et à travers le monde, dont les terres sont volées, les communautés détruites par des projets d'extraction minière ou forestière. Plus de 600 femmes autochtones sont tuées et disparues au Canada. Nous joignons nos sœurs autochtones pour demander que justice soit faite pour elles.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ DES ÉTUDIANTES**, dont la majorité sont obligées de combiner travail et études, d'accumuler des dettes, sans débouchés adéquats sur le marché du travail.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ SOCIALE** : les attaques constantes aux maigres acquis sociaux concernant le logement, le transport, l'éducation et la santé, fragilisent davantage la condition des femmes. Particulièrement, celles qui sont âgées, seules, ou handicapées ; même les enfants de migrantes se voient souvent refusés l'accès à l'éducation et aux services sociaux.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ DÉCOULANT DU RACISME** : la discrimination contre les femmes autochtones, les migrantes, notamment les nouvelles arrivantes, les femmes de couleur, et de plus en plus, les musulmanes, le taux d'emploi chez ces dernières étant systématiquement inférieur à ceux de la population générale au Canada.

**LA PRÉCARITÉ DUE À LA MARCHANDISATION DU CORPS DE LA FEMME** : la publicité sexiste, l'exploitation et le trafic sexuel, où le corps de la femme est considéré comme une marchandise, sont de plus en plus banalisés. Notre corps devient une marchandise comme les autres, bonne à vendre ou à louer.

À l'occasion du 8 mars, nous invitons les femmes de toutes origines et leurs alliés à venir manifester leur volonté de briser la cage de verre qui nous maintient dans la pauvreté, la soumission et l'inégalité, et de nous opposer à *logique* du capitalisme et du patriarcat. Il n'y a pas de fatalité ! Unissons-nous en solidarité avec les plus opprimées d'entre nous, organisons-nous toutes ensemble afin de nous libérer. En cette Journée internationale des femmes, continuons la fière tradition de la lutte des femmes pour la justice et l'égalité, qui a été à l'avant plan de plusieurs changements importants, et exigeons une FIN À LA PRÉCARITÉ!

## ASSEMBLÉE PUBLIQUE – 13H00

### Solidaires contre la précarité :

### Brisons la cage de verre !

13H00 Collège Dawson, salle 4C.1, 4001 de Maisonneuve Ouest, Montréal, Métro Atwater

## MANIFESTATION – 15H30

Rassemblement : Carré Cabot (métro Atwater, coin Ste-Catherine)

**Un appel du Comité 8 mars des Femmes de diverses origines**

(Un groupe de travail du GRIP Concordia)

**Membre fondateur de l'Alliance internationale des femmes (IWA)**

inclut les organisations suivantes:

Centre des travailleuses et travailleurs immigrants (CTI-IWC)--PINAY-- Groupe des femmes philippines du Québec--Centre communautaire des femmes sud-asiatique CCFSA-SAWCC--MCVI - Mouvement contre le viol et l'inceste--Association des femmes iraniennes-- Centre d'appui aux Philippines-- Front féministe prolétarien--Association des parents d'origine philippine-- Dignidad Migrante--Mexicanos unidos para la regularizacion (MUR)--Comité Amérique latine de l'UQAM

## CENTRE UPDATE



### Centre Hours

Monday & Thursday 9am—9pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 9am—5pm

The Centre is wheelchair accessible

Le centre est accessible aux fauteuils roulants.

### Membership

Have you renewed your membership this year? If not, you can do so by sending the fees to SAWCC.

### Volunteers

If you are interested in helping out at the Centre, please contact Homa (Ext. 102 or [homa@bellnet.ca](mailto:homa@bellnet.ca)) to coordinate a meeting!

## IN SUPPORT OF DEEPAN BUDLAKOTI AND THE AWAN FAMILY:

### ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY FROM THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION PARTY OF CANADA

SAWCC supports migrants navigating the Canadian immigration and refugee system, with the hope that people can gain status and live in dignity. This often translates into the centre endorsing public campaigns where migrants make courageous decisions as they fight for justice and freedom. Currently, SAWCC endorses both the Justice for Deepan and Justice for the Awan Family campaigns. For SAWCC, this act entails several forms of commitments, including that of ensuring that politicians are held accountable for the power they wield over the lives of refugees.



Subsequent to a request on the part of the New Democratic Party (NDP), the Official Opposition Party of Canada, on Thursday, February 20th, 2014, some members of SAWCC's staff and executive council met with Mme Lysane Blanchette-Lamother (Official Opposition Critic for Citizenship and Immigration) and H  l  ne Laverdi  re (Member of Parliament for Laurier-Sainte-Marie, riding in which SAWCC is located). During this meeting, Mme. Blanchette-Lamother expressed support of SAWCC's demands:

- That the NDP take a clear public position on Deepan's case, as well as sign onto the public statement in support of Deepan and against double punishment that appears on his website
- In the context of Mr. Mulcair's expressed public support of the Awan family on Friday February 14th (see Awan Family website), that the NDP ensures that Mr. Mulcair will remain committed to his word. This includes speaking about the family's demands in parliament, and to use all channels necessary in order to regularize Mrs. Awan's status and to ensure that her husband, Mr. Mohamad Khalil Awan can be brought back to Canada and be granted permanent status.
- That the NDP take a firm position against the proposed two-tiered citizenship legislation (Bill C-24).

In this light, SAWCC members who were present felt that it was a fruitful conversation and are currently trusting that Mme. Blanchette-Lamother and Mme. Laverdi  re will remain true to their commitments.

SAWCC continues to demand justice for Deepan and the Awan family. For more information on both these campaigns, please visit their respective sites:

[justicefordeepan.org](http://justicefordeepan.org)

[soutienfamilleawan.org](http://soutienfamilleawan.org)

## **Come to a SAWCC Executive Council MEETING!**

All Executive Council (EC) meetings of SAWCC are open to all members. Members are encouraged to attend and participate in SAWCC discussions and decision-making. It's a great way to learn of new initiatives and make a tangible contribution to the organization. The next EC meeting will be on *Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2014*. We arrive at 6pm, share some food and the meeting starts at 6:30pm.

### **PRESENTATION BY SAWCC MEMBER, JEAN CHAPMAN**

#### **Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, Research Associate Seminars**

Following the presentation on 20<sup>th</sup> February dedicated to three Indian feminists Vina Mazumdar, Lothika Sarkar and Sharmila Rege, who all passed away in 2013, there has been a desire expressed to keep up the momentum of deepening our understanding on the status of women in contemporary India. Violence against women in India has caught the imagination of activists and scholars around the world. Your input into the ongoing conversation is invaluable.

#### **Title "Violence against women in contemporary India: beyond description"**

##### **Abstract**

Violence occurs in private spheres and may be physical or mental. It takes the form of marital rape, wife-battering, female genital mutilation, honour killing, forced marriages, child abuse, female foeticide, sexual and emotional harassment, forced sterilization, pregnancy, sexual slavery, prostitution and pornography. Private violence against women has direct implications for public violence as patterns of violence cultivated in the domestic unit are directly transposed into the public domain. Women's security is imperiled by misogynist killings such as mutilation murder, rape murder, and battery that escalate into murder. It is becoming imperative to go beyond description and interrogate the origin of violence against women to understand it, locate allies, and fight it. In this presentation I argue that violence against women has its misogynistic roots in brahmanical patriarchy which codified caste, a system of graded inequality in which castes are arranged according to an ascending scale of reverence and a descending scale of contempt. To substantiate the argument I use the case of widows who bear the brunt of brahmanical patriarchy and who represent the Achilles heel of contemporary Indian society.

*Jean Chapman is a Research Associate at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, Montreal. Her research interests are theorizing gender, the Khmer extractive industry, and violence against women in contemporary India. She is currently the Co-chair Planning Committee, Society for Socialist Studies 2014 Conference, 27-29 May 2014, which is taking place concurrently with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences at Catharines, Ontario. She is a Life Member of the South Asian Women's Community Centre.*

#### **Simone de Beauvoir Institute, 2170 Bishop Street, Montreal**

**Exact date and time to be confirmed. Either Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March or Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Time either 1:30pm or 2:30pm**

*Light refreshments served. All welcome*

## **EN SUPPORT À DJABER KALIBI: UN DISSIDENT IRANIEN MENACÉ DE DÉPORTATION DU CANADA**

**MARDI 25 MARS 8h : Vigile de solidarité + point de presse (Complexe Guy-Favreau)**

En raison de sa résistance contre la dictature en Iran, Djaber Kalibi, un militant révolutionnaire, est actuellement menacé d'être déporté du Canada. Seule une mobilisation importante et résolue de la communauté peut faire renverser la décision du Ministre de la Sécurité Publique. S'il-vous-plaît, participez en grands nombre aux deux prochains événements, afin de démontrer votre support à Djaber et sa famille, ainsi qu'en opposition aux décisions injustes du Bureau de l'immigration et des réfugiés.

facebook : [www.facebook.com/events/735214853165086](https://www.facebook.com/events/735214853165086)

web (avec affiche) : [www.solidarityacrossborders.org/fr/march-25-solidarity-vigil-with-djaber-kalibi](http://www.solidarityacrossborders.org/fr/march-25-solidarity-vigil-with-djaber-kalibi)

## EXTRAIT D'UNE COMMUNIQUÉ DE PRESSE:

### LA FAMILLE AWAN REÇOIT LA VISITE DU DÉPUTÉ THOMAS MULCAIR DANS UNE ÉGLISE À MONTRÉAL

MONTRÉAL, 14 février 2014 – Ce midi, Khurshid Begum Awan a reçu la visite de Thomas Mulcair, le député représentant son ancienne résidence à Côte-des-neiges, où elle habitait avant d'être forcée de se réfugier dans une église à Montréal le 21 août 2013.

L'Évêque Barry Clarke du diocèse Anglican de Montréal était présent pour accueillir M. Mulcair.

Khurshid Begum Awan habite en sanctuaire depuis maintenant près de six mois.

Durant cette période, elle n'a pas eu accès à des soins médicaux adéquats qu'exige son état de santé gravement affaibli, y compris une condition cardiaque en détérioration. « Je suis constamment inquiète. J'ai besoin de pouvoir aller à l'hôpital, mais je ne le peux pas, » a affirmé Mme. Awan.

Ce traumatisme constant a placé d'autres membres de la famille, y compris un jeune de 15 ans, sous un stress énorme. « Nous n'en pouvons plus » a dit Tahira Malik, la fille de Mme. Awan.

« Le système d'immigration canadien est entaché d'injustices, poussant les individus et les familles à la limite de la mort, et trop souvent, les menant même jusqu'à la mort » a affirmé Farha Najah Hussain, membre du Comité de soutien de la famille Awan.

La famille Awan et leurs supporteurs exigent que le gouvernement octroie un statut à Mme. Khurshid Begum Awan immédiatement, permette à son mari Mohammad Kahlil Awan de revenir au Canada, et fasse en sorte que toute la famille, y compris Tahira et Ali, puissent vivre avec justice et dignité.

Pour lire la communiqué au complet, veuillez visiter: [soutienfamilleawan.org](http://soutienfamilleawan.org)



## LECTURES OF INTEREST AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY

### **"The Global Politics of Migrant Labor, Gender, and Everyday Life"**

Nicole Constable, Department of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh

**DATE:** Monday, March 24, 2014, 4-5:30 PM

**PLACE:** Burnside Hall 426

This talk focuses on the everyday challenges faced by temporary migrant workers, especially migrant women from the Philippines and Indonesia who become pregnant in Hong Kong. Various factors – especially the migratory status of their partners – deeply color their own and their children's opportunities and vulnerabilities. Migrant mothers' stories point not only to their creative tactics for survival, but also to ever-growing global patterns of economic inequality and to the wider politics of privilege and precarity that define and limit their life choices. The stories of migrant mothers and their babies in Hong Kong may seem unique, but they echo many contemporary problems and vulnerabilities faced by temporary migrants the world over. This talk draws from recent anthropological and ethnographic fieldwork, and from my forthcoming book entitled: *Born Out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor* (University of California Press, 2014).

*Co-sponsored by the Department of Sociology and the Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies.*

### **"After IVF: is the future of reproduction technological?"**

Sarah Franklin, Department of Sociology, University of Cambridge

**DATE:** Thursday, March 20, 2014, 3:00-5:00 PM

**PLACE:** Social Studies of Medicine, 3647 Peel Street Room 101

This talk looks both forward and back at what is meant by the phrase 'reproductive technology' and examines how 'new reproductive technologies' might be related to older technologies of kinship, gender, sex. Examining in particular the transformation of the human embryo into a tool, and the wider technologization of reproductive substance at the IVF-stem cell interface, this talk explores the changing relationship between the biological and the technical in contemporary bio-science.

*Cosponsored by the department of Social Studies of Medicine, the Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies (IGSF) and the Situating Science cluster*

## CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO CITIZENSHIP LAWS IN CANADA – A TWO-TIER SYSTEM

*In the infamous words of Minister Alexander, “citizenship is not a right, it’s a privilege”*

Much in what is proposed in Bill C-24 (euphemistically called, “Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act”) is unnecessary. Reading the proposed changes it would appear that there are terrorists lurking all over Canada in the guise of citizens, that there are fraudster [read non-genuine] citizens exploiting the goodness of unwitting Canadians, etc. The overwhelming sense is punitive; all those ‘undeserving’ of citizenship who should be rooted out, have their citizenship revoked.)

The changes are rife with presumptions; that the Canadian population is homogeneous, that life trajectories flow in straight lines, are black and white. Glaring is a total absence of any understanding of realities of people’s life situations, immigration and refugee specificities with regard to documentation, politicization of situations, etc.

As well, like many punitive, conservative policies it ‘creates’ problems where none or few really exist. Once again there is an attempt to demarcate the ‘good, deserving’ citizens from the ‘bad undeserving’ ones. As well, again in the spirit of this type of thinking, there is the propagandizing of how the changes will create greater efficiency, reduce wait times for citizenship (by reducing the stages required).

Highly problematic with respect to the punitive measures is who adjudicates, how phrasing gets interpreted, etc. “When asked how the government would determine whether terrorism charges or convictions in countries with dubious justice systems were legitimate, [CIC minister] Alexander said the new provisions in the act would *likely apply to exceptional cases that would be carefully examined*. [own emphasis](Canadian Press report) There will be greater inflexibility, which make it impossible to take into account the kinds of variables that reflect people’s life situations.

As with other such punitive pieces of legislation that get layered onto existing laws, there is no need. Laws that are already in place can be applied.

***Proposed changes that are particularly relevant to our communities are:***

**Stripping citizenship from certain dual nationals.** “Under the new legislation, citizenship can be revoked from dual nationals who are members of armed forces or groups engaged in an armed conflict with Canada, and from dual nationals convicted of terrorism, high treason or spying.” Currently, there is no authority to revoke citizenship for acts against “Canada’s national interest”.

**Denial of citizenship to permanent residents** who are involved in the above activities

**Two-tiered system.** Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe, NDP MP (Pierrefonds-Dollard) said, “We want to make sure it doesn’t go against our Charter of Rights. We want to make sure it doesn’t create two classes of citizens. We have a justice system, a legal system that is able to deal with criminality and we’re not sure it’s necessary to go on that dangerous path.”

**Canada already tacitly abdicates responsibilities towards Canadians labelled terrorists:** E.g. Abousfian Abdelrazik, stranded in Sudan and tortured. “He was a Canadian citizen, but Canada actively prevented him from returning home (basic citizenship right). Imagine what will happen if these changes go into effect. (In addition to Arar, also El-Maati, Almalki, Nureddin secretly imprisoned and tortured in Syria on faculty intelligence provided by their own government and betrayed by Canadian officials charge with guarding their interests.”

**Revoking one’s original citizenship after becoming Canadian may be hard.** Janet Dench, Executive Director of the Canadian Council for Refugees said: “If they have their citizenship stripped they can’t return to Canada to clear their name if they have in fact been wrongly accused (e.g. Maher Arar) It’s a very disturbing direction the government is going in where they’re making citizenship something that can be taken away as a form of punishment. Once you open that door, where does it lead to?”

**Changes to language requirements + changes to age exemptions.** : Currently adult applicants aged 18-54 must meet language requirements and pass knowledge test; upper age limit of 54 currently established by policy, not in legislation, and applicants can meet knowledge requirement with assistance of an interpreter. The change will require applicants aged 14-64 to meet language requirements and pass knowledge test. As well, applicants must meet knowledge requirement in English or French. ***This means disqualification on grounds of language; also children and parents will be adversely affected as well.***

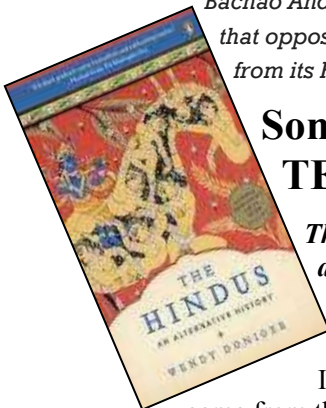
**Extension of resident requirement.** Currently 3 out of 4 years, will change to 4 out of 6 years. Also more stipulations such as “intent to reside” provision.

Significantly, there will be an increased cost, from \$200 to \$400, which the government explains away as still being lower than costs in the USA, UK and New Zealand!



## WENDY DONIGER'S BOOK

In February, Penguin Books India agreed to withdraw Wendy Doniger's *The Hindus: An Alternative History* from Indian bookstores and pulp any remaining copies. The settlement came in response to a complaint filed by Dinanath Batra, head of Shiksha Bachao Andolan, [Save Education Movement] a Hindu fundamentalist group that opposes sex education in Indian schools and textbooks that deviate from its Hinduvta ("Hinduness") interpretation of Indian history.



## Some thoughts on Historical Temper -- TERRORIZED BY THE PAST

*The tradition of sexuality in ancient Indian culture is what the attackers of Wendy Doniger's book fear most, writes*

**Janaki Nair**

It is our good fortune that our knowledge of Hinduism does not come from the authorized versions that Dina Nath Batra and his Shiksha Bachao Andolan [Save Education Movement] wish to propagate. Neither does our collective imagination remain reined in by his fantasies about the Indian past. This large and luxuriantly complex society, even when all else has been brutally taken from its wretched millions, has its imagination intact. And, we fervently hope, for some time to come. Therein lies the challenge to our desperately needed "historical temper".

As an 18-year-old, I had read the sexually frank passages of the Rig Veda with wonder and amazement. In a small village called Sanehalli, Karnataka, where the performing arts have been vigorously patronized by Swami Panditaradhyia, I recently watched, along with the people from surrounding villages, the Kathakali performance at the annual theatre festival, in which Shakuntala incrementally raised the decibel level and shouted "*Anarya!*" at Dushyanta, violating all norms of womanly behaviour and appropriate performance voice. There was thunderous appreciative clapping at the end. I have filed past, with lots of ardent devotees of Krishna, the brilliant murals at the Cochin Palace at Mattancherry, where Krishna does not waste a single digital extremity of his eight hands and two feet in pleasing his *gopis* (his two flute playing hands excepted). Ditto the Guruvayur Temple, whose sexually explicit murals are now, alas, being modestly covered in (NRI-sponsored) gold plate. The erotic sculptures at the Nellaippar Temple at Tirunelveli, the great Chalukyan temples at Aihole Pattadakal and Badami, all visited daily by hundreds of chattering and irreverent school children, continue to stand as testimony to what our illustrious forebears were *also* preoccupied with. One could go on *ad nauseum*, about the little and great traditions of Indian mythology which are not only sexually explicit but blood-stained to boot. It is Wendy Doniger's triumph that she brings us these complexities in just one book.



WENDY DONIGER

To be fair to Dina Nath Batra, he does not deny that the luxuriant growth called Hinduism has yielded many embarrassing fruits: indeed he even admits that there is much that is shameful in Hinduism up to the present day. This is among the many charges Batra made against Wendy Doniger: "That the entire list of the books authored by YOU NOTICEE shows that YOU NOTICEE concentrate, focus and write on the negative aspects and evil practices *prevalent in Hinduism*." Therefore, his argument is that we should shield our young/vulnerable/women from such knowledge. Therefore, genuine terror about the Indian past underlies Batra's recent campaign, and his success in getting Penguin to pulp the remaining copies of the 2009 book *The Hindus: An Alternative History*. What if this text actually reveals to the deracinated urban school child or NRI [non-resident Indian] reader that there is much shameful ambiguity in "ancient Indian culture" to which we should be reverently and unquestionably wedded? What if women learn that contemporary Indian sexuality has deep roots in, not the Wicked West but our *own* ancient Indian culture?

So, in the laziest and most predictable way, Doniger's gender and race identities are used to trump her formidable language skills, scholarly acumen, and academic experience. This is an ironic echo of the proscriptions against certain genders and castes that Doniger herself has highlighted as a central feature of centuries of Indian "censorship". Doniger's "crime" is not her preoccupation with sex and sexuality as "ancient Indians" knew and practised it: it is rather her unwillingness to participate in eliminating these aspects from our collective memory. What the AIDS epidemic, the review of Section 377 [sodomy laws], and the December 16, 2012 incident [Delhi gang-rape] all brought into the public sphere was an unprecedented focus on sex/violence/sexuality that ripped open what for so long had been strenuously denied and brushed under the subcontinental mat-



Continued...

to put this ungovernable sexuality back into the toothpaste tube.

In his insightful work on the “formations of the secular”, the anthropologist, Talal Asad, rightly highlights a particular problem posed by claims of sacredness (and therefore, in our current context, the luxuriant claims of “hurt sentiment” that ensue): is a book inherently “religious”? Or is it inherently malleable? In short, can it be read as both a literary and a religious text? If not, it raises the further question: is it the book, or the reader, whose religiosity is at stake?

The Shiksha Bachao Andolan seems to be claiming a bit of both, like many current protests. Of late, we have been continuously enjoined to delete, ban, boycott or abstain from certain representations/practices, not because the bearer of the “hurt” asserts the “believer’s right” that “I must not see it” (that is much easier achieved, by self-imposed abstinence). Rather, we are continuously told that “*It must not be seen/ heard/taught/thought*”, and therefore, the text/sculpture/painting/ movie must, if necessary, be violently removed from the public sphere.

Unfortunately, the list of books/artifacts/movies/paintings that Batra and his shock troops, (including the ardent long-distance Hindu nationalists of the United States of America), will have to censor/delete/destroy/alter will be a long one indeed, beginning with the Rig Veda itself. Although this will be an arduous task, we have too many uncomfortable historical reminders of the extent to which zealots will go to cleanse and rewrite public memory. This claim of “hurt sentiment”, it must be pointed out, is quite different from the democratic demands for collective reflection on truly disabling “historical wounds” arising from statements and representations on the underprivileged/oppressed. But it will not do to rely on the inherent wiles and cunning of those inhabiting the subcontinent, or on private memory, to survive and resist such public onslaughts of a dominant political, religious and social majority. Our demand to remember, hear, see, know, and above all be heard, be seen and be known must be vociferously defended from such infringements by beginning an urgent and long overdue discussion on the lineaments of a new civility, and a thoroughly revised “historical temper”.

The author is Professor of History, Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, JNU

March 8 Committee - Women of Diverse Origins - February 15, 2014

## **Women United Against PRECARIETY -- Smash the Glass Cage of Insecurity!**

**This March 8**, we declare our solidarity with the poorest and most vulnerable among us, and take to the streets to denounce the PRECARIETY and insecurity imposed on us by a system based on economic, social and political inequalities. We reject the diversionary tactics of the government preying on fears around cultural identity, and focus instead on the conditions we face as the vast majority. Together we will smash this glass cage of capitalism and patriarchy!

The majority of women find themselves at the bottom of a hierarchy of inequality in Canada and around the world. Government policies are widening the gaps between haves and havenots, as they race to provide increasingly cheap, more vulnerable and flexible workforces for the capitalist class and public sector employers.

Precarity is imposed on us in Quebec, Canada and globally, in the current world order, at all levels of existence.

**PRECARIETY OF EMPLOYMENT** - low-wage, part-time, casual jobs without benefits, protection or unions; Walmartization of the service sector where women are the majority. Women outnumber men in minimum wage jobs; 70 % in part-time jobs ; women head the majority of single parent families. Still today, for every dollar earned by a man in Canada, a woman earns only 70 cents.

- Precarious conditions for domestic workers, still denied minimum protection of CSST because their jobs aren't considered "real work". Racism and discrimination faced by foreign caregivers under the Live-In Caregiver Program who can be denied resident status if they fall ill, or fail to complete two years in their employers' homes within imposed time limits. Despite these harsh conditions Filipino women are forced to leave their homes for such employment -- part of the global feminisation of migration and the commodification of women.

**PRECARIETY CAUSED BY IMPERIALIST WARS AND VORACIOUS TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS** to control the resources of the planet, leaving environmental devastation and poverty in their wake. Millions are forced to migrate to survive.

**PRECARITY OF MIGRATION, reinforced by changes to immigration and refugee laws** Unemployment twice as high among recent immigrants than among locally-born (15% compared to 7.5 %), foreign qualifications and accreditation unrecognized, with the consequence of de-skilling of thousands of workers and professionals; immigration policies that have shifted to bring in even more vulnerable workers. Since 2008, Canada has brought in more temporary foreign workers, at wages up to 15% below average wages and the trend shows no sign of decline. More migrants driven underground to become easy prey for contractors and employers who push wages down further. We stand behind the demands for the regularization of non-status migrants.

**PRECARITY WITH RESPECT TO BODILY SECURITY & MOTHERHOOD** -- Immigration and refugee laws --have a devastating impact on women, making them more dependent and vulnerable to abuse and violation of parental rights when they enter Canada as sponsored spouses. Oppression and violence also negatively impacts the bodily security of queer and trans women. Reproductive choice is constantly threatened.

**PRECARITY FOR ABORIGINAL WOMEN** in Canada and abroad whose lands are taken and communities destroyed by mining and lumber extraction projects. Over 600 aboriginal women are missing or murdered in Canada. We join our Native sisters in demanding justice for them.

**PRECARITY FOR STUDENTS, many of whom are forced to** combine work and studies for years, and even then accumulate debt, with no guarantees of employment once they graduate.

**PRECARITY OF SOCIAL RIGHTS** -- Constant attacks on social housing, education, health services and transportation, further inequality for women, particularly elderly and single and women with disabilities. Even children of migrant women are often denied access to school and other social services.

**PRECARITY FROM RACISM** -- Discrimination against indigenous women, migrant women, especially newcomers, women of color and increasingly, Muslim women, whose employment rates are consistently lower than those of the general population in Canada

**PRECARITY FROM COMMODIFICATION OF FEMALE BODY** -- Sexist advertising long in existence, combined with, sexual exploitation and trafficking which are increasingly commonplace. The female body has become just another commodity for sale or rent.

On the occasion of March 8, we invite women of diverse origins and their allies to come out and show their resolve to smash the glass cage that keeps us subordinate, unequal and in poverty, and oppose the "inevitability logic" of capitalism and patriarchy. They are not our destiny!. Unite in sisterhood and solidarity with the most oppressed to organize to free ourselves This International Women's Day, let us keep up the proud tradition of women at the forefront of struggles for justice and equality and demand an **END TO PRECARITY!**

## **PUBLIC MEETING - 1:00 PM**

# **Solidarity against Precarity: Smash the Glass Cage of Insecurity !**

13H Dawson College , 4001 4C.1 room Maisonneuve West, Montreal Metro Atwater

## **DEMONSTRATION - 3:30PM**

START: Cabot Square ( Atwater metro, corner Ste- Catherine

**A call from the March 8 Committee Women of Diverse Origins**

(A working group of QPIRG Concordia)

**founding member of the International Women's Alliance**

includes the following organizations:

Association of Parents of Filipino Origin--Centre for Philippine Concerns-- Comité Amérique latine de l'UQAM- Dignidad Migrante--Front féministe prolétarien- Immigrant Workers' Centre (CTI-IWC)-- Iranian Women's Association-- Mexicanos unidos para la regularizacion (MUR)-- Mouvement contre le viol et l'inceste (MCVI)-- PINAY (Filipino Women's Group of Québec)- South Asian Women's Community Centre (SAWCC)

**Centre Communautaire des femmes sud-asiatiques**

South Asian Women's Community Centre  
1035, rue Rachel est, 3ième étage.  
Montréal, QC H2J 2J5

Phone: 514-528-8812  
Fax: 514-528-0896  
E-mail: sawcc@bellnet.ca

32 years of sisterhood, strength, struggle and success 1981-2014


[www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca](http://www.sawcc-ccfsa.ca)

Mars 4– Staff meeting  
March 8–International Women's  
Day events  
Mars 11—Sewing class  
(10:30am– 12:00 pm)  
Mars 18 –Information session on  
tax returns  
Mars 20– Executive Council  
Meeting at 6 00 PM  
Mars 25– Information session on  
Child Tax Benefit (10:30am–  
12:00pm)

4 Mars- la réunion du personnel  
8 Mars—journée international  
des femmes  
11 Mars— Cours de couture  
(10h30—12h)  
18 Mars— Session d'information  
sur les impôts  
20 Mars- Réunion du conseil ad-  
ministratif à 18h00  
25 Mars—Session d'information  
sujet sur le soutien aux enfants  
(10h30—12h)

# March 2014

**Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat**

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2	3	4 	5	6	7	8 <b>WOMEN'S</b>
9	10	11 	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 	19	20 	21	22
23	24	25 	26	27	28	29
30	31					



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

**SOLIDARITY**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

**Public meeting**

**1pm**

**AGAINST**

**Dawson College**

**4001 de Maisonneuve, o**

**Room 4C.1**

**PRECARITY:**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

**DEMONSTRATION**

**3:30PM**

**SMASH the**

**Cabot Square**

**(Atwater &**

**GLASS CAGE of**

**Ste-Catherine;**

**INSECURITY**

**Metro Atwater)**

**All welcome**

8th March Committee  
of Women of  
Diverse Origins  
is a working  
group of  
QPIRG-Concordia



**8<sup>th</sup>**

**MARCH 2014**