

PRESENTATION

SUPRI Project Annual Report April 2019 - March 2020

Group 2 “Global Justice and Human Rights”

Group Members:

Tracey Nicholls, Rob Sinclair, Johanna Zulueta

1. Background to academic year 2019:

The Global Justice and Human Rights research team was constituted at the first meeting of academic year 2018, April 25, 2018. We were charged with developing a research plan that could form the basis of a *Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research* (KAKENHI) application for research funding from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

In our first team meeting (May 16, 2018), we met to discuss our respective research interests, with a view towards establishing the overlap out of which we might develop a collaborative research project. We continued to meet and coordinate over academic year 2018 to develop the KAKENHI application we submitted October 2018 (title: “Understanding Sexual Violence: Epistemic Injustice, Law, and Social Awareness”). We were notified just before the beginning of academic year 2019 that our project proposal for academic year 2018

was not funded.

2. Activities of academic year 2019:

The Global Justice and Human Rights research team continued to meet throughout the year to reframe the project in advance of resubmission in October 2019 of a modified project that was retitled “Understanding Sexual Violence as Epistemic Injustice, Structural Violence, and an obstacle to Sustainable Development.” We are currently awaiting notification of the 2019 funding decisions.

In addition to this major project, we organized and co-hosted, with the Center for Gender Studies at International Christian University, a conference called “Woman and Peace-Making in the Asia Pacific” (June 2019, at International Christian University). The conference was funded through the generosity of SUPRI and our ICU co-host Dr. Kana Takamatsu’s KAKENHI grant, and was well-attended by SIPS and FILA students. In the spirit of Soka University’s commitment to humanistic education, the role of commentator on keynote speeches and panel discussions was reserved for and offered (based on matching research interests) to SIPS masters students, as training for their future academic participation. In the spirit of dialogue, the substantial and necessary expenditure was for a fully bilingual conference guide (schedule, abstracts, and speaker biographies) and for interpretation onsite.

This linguistically accessible and interdisciplinary conference promoted discussion among feminist scholars in Japan on the links between gender inequality and conflict—both large-scale geopolitical

conflict and conflict in the domestic sphere or workplace. The notable contribution our panel discussions made to the growing field of feminist peace studies was to frame “me too” movements around the world (New York, Seoul, Okinawa, Hachioji) as peace-building movements. The notable contribution our keynote speeches made to international relations and peace studies was in demonstrating for students how activism (Suzuyo Takazato) and academic study and dialogue (Kozue Akibayashi) work together to build cultures of peace. Students who completed conference questionnaires afterwards praised ideas that had been presented in the conference, and spoke of how much they had learned and how inspired they were to contribute to peace-making in their own lives. As a matter of student empowerment, there is a lot of value in funding conferences that introduce students to the research expertise of the SIPS faculty/SUPRI researchers and do so in ways that help the students to develop themselves as scholars.

[image: conference participants and attendees, *Women and Peace-Making in the Asia Pacific*, June 2019]



Source: Swati VOHRA

3. Beyond academic year 2019:

Because of international relocation by one of the team members (Nicholls) and teaching and administrative leadership loads of the other two members, it is clear that the composition of this research team in future academic years will look very different. Any team newly constituted by SUPRI in academic year 2020 will obviously also require the kind of start-up time we were given in 2018 to develop a plan that advances and is advanced by the specializations and knowledge bases of each of the team members.

In the event that the plan we developed and submitted in the October 2019 round of KAKENHI applications is funded, and in the event that the funding is transferrable from Nicholls (identified as PI in the 2019 round) to one of the other co-investigators, we would like to discuss how our research project can be executed under the framework of an international, multi-university collaboration.

Our goals for academic year 2019 had included writing and submitting for publication two separate co-written articles, both in SCOPUS-indexed journals. (*Gender and Society* and *Philosophy Compass*).

- The first collaboration is the article Drs. Nicholls and Zulueta are co-writing on how to understand “me too” as a globalized phenomenon, making their argument through multiple theoretical lenses—mobility studies, peace studies, and gender studies. It is still in the writing stage, but this is a project that each of us remains committed to.
- The second collaboration involved all three of us co-writing a theoretical analysis of the injustices of sexual violence. This

SUPRI Project Annual Report, Group 2 “Global Justice and Human Rights” 121
article, planned to be published in SCOPUS-indexed *Philosophy
Compass*, was to form the initial framework through which we
announced and explained our project; we anticipate now that this
may no longer be feasible (if the project is not funded) and may
no longer be the best use of limited faculty research time.