

Asian Center for Women's Studies Race and Gender Special Lecture Series 3

Defining “Mixed Blood”: (Re)Making Koreanness at the Crossroads of Race and Gender

11 November 2022 (Fri)
10:00am (Korea Standard Time)

Venue Online (Zoom) **Language** English

Abstract

This presentation examines the intersection of racial and gender anxieties in the struggle to define "mixed-blood" Koreans in relation to a "pure-blood" counterpart in Cold War South Korea. Born from the post-war US military occupation of South Korea, the Amerasian “mixed-blood (honhyŏl)” children of American soldiers and Korean women threatened a postcolonial commitment to ethnic homogeneity that was championed by scientists and state agents intent on isolating “Korean blood” by biologically defining, medically pathologizing, and legally disowning “mixed-bloods.” Exposing the eugenicist approaches to reproduction that researchers brought to their studies of "mixed-blood" subjects and their mothers, Diederich proposes a mixed-race centered narrative of South Korean national identity-making that highlights how the process of pathologizing "mixed-blood" proliferated newly biologized understandings of South Korea as a "pure-blood" nation that continue to resonate in state policies and personal relations today.

Bio

Professor Inga Kim Diederich is a historian whose research focuses on the development of Korean ethnic nationalism and its medico-scientific dimensions. Working at the intersection of Asian Studies, Science Studies, and Ethnic Studies, she concentrates on how the symbol and substance of blood worked to congeal a new form of modern Korean identity across a divided peninsula and diverse diasporas. She has published, presented, and organized work that explores the connections between Korean nationalism and the biological sciences in the context of gender, race, and class formations in modern East Asia and the trans-Pacific sphere, and teaches courses in the Departments of History, East Asian Studies, and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies that survey East Asian history from antiquity through the present, explore the contours of Korean modernity, and consider how Asian bodies have been shaped by sexualized and racialized discourses and practices.



Speaker
Inga Kim Diederich
(Colby College)

- 📄 Registration Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/100HpwD-oyz63hnRrMeahn9Myl8oSHky_Umy7nNJcAr8/viewform?edit_requested=true
- ✅ Registration Deadline: 10 November 2022 (Thu) / 12:00pm (Korea Standard Time)
- 🔍 For inquiries, email: acwsewha@ewha.ac.kr

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