

# Law&Society@UBC

presents

## A Cosmopolitanism to Come?

Friday February 17th 2012  
3-5pm  
CK Choi Room 120

Recent years have witnessed a resurgent interest in cosmopolitanism as an ethical vision for global futures. Rejecting its Eurocentric histories, unmooring it from the lettered elite situated in the imperial metropole (Kant, Goethe, Wilde), and recasting it through the subaltern and excluded, the “new cosmopolitanisms” have initiated and opened important discussions on collective global futures.

Today, we experience the realities of transnational networks and diaspora as so many potentials for proliferating local democracies and promoting community struggles for an amelioration of “human insecurity” (UN 1994). Most recently, the transnational networks linking the Arab Spring to #Occupy has provided an example of how global solidarities, shared rhetoric and critiques of capital are inflected locally to address particular constitutional and economic realities and how these rhetorics themselves may become a site of additional critique. In response to #Occupy, Indigenous peoples invited a reflection and discussion on how we might unoccupy already occupied lands.

This transnational and contested landscape deeply shapes and recasts our understandings and conceptualizations of cosmopolitanism. To ask for a future cosmopolitanism or a cosmopolitanism for the future requires us to think through the asymmetries of the transnational with careful attention to historical and contemporary reconfigurations of local, national, and global power relations while also recognizing that universal categories such as 'the secular' or 'human rights' must be rethought from within these transnational engagements and contestations.

**Confirmed participants include:**

Dina Al-Kassim, Assistant Professor, English  
Tim Cheek, Professor, Institute for Asian Research  
Sneja Gunew, Professor, English  
Patrick Hanafin, Professor of Law, Birkbeck  
Thomas Kemple, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Chris Lee, Assistant Professor, English  
Renisa Mawani, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Gerry Pratt, Professor, Geography