

Fact Sheet:

The Politics of Yoga: Sex, Religion, and Power in a Global Industry

August 4, 2017

University of Victoria, Centre for Studies in Religion and Society

Organized by:

Paul Bramadat (University of Victoria)

Participants:

Paul Bramadat (University of Victoria)

Andrea Jain (Indiana University)

Angela Jamison (University of Michigan)

Neilesh Bose (University of Victoria)

Siobahn Chandler (Camosun College Lansdowne)

Katherine Young (McGill University)

Christina Gentile (University of Victoria)

Christopher Goto-Jones (University of Victoria)

Event Description:

The purpose of this workshop was to discuss the complex religious, social, economic and political debates that swirl around “modern postural yoga.” The event brought together scholars and practitioners for a full day of lectures, discussions, and network-building. In particular, the support of the RDP allowed us to bring to the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society Dr. Andrea Jain, a religious studies professor at Indiana University and the author of *Selling Yoga: From Counterculture to Pop Culture* (OUP, 2014), as well as Dr. Angela Jamison, adjunct professor at the University of Michigan, and level-two authorized teacher in the Ashtanga yoga lineage. Other speakers included Dr. Neilesh Bose, Dr. Siobahn Chandler, Dr. Katherine Young, Christina Gentile, and Dr. Christopher Goto-Jones. I offered opening remarks to explain the scholarly and public relevance of stimulating advanced reflection on postural yoga. I also moderated the academic and public discussion period, organized the event as a whole, offered closing remarks, and hosted all of the social activities associated with the event. I was supported in my efforts by the CSRS staff.

Results Dissemination:

Beyond the lectures and responses, there was an active and productive discussion component of the day. Indeed, discussions continued long after the event was officially concluded. The fact that Andrea Jain – the incoming editor of the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* – was so appreciative of the workshop bodes well for future academic discussions about contemporary yoga in the west. The RDP was acknowledged publicly both on all of our promotional materials, as well as in my opening and closing remarks and the powerpoint we used for the presentations. As well, the creator of a popular yoga blog conducted interviews with Andrea Jain and Angela Jamison, and produced the following quite impressive stories/interviews:

<http://www.itsallyogababy.com/yoga-social-justice-andrea-jain/>

<http://www.itsallyogababy.com/resilient-yoga-angela-jamison/>