



International Sexual Violence Justice Symposium

Official Agenda with Presenter Biographies

By Take Back The Night

Symposium Agenda

December 5, 2025; 11:00am-12:45pm EST

- 11:00 - Introduction - Katie Koestner — Executive Director, Take Back The Night (USA)
- 11:05 - Priya Varadarajan — Founder & CEO, I'm Every Woman (India)
- 11:10 - Brenda Oulo — Co-Director, Girls Agency Lab (Kenya)
- 11:15 - Renee Williams — CEO, National Center for Victims of Crime (USA)
- 11:20 - Halima Kazem — Associate Director, Stanford University (Afghanistan)
- 11:25 - Jaye Wesley — Executive Director, Kenora Sexual Assault Centre (Canada)
- 11:30 - Lise Gotell — Professor in Women & Gender Studies, University of Alberta (Canada)
- 11:35 - Tracey Jewel — Survivor & Advocate (Australia)
- 11:40 - Bridget Taremotimi — Head of General Services, WARIF (Nigeria)
- 11:45 - Monika Platek — Head of Criminology Department, Warsaw University (Poland)
- 11:50 - Ashlea Ambris — Project Officer, Directorate of Gender Affairs (Antigua & Barbuda)
- 11:55 - Mariana Valente — Assistant Professor, University of St. Gallen (Brazil)
- 12:00 - Renata Giannini — Associate Professor, George Washington University (Brazil)
- 12:05 - Stacey Sriver — Lecturer of Gender & Women's Studies, University of Galway (Ireland)
- 12:10 - Nata Duvvury — Professor of Gender & Women's Studies, University of Galway (Ireland)
- 12:15 - Mona Tajali — Executive Board Member, Women Living Under Muslim Laws (Iran and Turkey)
- 12:20 - Lin Li — Assistant Professor of Asian History, Kenyon College (East Asia)
- 12:25 - Isiuwa Iyehen — Acting Head of Office, UN Women MCO-Caribbean (UN)
- 12:30 - Aleksandra Ivankovic — Expert Leader, Victim Support Europe (EU)
- 12:35 - Katie Koestner — Executive Director, Take Back The Night (USA)

Featured Presenters



INDIA: Priya Varadarajan (she/her)

Founder & CEO, [*I'm Every Woman*](#)

Priya Varadarajan is the founder of Durga – I'm Every Woman, a nationally recognized gender justice initiative that reimagines how women and girls belong in India's public spaces. Drawing from lived experience, she has built Durga into a systems-change organization that blends behavioral science, grassroots mobilization, and institutional partnerships—introducing India's first panic alarm in public transport, training 5,000+ active bystanders, and collaborating with 75+ colleges on safe, inclusive campuses. With two decades across philanthropy, policy, and grassroots action—including leadership roles at the Azim Premji Foundation and Co-Impact—Priya has advanced gender equity, anti-trafficking, care economy, and reproductive rights initiatives. She also serves on state committees addressing child marriage, inheritance law reform, and workplace justice.

USA: Renee Williams (she/her)

CEO, [*National Center for Victims of Crime*](#)

Renée Williams is a dedicated advocate and leader in the field of victim services, currently serving as chief executive officer of the National Center for Victims of Crime. With over 15 years of experience in the nonprofit and legal sectors, Renée has a proven track record of championing the rights and needs of victims of crime. Prior to her role at the NCVC, Renée was the executive director of a legal services organization in Pittsburgh that focused on the legal rights of victims of domestic violence and other indigent clients. She has represented NCVC on “NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt,” Court TV, HLN, and is a frequent guest on podcasts. She has been instrumental in shaping national conversations around victims' rights and has been a vocal advocate for changes to the justice system that better protect and support victims of crime. As the executive director of the NCVC, Renée continues to lead with integrity, compassion, and a commitment to making a difference in the lives of those affected by crime.





AFGHANISTAN: Halima Kazem (she/her)

Associate Director of Feminist, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, [Stanford University](#)

Dr. Halima Kazem is the Associate Director of Stanford University's Program in Feminist, Gender, Sexuality studies. Halima's work is deeply rooted in feminist methodologies and 26 years of working as a journalist, lecturer, human rights researcher, oral historian, and filmmaker. Her research intersects in the areas of gender, empire, human rights, and media with a focus on Afghanistan. Halima's forthcoming book, *A Feminist History of Afghanistan: Resisting the Erasure of Women*, unearths and narrates the little-told feminist history of women's movements in Afghanistan. It will be published in the fall of 2025. Halima is also collaborating with the Hoover Institution as an oral historian and building an oral history archive about the US Afghan war. From 2022-2024 Halima was a University of California Chancellor's postdoctoral fellow, where she started directing a documentary film about the codification of gender apartheid as a crime under international law.

CANADA: Jaye Wesley (she/her)

Executive Director, [Kenora Sexual Assault Centre](#)

Jaye Wesley is an experienced non-profit leader and crisis counselor dedicated to community advocacy and support. As Executive Director of the Kenora Sexual Assault Centre, Jaye oversees staff and volunteers, manages ministry contracts, and advances strategic initiatives that strengthen services for survivors of sexual assault and human trafficking. With a strong background in policy, financial management, fundraising, and stakeholder relations, Jaye has successfully built collaborative partnerships across agencies to ensure accessible, trauma-informed support.

Her career also spans roles as a paramedic and Special Constable with the Ontario Provincial Police, reflecting her deep commitment to serving vulnerable populations. Jaye holds multiple diplomas and degrees in counseling, Psychology Social Work, Law Enforcement and Forensic Sciences.





CANADA: Lise Gotell (she/her)

Professor in Women & Gender Studies, [University of Alberta](#)

Lise Gotell is a Professor in Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Alberta whose scholarship examines gender, sexuality, and law. Her research focuses on the legal regulation of sexual violence in neoliberal contexts and includes widely cited work on Canada's affirmative consent standard, antifeminist backlash, gender-based violence policy, and the rough sex defence. Cited by the Supreme Court of Canada and law reform bodies internationally, she bridges scholarship and advocacy. A

former National Chair of LEAF, she now chairs NAWL's Violence Against Women Working Group. She has won several teaching awards, along with the University of Alberta's Community Scholar Award.

AUSTRALIA: Tracey Jewel (she/her)

Survivor & Advocate, [Inclusive Mamas Club](#)

Tracey Jewel is a passionate advocate, social enterprise founder, and mum with lived experience of family and domestic violence (FDV). Drawing from her personal journey, Tracey is committed to creating inclusive, neuro-affirming spaces for mothers and children through initiatives like Inclusive Mamas Club and Bright Side Kids. Currently studying Social Impact at the University of Western Australia, she blends academic insight with real-world empathy to design tools and programs that support emotional regulation, self-worth, and community connection. Tracey's mission is to empower families and professionals with accessible, strengths-based resources that honour the resilience behind every story.





NIGERIA: Bridget Taremotimi (she/her)

Head of General Services, [WARIF](#)

Bridget Taremotimi is a passionate advocate for women and girls, working at the crossroads of human resources and gender justice. As the Head of General Services at the Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF), she assists survivors of sexual and gender-based violence while strengthening the systems that safeguard them. With over ten years of experience, Bridget has led training sessions on sexual harassment prevention, diversity, and empowerment, creating safer environments for women in the workplace and the community. She holds a Master's

Degree in Industrial and Labour Relations and is dedicated to mentoring young women to see themselves as agents of change. Driven by her belief that every woman deserves dignity, safety, and opportunity, Bridget continues to use her skills and voice to promote equality and resilience.

POLAND: Monika Płatek (she/her)

Head of Criminology Department, [Warsaw University](#)

Monika Stanisława Płatek is a Polish legal scholar, criminologist, and politician. She is a professor at the University of Warsaw, and her research focuses on penal systems, criminal and civil law, gender studies, and feminist jurisprudence. She has been a candidate for the Senate of Poland and the European Parliament. Płatek founded the Polish Association for Legal Education, of which she then served as the president. She has also been a board member of the Panoptykon Foundation, an anti-mass surveillance human rights NGO, and the board for the Osiatyński Archive, a legal archive.





ANTIGUA & BARBUDA: Ashlea Ambris (she/her)

Project Officer, [Directorate of Gender Affairs](#)

Ashlea Ambris serves as a Project Officer at the Directorate of Gender Affairs, where she supports the design and execution of programs that promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and youth leadership. She works closely with community stakeholders, young advocates, and institutional partners to advance initiatives that foster the full participation of women and girls, as well as men and boys, in social, economic, and political life. Ashlea holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and Economics from the University of Pedagogical Sciences

José Martí and a Master of Science in Regional Development from the University of Camagüey. She is passionate about creating social impact and is especially committed to increasing female representation in leadership and politics across the Caribbean.

BRAZIL: Mariana Valente (she/her)

Assistant Professor, [University of St. Gallen](#)

Mariana Valente is a law professor and researcher at the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland and co-founder of InternetLab in Brazil. She has been researching gender-based violence on the internet since 2014 and is the author of the book *Misoginia na Internet*, which was a finalist for the Jabuti Award. She was a member of the Federal Senate's Commission of Jurists that drafted the AI regulation bill, and of the working group of the Secretariat of Social Communication of the Presidency of the Republic (SECOM/PR) to assess the impact of deepfakes.

Internationally, she has worked in partnership with the UN and chaired the Law and Policy Working Group of the International Panel on the Information Environment, which seeks to bring scientific evidence to the global process of public policy formulation for the information environment. In 2025, she received the Internet Governance Highlights Award from CGI.br (Brazilian Internet Steering Committee).





BRAZIL: Renata Giannini (she/her)

Associate Professor of International Affairs, [George Washington University](#)

Dr. Renata Giannini is a researcher and practitioner specializing in the intersection of women's rights, conflict, and climate change. For over 16 years, she has worked with leading think tanks in Argentina, Brazil, and the United States, shaping public policy on gender equality, public safety and sustainable development. In Brazil, she led the creation of EVA (Evidence on Violence and Alternatives to women and girls), the country's largest publicly available database on violence against women. Her current research project "Guardians of the Amazon: women's contribution to climate change mitigation" examines the outcomes of 15 conflicts over land and water in the Amazon, assessing the different strategies used by women defenders to overcome them.

IRELAND: Stacey Scriver (she/her)

Lecturer of Gender & Women's Studies, [University of Galway](#)

Dr. Stacey Scriver is a research and author with more than 15 years experience working on sexual and gender based violence in Ireland internationally. Her co-authored book, *Rape and Justice in Ireland* (2009) remains the seminal work on rape attrition in the Irish justice system. Stacey continues to publish widely on SGBV. Her forthcoming co-authored book (with Nata Duvvury and Srinivas Raghavendra), *Violence against Women and the Global Economy*, provides an account of the economic and social costs of sexual and gender based violence against women internationally.





IRELAND: Nata Duvvury (she/her)

Professor of Gender & Women's Studies, [University of Galway](#)

Professor Nata Duvvury is Director of the Centre for Global Women's Studies. She is a feminist economist and a global expert on the economic burdens that violence against women, including sexual violence, places on individual women, their families, communities and society more broadly. She has led multiple projects in Africa and Asia on violence against women, HIV and AIDS, women's sexual health, masculinities and exploring community interventions

to prevent violence. She is Scientific Advisor to the Lancet Commission on Gender based Violence and Maltreatment of Youth.

IRAN AND TURKEY: Mona Tajali (she/her)

Executive Board Member, [Women Living Under Muslim Laws](#)

Mona Tajali is a scholar of gender and politics, specializing in women's political participation and representation in Muslim countries, with a comparative focus on Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkey. Her research includes analysis of feminist mobilization against patriarchal structures as well as the experiences of institutionalization of women's rights in semi-democratic and non-democratic contexts. She is the author of *Women's Political Representation in Iran and Turkey: Demanding a Seat at the Table* (2022) and co-author of *Electoral Politics: Making Quotas Work for Women* (2011). She is published in both academic and popular outlets, among them the *Middle East Journal*, *Politics & Gender*, *The Conversation*, and *The Washington Post*.





CHINA, JAPAN, & KOREA: Lin Li (she/her)

Assistant Professor, [Kenyon University](#)

Lin Li is the James P. Storer Assistant Professor of Asian History at Kenyon College. Li received PhD in East Asian history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a minor in gender and women's studies, after which she completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Stanford University's Clayman Institute for Gender Research. As a gender historian of East Asia, Li is interested in the dynamic interactions among structural injustice, historical memory, and popular culture. Li has published in *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*,

International Feminist Journal of Politics, and *Arcade: Literature, the Humanities, and the World*. She is currently preparing a monograph that examines the emergence and struggle over trans-Pacific historical memories of the "comfort women" system, a system of Japanese military sexual slavery during World War II.

KENYA: Brenda Oulo (she/her)

Co-Founder & Co-CEO, [Girls Agency Lab Consulting](#)

Dr. Brenda Oulo is a feminist researcher and advocate whose passion for gender equity inspired her transition from medicine to research and data science. Trained as a health economist and data scientist, she brings a multidisciplinary perspective that bridges quantitative rigor with an understanding of gender dynamics. Her work centers on developing and validating psychometric tools and applying evidence-based approaches to strengthen adolescent girls' agency. Dedicated to advancing girls' well-being, she focuses on equipping them with the skills and opportunities to shape their futures and improve life outcomes.





EU: Aleksandra Ivankovic (she/her)
Deputy Director, [Victim Support Europe](#)

Aleksandra Ivankovic is Deputy Director of Victim Support Europe, a Brussels-based NGO network of victim support organisations. Aleksandra holds a MSt in International Human Rights Law from the University of Oxford, UK and has a particular expertise in the rights of victims of terrorism and mass victimisation, gender-based violence and rights of persons with disabilities.

United Nations: Isiuwa Iyahan (she/her)
Acting Head of Office, [UN Women Multi-Country Office for Caribbean](#)

Isiuwa Iyahan is currently the Deputy Representative and Acting Head of Office with the UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO) for the Caribbean. She is responsible for the day-to-day management of the MCO, substantially contributing to the design, implementation, management and oversight of programmes and operations to ensure effective and efficient delivery of results. Previously, Ms. Iyahan managed the Economic Empowerment and Statistics portfolios for the UN Women MCO-Caribbean. In that capacity, her technical leadership resulted in narrowing significant knowledge, research, and gender data gaps on violence against women and girls, the labour force, social protection, and unpaid care work in CARICOM. She has over 20 years of experience in international development and has served in various capacities within the United Nations system and non-governmental organisations. Ms. Iyahan has a Master of Public Policy degree from the University of Minnesota's Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Swarthmore College.





USA: Katie Koestner (she/her)

Executive Director, [Take Back The Night](#)

Katie Koestner is the first woman in the United States to speak out nationally and publicly as the victim of campus “date” rape at age 18. Katie has been featured on the cover of TIME Magazine, The Oprah Winfrey Show, NBC Nightly News, CNBC Talk Live, CNN, Larry King Live, Good Morning America, Later Today, MSNBC, Entertainment Tonight and other national television programs. Katie is the subject of an HBO movie and has lectured for over 5000 schools and organizations in North America and around the world.