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Gender Wire is an electronic newsletter informing the UNESCO Secretariat and UNESCO Member States of relevant facts and figures, events and news concerning the work of UNESCO for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Women's Forum

Paris, France – 14-16 November



Ms Azoulay at the Women's Forum

The Women's Forum Global Meeting 2018 took place in Paris from 14 to 16 November.

UNESCO's Director General, Ms Audrey Azoulay, participated at the opening session entitled "A united front: Men and women laying the foundations to bridge divides" that took place at OECD. In her speech, Ms Azoulay gave statistics on gender gaps in all of UNESCO's field of competencies, and highlighted the importance of technology and digital skills education for girls.

STEMM Equality Congress: Gender and Artificial Intelligence

Amsterdam, the Netherlands – 12 October



Ms Corat at the STEMM Equality Congress in Amsterdam

For the second year running, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat, UNESCO's Director for Gender Equality, gave a keynote address at the [STEMM Equality Congress](#), which took place this year on 12 October at the Beurs van Berlage in Amsterdam.

Ms Corat spoke in front of 350 attendees on Artificial Intelligence and coded bias against women. She noted women's lack of access to information in relation to men, identified as one of three most important issues facing women

globally, after poverty and violence. Ms Corat concluded her remarks by saying; "We want girls to move full steam ahead towards a career in the discipline of their choice, unrestrained by gendered perceptions of different fields. For this, education is vital".

Inter-sessional Meeting of IANWGE

Paris, France – 30 October



Inter-sessional Meeting of IANWGE

On 30 October, UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality [hosted the Inter-sessional Meeting of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality](#) (IANWGE), a network of Gender Focal Points in United Nations agencies. Representatives from different UN Agencies were present, notably from UN Women, the ILO, UNDP, UNICEF among others.

Ms Saniye Gülser Corat and Ms Elspeth McOmish, from her team, gave a presentation entitled "Artificial intelligence, digital skills and gender: UNESCO's action." Ms Corat highlighted that by bringing these issues out into the open, UNESCO aims to create a public debate on the gender dimensions of AI, and put pressure on companies to infuse gender equality in their systems and technology.

UNESCO Chair in Gender Research Annual Lecture

London, United Kingdom – 31 October

The UNESCO Chair in Gender Research Annual Lecture was held on 31 October at the Work Foundation, London.

As 2018 marks ten years since this UNESCO Chair was established at Lancaster University in London, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat was invited to present UNESCO's Priority Gender Equality and selected initiatives in this area.

Prof S. Laurel Weldon, Professor of Political Science at Simon Fraser University in Canada gave a presentation on “Women’s global activism against violence as a source of change”.

A review of the work of the UNESCO Chair can be read [here](#). A list of all Gender-related UNESCO Chairs and Networks can be found [here](#).

Harvard Graduate School of Education Cambridge, USA – 7 November



Ms Corat at Harvard Graduate School of Education

On 7 November 2018, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat gave a presentation to students at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education Cambridge, Massachusetts.

During her presentation, Ms Corat described the global context for girls’ education and provided data and evidence on persistent gaps and UNESCO’s work on girls’ education. She noted phenomena such as the funding gap for girls’ education, the benefits of education for girls and women, girls’ participation in STEM education, and digital skills for girls and women. She highlighted selected UNESCO programmes that focus on girls’ education, such as the [Malala Fund for Girls’ Right to Education](#), the [Literacy Project for Girls and Women in Senegal](#), and the [Joint Programme for the Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women Through Education](#) implemented in partnership with UN WOMEN, UNFPA, and the World Bank.

Women’s Forum – Daring Circle on AI and Women

Paris, France – 14 November



Ms Corat during the Daring Circle at UNESCO HQ

On 14 November, UNESCO also hosted a Daring Circle session dedicated to “Women and Artificial Intelligence working hand in hand for empowerment”, led by Microsoft in collaboration with Google, L’Oréal and AXA. At the meeting, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat spoke of UNESCO’s reflection of AI as an important topic to tackle in all its areas of competencies, including gender equality.

Priority Gender Equality Training

Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania – 5-6 December



Meeting with representatives of KOICA

From 5 to 6 December, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat was in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania to deliver UNESCO’s mandatory training on Priority Gender Equality with assistance from Ms Elspeth McOmish from her team. 19 colleagues from UNESCO Office in Dar-es-Salaam attended the training, including the Head of the Office.

During her mission, Ms Corat also held bilateral meetings about the Joint Programme on Empowering adolescent girls and young women through education. Accompanied by the Head of UNESCO Office in Tanzania, Mr Tirso Dos Santos, she met with selected partners including: the Country Director and the Deputy Country Director and the Programme Officer at KOICA, the Director at UN Women, the representative of UNFPA as well as the Assistant Director for the Institute of Adult Education.

Priority Gender Equality Training

Libreville, Gabon – 5-6 December

From 5 to 6 December, Mr Cvetan Cvetkovski, and Mr Damiano Giampaoli, from the Division for Gender Equality, delivered UNESCO’s mandatory training on Priority Gender Equality in Libreville, Gabon. The training was attended by all the personnel of the UNESCO Office in Libreville.

Gender Views: When Laws Legitimize Gender Inequalities

Paris, France – 18 October



Professor de Silva Alwis and Ms Corat

On 18 October, [Professor Rangita de Silva de Alwis](#) gave a talk about the [legitimization of gender inequalities through the rule of law](#) during a session of Gender Views at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Professor de Silva de Alwis described the global mapping she has conducted as part of the Global Women's Leadership Project, which provides research for UNESCO and UN Women in support of our work on women, peace, justice and women's human rights. She acknowledged and recognized the leadership of UNESCO and the longstanding contribution of Ms Saniye Gülser Corat, UNESCO's Director for Gender Equality, to this process. Ms Corat highlighted UNESCO's concern in the persisting issues of gender inequality in the context of extremist ideologies: "the rise of extreme ideologies influences the way laws are developed and interpreted".

Professor de Silva de Alwis' presentation was followed by a Q&A session with the audience. Several follow-up questions were asked on how discriminatory practices and cultural norms are embedded in national legislation in all corners of the world.

Download the publication [Making Laws, Breaking Silence: Case Studies from the Field](#), edited by Professor de Silva de Alwis and published in partnership with UN Women, UNESCO, Sustainable Development Goals Fund and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Gender Views: Fighting Gender Stereotypes in the Media

Paris, France – 25 October



Ms Corat and Ms Delarue

On 25 October, Ms Christelle Delarue, founder and CEO of Mad&Women advertising company, gave a talk on "[Fighting Gender Stereotypes through Innovative Solutions with 'Feminist Advertising'](#)" for Gender Views at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

Ms Delarue described what it means to work for feminist advertising, and how the advertising industry can become a strong ally to advocate for gender equality through the media. In today's media, women have 48% more chance of being represented in their kitchen, while 82% of experts roles in advertising are filled by men, including in some ads that seem to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Ms Delarue's presentation was followed by a very interactive Q&A session with the audience. The questions touched upon whether Mad&Women can work with masculine industries, how to improve the visibility of this work outside the feminist circles and how education can change gender stereotypes.

For UNESCO's Director for Gender Equality, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat, the advertising industry being at the heart of the private sector: "it is crucial to identify and challenge gender stereotypes in advertising to promote women's empowerment and gender equality".

Gender Views: Gender and Systemic Change: Stories from the Political Trenches

Paris, France – 19 November

On 19 November at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the Honorable Eleni Bakopanos, P.C. gave a talk on the [importance of educating youth, especially girls, to build their future and become leaders within their communities and beyond.](#)

Ms Bakopanos shared her experience as a female politician, which requires long hours and elicits criticism often based more on one's appearance and look rather than the substance of the work, but she confirmed that focusing on delivering results and claiming any legitimate seat around the discussion tables is often the best strategy to be respected as a female leader and as a politician.

Ms Saniye Gülser Corat, UNESCO Director for Gender Equality, underlined the transformative power of education to deconstruct gender stereotypes and to create new opportunities, especially for those in vulnerable situations.

Ms Bakopanos' presentation was followed by a Q&A session, and the audience asked about discrimination and barriers faced by women to get funding in politics, and what impact the #MeToo movement had in politics. Ms Bakopanos recognized that women should dare to do anything they want to do, and should support each other in businesses and politics. Her motto is: *"Be her! If you can't, support her! If you can't, celebrate her!"*



Ms Bakopanos and Ms Corat

Gender Views: Comparative Perspectives on Conjugal Violence in France and Canada

Paris, France – 26 November

On 26 November, UNESCO organized a special session of Gender Views in the framework of the International Day of the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November). The session was on [Comparative Perspectives on Conjugal Violence in France and Canada](#), and Ms Saniye Gülser Corat, UNESCO's Director for Gender Equality, highlighted the importance of having men as allies to address violence against women.

H.E. Mr José Antonio Rodriguez, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to UNESCO, opened the session with an acoustic performance of one of his original songs, *Ella solo dijo no*, which talks about gender disparities and says no to discrimination. Film director Mr Gilbert Glogowski made a brief presentation before the screening of the film *"Je t'aime à la folie"* (Mad Love).

The film screening was followed by a panel discussion moderated by Ms Claudine Serre-Monteil, from the French National Commission for UNESCO. Ms Nathalie Tomasini, Ms Janine Bonaggiunta, lawyers and associates, spoke about their initiative on creating a law firm fighting for the protection of victims, and to advocate for police, medical corps and magistrates to better respond to suspected or filed cases of conjugal violence. The panel discussion was followed by a Q&A session. Among the topics discussed were the #MeToo movement, sexism in the media and the role of culture in changing perceptions of violence against women.



Ms Corat, Ms Serre-Monteil, Ms Tomasini, Ms Bonaggiunta, Mr Glogowski and H.E. Mr Rodriguez

UNESCO'S GENDER EQUALITY CHAMPION



PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH THE MEDIA

In recognition of their work promoting gender equality, the Division has chosen UNESCO Office in Dakar as this edition's Gender Equality Champion. UNESCO Office in Dakar developed a programme entitled [Preventing Violence and Promoting Gender Equality through the Media in Senegal](#), funded by Spain and in the framework of the [International Programme for the Development of Communication](#).

The main objective of this programme is to empower beneficiaries to promote gender equality and address the reporting and spread of hate speech in the media while encouraging a better strategic approach to the use of digital.

A series of four itinerant workshops took place throughout Senegal. The first workshop was held from 16 to 18 August and welcomed nearly 40 participants, including members of the community radios as well as the online press, located in the region of Dakar and Thiès. For three days they were trained on the concepts of human rights, gender and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); and in journalistic techniques, on the notions of ethics and deontology in the treatment of information. At the end of the training sessions, the participants were invited to produce written materials and radio broadcasts, mainstreaming the notions of gender, ethics and deontology based on what they have learned.

The workshop was an opportunity, especially for members of the online press, to participate for the first time in an activity dealing with gender issues, demonstrating clearly the need for strengthening these themes at all scales.

The traveling workshops were also held other cities, such as Kaolack (September), St. Louis (October) and Kolda (November). Promoting a culture of peace and gender equality is central to UNESCO's mission.



The first traveling workshop of the programme "Preventing violence and promoting gender equality through the media in Senegal" was held from 16 to 18 August 2018 in Thiès.

The Programme Preventing Violence and Promoting Gender Equality through the Media in Senegal is part of the Organization's drive to strengthen peace and non-violence through the media with a focus on building their capacity to advance ethical, objective and quality journalism. It is implemented in Senegal with the support of partners at the national level such as the Ministry of Communication, Telecommunications, Posts Offices and Digital Economy, the National Commission of Senegal to UNESCO (COMNAT), the Union of Associative and Community Radios of Senegal (URAC), the Association of Publishers and Professionals of the Press on Line (APPEL) and the Network of the bloggers of the country.

LET'S MAINSTREAM



UNESCO REPORT ON SCHOOL VIOLENCE AND BULLYING



Violence and bullying are pervasive in many schools across the world, with physical and sexual bullying occurring most frequently, and being different in any way making children and young people more of a target. These are the key findings from [School violence and bullying: Global status and trends, drivers and consequences](#), a summary report released by UNESCO at a UN General Assembly side-event organized by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, entitled [Protecting Children from Bullying and Cyberbullying](#) on 8 October 2018.

The summary report draws on multiple data sources and, in particular, on two largescale international surveys, the Global school-based Student health Survey and Health Behaviour in School aged Children study – which together provide data from 144 countries and territories in all regions of the world.

Of children who are bullied, 16.1% have experienced physical bullying, and 11.2% have experienced sexual bullying. The highest prevalence of physical bullying is reported in the Pacific and sub-Saharan Africa, while for sexual bullying, the highest rates appear in Central America, the Middle East and North Africa.

Data from seven countries in Asia, the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa show that one in three girls have experience sexual violence in school, against one in five boys. [School-related gender-based violence](#) has very real consequences in learners' lives, ranging from low self-esteem and depression, to early and unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections such as HIV. This violence also has a serious impact on educational outcomes, with many students avoiding school, achieving below their potential, or dropping out completely.

School-related gender-based violence involves acts or threats of sexual, physical or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated because of gender norms and stereotypes, and enforced by unequal power dynamics. New forms of sexual violence are also emerging, including sending sexual messages and images online. Data from five countries reveal that between 12% and 22% of children received messages with sexual content in the past year.

Many countries have seen a decline in bullying over time, but fewer have seen a decrease in physical violence. Of the 71 countries and territories with data on bullying, 35 have seen a decrease and of the 29 countries with data on physical fights, 13 have seen a decrease. Although the prevalence of cyberbullying is low compared with other forms of school violence and bullying, the summary report reveals that it is an increasing problem.

IN THE NEWS



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD – 11 OCTOBER

132 million girls are out of school today. UNESCO plays a coordinating role through its ongoing collaboration with Member States, civil society and other partner organizations to promote quality education for all. To celebrate the [International Day of the Girl Child](#), UNESCO and Plan International France, with the support of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, organized an event on 11 October at UNESCO Headquarters on girls' education entitled "[Learn to lead](#)".

UNESCO's Director General, Ms Audrey Azoulay decided to entrust the responsibility of representing her to Kadiatou, a 17-year-old leader from Guinea standing for girls' rights, a symbolic way of highlighting UNESCO's commitment to the empowerment of girls. "The emancipation of girls and the evolution of our societies are through education. Because an educated girl is a force for change, empowering girls to learn and empower themselves is the promise of a better world. It is in this spirit that I asked Kadiatou, a young Guinean woman with a remarkable history, particularly because of her fight against forced marriages, to represent me at UNESCO Headquarters for the event on girls' education".



Kadiatou, a young leader from Guinea standing for girls' rights, taking over symbolically the role of UNESCO's Director-General

The evening concluded with the award ceremony of the [UNESCO Prize for the](#)

[Education of Girls' and Women](#). This prize honours outstanding and innovative contributions made by individuals, institutions and organizations to advance [girls' and women's education](#).

The 2018 Laureates:

[Misr El-Kheir Foundation](#) supports girls' education in some of the poorest villages of Egypt. They empower girls to acquire literacy, life and future employment skills, and support teachers to deliver gender-responsive teaching and practices and to create safe teaching and learning environments.



Assistant Director-General for Education, Ms Stefania Giannini; Mr Mohamed Abdelrahman, Misr El-Kheir Foundation; and the Vice-Minister of Education of the People's Republic of China, Mr Xuejun Tian.

[The Women's Centre of Jamaica](#) provides continuing education for pregnant adolescent girls and mothers who had to drop out of school. The Foundation's project has become a powerful model and has replicated in countries including Grenada, Guyana, and South Africa.



Ms Giannini; Hon. Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport of Jamaica, Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation; and Mr Tian.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN – 25 NOVEMBER



Every year on 25 November, UNESCO marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This day was first commemorated in 1999 following a proclamation from the UN General Assembly. As 25 November fell on a Sunday this year, a series of activities were organized at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris starting on Friday 23 November.

The first of these activities was a [Facebook Live interview](#) with the Director for Gender Equality, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat. During this interview, Ms Corat spoke of the history of this day, its importance to UNESCO, and UNESCO's ongoing work to end violence against women, both online and offline.



Ms Morgan Martinez, Ms Saniye Gülser Corat and Mr Bruno Zanobia during the Facebook Live interview

Directly after the interview, around 150 UNESCO staff, both men and women, participated in a group photo to say NO to violence against women. This photo symbolizes the solidarity and commitment of UNESCO staff in eliminating the worldwide phenomenon of violence against women. Field Offices also shared photos expressing solidarity for this commitment. These photos may be viewed [here](#).

An exhibition, providing facts on violence against women in the domains of competence of UNESCO, is displayed on the fences of UNESCO. It aims to raise awareness of the scope and depth of violence against women around the world. This exhibition

will extend throughout the 16 Days of Activism and it may also be viewed online [here](#).



Exhibition providing facts on violence against women in the domains of competence of UNESCO.

For people looking to get involved, UNESCO encouraged everyone to post their own photos on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram by including the hashtags #OrangeTheWorld #25Nov #IDEVAW. More information can be found [here](#).

On Monday 26 November, a [special session of Gender Views](#) within the framework of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women took place at UNESCO Headquarters. Ms Nathalie Tomasini and Ms Janine Bonaggiunta, two lawyers who established an international network to protect victims of conjugal violence in France and Canada, gave a talk on their work. H.E. Mr José Antonio Rodriguez, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to UNESCO, opened the session with an acoustic performance of one of his original songs, *Ella solo dijo no*, which talks about gender disparities and says no to discrimination. The short film "*Je t'aime à la folie*" (MadLove), produced in 2016, was also screened in the presence of the film director Mr Gilbert Glogowski. The panel discussion was followed by a Q&A session. Among the topics discussed were the #MeToo movement, sexism in the media and the role of culture in changing perceptions of violence against women.

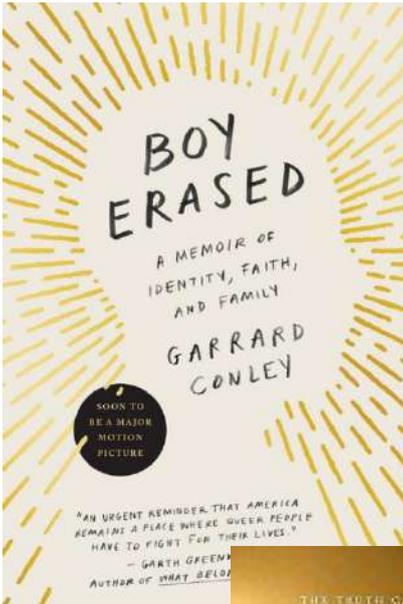
Learn more about UNESCO's action on preventing Violence against Women [here](#).

GENDER WIRE'S SELECTION

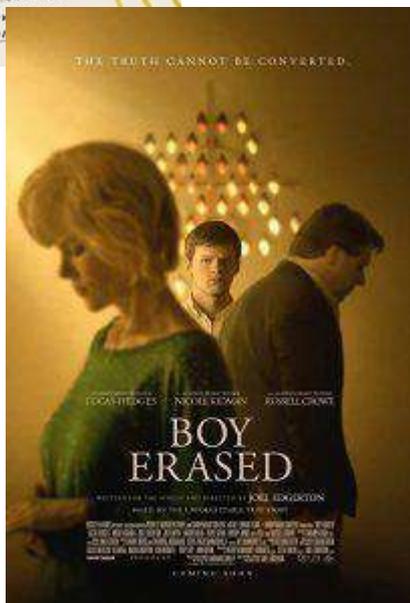


BOOK AND MOVIE SELECTION

Garrard Conley. *Boy Erased: A memoir* (2016)



The son of a Baptist pastor and deeply embedded in church life in small town Arkansas, as a young man [Garrard Conley](#) was terrified and conflicted about his sexuality. When Garrard was a nineteen-year-old college student, he was outed to his parents, and was forced to make a life-changing decision: either agree to attend a church-supported conversion therapy program that promised to "cure" him of homosexuality; or risk losing family, friends, and the God he had prayed to every day of his life. Through an institutionalized Twelve-Step Program heavy on Bible study, he was supposed to emerge heterosexual, ex-gay, cleansed of impure urges and stronger in his faith in God for his brush with sin. Instead, even when faced with a harrowing and brutal journey, Garrard found the strength and understanding to break out in search of his true self and forgiveness.



By confronting his buried past and the burden of a life lived in shadow, Garrard traces the complex relationships among family, faith, and community. At times heart-breaking, at times triumphant, *Boy Erased* is a testament to love that survives despite all odds.

Considered the [New York Times bestselling](#) memoir about identity, love and understanding, this book has also been adapted into a movie (2018) written and directed by Joel Edgerton, starring Nicole Kidman, Lucas Hedges, and Russell Crowe.

"Honestly, I think my heart was cut out when my parents gave me an ultimatum. It didn't feel good to be there. It felt extremely shameful that I 'needed help'."

[Garrard Conley](#)

DID YOU KNOW?



THE THIRD GENDER OF SOUTHERN MEXICO!



© Zofia Radzikowska

The muxes: the third gender of southern Mexico

Did you know that, in the Istmo de Tehuantepec region in Mexico's southern state of Oaxaca, there are three genders: female, male and muxes?

This traditional indigenous division of three genders is seen as a natural way of being. Derived from the Spanish word for woman (*mujer*), muxes (also spelled muxhes) have been acknowledged and celebrated since pre-Hispanic times. A three-day festival called *Vela de las Intrepidas* (Vigil of the Intrepids) takes place each November in Juchitán de Zaragoza to honor muxes and their gender fluidity.

They generally represent people who are assigned male at birth and identify as different genders: "What we know, 'under Western eyes', as 'male-to-female transvestite', 'male-to-female transsexual', 'effeminate gay' or 'masculine gay' seems to be included within the category of 'muxe' as long as there is also a

strong component of ethnic identity," writes anthropologist Pablo Céspedes Vargas in one of his [articles](#).

In an [interview to BBC](#), Fernando Noé Díaz, a primary school teacher who has many muxe friends mentioned that "When the man is at sea or in the field and the woman is at the market, there is no-one to take care of the household and family. That's where the muxe comes in. (...) Some even say it's a blessing for a mother to have a muxe son who will help her at home and take care of young siblings".

Juchitán has become a queer paradise and a symbol of tolerance for the Mexican and international gay community. This traditional indigenous division of three genders as a natural and traditional way of being has inspired the communities around the world to advocate for universal understanding of gender fluidity.



Happy Holidays

Ms Saniye Gülser Corat, Director,
and the Division for Gender Equality
wish you happy holidays
and a wonderful New Year.