



**CCPL**  
CENTRE FOR COMPARATIVE  
AND PUBLIC LAW  
比較法與公法研究中心  
AT THE FACULTY OF LAW, THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG



# Law and gender in Singapore: Representation of transgender individuals in newspapers

**Mie Hiramoto**

**Date: March 1, 2019 (Friday)**

**Time: 1:30pm – 2:30pm**

**Venue: A723, 7/F, Cheng Yu Tung Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU**

**Language: English**

## **Abstract:**

By referring to Judith Butler's idea of regulative discourse and heterosexual matrix, this presentation investigates media representations of two transgender Singaporeans who appeared in newspaper in recent years. Mr. Z is a pre-operational transman who was arrested for sexual assault against an underage girl in Singapore. Ms E is a pre-operational transwoman who was granted political asylum in the UK so that she could avoid compulsory military service as a man in Singapore. Regulative discourse patrols the 'sexual ordering of gender' by advocating heteronormative possibilities of gender, sex, and sexuality. Due to the fact that transgender individuals do not conform to these possibilities, they are deemed non-normative within this essentialized structure. Our analysis shows how regulative discourse influences the ways in which newspapers report on Mr. Z and Ms E, which in turn reaffirm the regulative discourse in Singaporean society.

## **About the Speaker :**

Mie Hiramoto is a linguist at the Department of English Language and Literature at the National University of Singapore. Her research interests include language contact and linguistic change, with particular interest in Japanese spoken outside Japan, Hawai'i Creole, and Singapore English. She also works on language, gender, and sexuality issues, with special interest in identity construction in scripted speech such as anime, movie translations, and comedy performances.

