

# CROSSING DISCIPLINES

Comparative Studies Colloquia on Interdisciplinarity

## Necropolitics or Biopolitics? The Politics of Life and Death in Our Contemporary World

Colloquium Leader

**Axelle Karera, Ph.D.**



This seminar will attend to some of the ways in which philosophers of race. It is fair to claim that in these years now deemed “postcolonial”, years wherein the formation and maintenance of power is particularly fueled by the proliferation of death in endless cycles of violence, Fanon’s “apocalyptic aphorisms” on anti-colonial violence have not aged well. However, the strength of Fanon’s philosophy undeniably remains. This is apparent in the ways in which his work has been re-appropriated by activists and theorists for nearly five decades. The aim of this seminar is to return to Fanon’s controversial text on violence with a set of specific questions in mind: (1) How do we read Fanon in an global atmosphere marked by the exercise of power outside the boundaries of the law, by the widespread arbitrary suspension of justice for “othered” bodies? (2) How useful is a philosophical trope such as Foucault’s “biopower”, in a context in which – to quote Mbembe - “new technologies of destruction are less concerned with inscribing bodies within disciplinary apparatuses as inscribing them, when the time comes, within the order of the maximal economy now represented by the massacre”? And (3), how must we identify or comprehend violence when the term has not only reached beyond the realm of definition and/or deliberate philosophical concentration, but also when it is no longer possible to clearly capture the manifold subjects that play host to its spreading course.

Axelle Karera, received her Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University in 2015 with a dissertation entitled “Re-theorizing Fanon through Derrida, Deleuze, and Mbembe”. Her areas of specializations are in 20<sup>th</sup> century continental philosophy, critical philosophy of race, Africana philosophy, and feminist philosophy. She has published in the *Journal of Critical Philosophy of Race* and her current work addresses questions of displacement, postcolonial forms of oppression and resistance, racism, and xenophobia as they paradoxically unfold within the context of globalization. These questions are approached through the lenses of a particular problematic: that of violence inflicted on so-called “citizens of the world” in an age of acute border control. Karera has begun working on her first manuscript, which is now tentatively entitled *When Death is Overwhelmed: War and Genocide in the Great Lakes Region*.

Selected readings will be provided in advance.

**Wednesday, March 16, 2016**  
**1-3 p.m. in CU 301**

The **Crossing Disciplines** colloquia promote the exchange of ideas across disciplines, fomenting the Comparative Studies Ph.D. Program’s philosophy that topics in the arts, humanities and social sciences are most fruitfully understood through comparative modes of analysis that include an ever-changing landscape of theory and methodologies. For more information, contact Michael J. Horswell, Ph.D. — [horswell@fau.edu](mailto:horswell@fau.edu)

**FAU**  
PhD IN COMPARATIVE  
STUDIES  
Dorothy F. Schmidt  
College of Arts and Letters  
Florida Atlantic University