

# **BOSTON UNIVERSITY ANTHROPOLOGY**

## **LECTURE SERIES**

### **Mary-Jo DeVecchio Good**

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#### **Aceh's Women Warriors: Narratives on Defending Children, Houses, Land and Men**

**Wednesday, April 2 4 PM**

**Anthropology Seminar Room (232 Bay State Rd #102)**

This paper explores gendered dimensions of experiences and responses related to years of civil insecurity and armed combat, drawing examples from Aceh Indonesia. Women living in high conflict rural areas of Aceh over three decades were not only exposed to combat, conflict, and trauma, as were men; many were also protectors of their male kin, buffering their husbands, sons and brothers from the military forces who hunted them. I found that the stories women told me as I carried out "post-conflict" mental health programs were not just stories of victimhood but of bravery and resilience, of humor and cynicism, and of women defending their men, children, houses and land during the conflict. These narratives resonate with the public images of women warriors of the Acehnese Sultanates of pre-colonial periods, of Aceh in times past. Might these historical symbols influence the pathways women take in constructing a post-conflict political subjectivity in now rather peaceful and somewhat democratic Aceh? What might comparative perspectives add to understanding gendered dimensions of post-conflict political subjectivities?

Mary-Jo DeVecchio Good, a comparative sociologist and medical anthropologist, is Professor of Global Health and Social Medicine, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School, and faculty in the Department of Sociology, Harvard University. At HMS, she co-directed the NIMH Training Program in Culture and Mental Health services, which brought post-doctoral trainees in medical and psychiatric anthropology to Harvard for over 24 years. She is core faculty for the International Mental Health Training Program, funded by the Fogarty International Center, to train psychiatrists from China in mental health services research.

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**Refreshments will be served. RSVP to [palmerm@bu.edu](mailto:palmerm@bu.edu)**

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