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# CIES perspectives

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# Dialogue and Debate:

## Implications of the election of Donald Trump as the US President for the field of comparative and international education

### STATEMENT FROM THE CIES FOLLOWING THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, ON BEHALF OF PRESIDENT

MARK BRAY AND THE CIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

14 November 2016

In the wake of the US Presidential campaign and election, the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) issues a call to the education community to renew its commitments to global engagement, educational and cultural exchanges, free inquiry, and mutual understanding. CIES reaffirms its commitment to the value of US engagement with the world in mutually beneficial relationships that advance the common good. And, it encourages educational researchers, practitioners and policymakers to advocate for equitable educational policies and practices that improve social and economic development, that prepare students to live in our globalized world, and that model and advance respectful dialogue across difference.

Now—as we have throughout our 60 year history as an academic association dedicated to promoting comparative education and related areas of inquiry and activity—CIES affirms the importance of and need for cross-cultural engagement guided by values of equality, mutual respect, and regard for the most vulnerable. CIES calls for interdisciplinary and international studies that contribute to understanding the field of education in its broad and interrelated political, economic and social contexts. We pledge and recommit to making our activities and events inclusive environments that welcome people regardless of their race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, dis/ability, socioeconomic status, or immigration and documentation status.

### Global Girls and Women's Issues under the Trump Administration

SUPRIYA BAILY, GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Gender-related research and a strong commitment to equitable and quality educational practices are a hallmark of what CIES members offer the world. CIES's strong commitment to gender in education is evidenced by the work of the Gender and Education Standing Committee, as well as in the depth of work that is showcased in CIES-related conferences, activities and publications. Taking critical perspectives, CIES members have pushed the boundaries of research to explore a gamut of political, social, cultural, economic and structural constraints around gender broadly and girls and women more specifically. Our work, as a community, has provided greater understanding on how the challenges girls and women face globally affect their day-to-day livelihood, security and individual and collective agency.

This commitment within CIES makes it all the more pressing to try to understand how the new US administration will fund, develop policy, and influence governmental efforts on gender-related issues. While issues such as gender-based violence, economic and political empowerment and [girls education initiatives](#) have been represented in US policy doctrine thus far (albeit with a neoliberal bent), there is far less clarity on the incoming administration's stance on girls and women's issues. Yet there are signs that are important for us at CIES to be watchful as the new administration begins its tenure.

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## DIALOGUE AND DEBATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

For instance, The Washington Post reports that the Trump transition team was seeking all information about “gender related staffing, programming and funding” at the US State Department. While the request did not seek out specific names (as requested of the Department of Energy and those working on [climate change](#).) it did ask for the information on the titles and positions central to these efforts. Such a sign, according to the Post, of exploring the use of resources could be a harbinger of “[reducing funding and attention to these programs](#).”

The Trump campaign has shown very little interest in talking about gender issues other than to pander to voters on childcare issues (with caveats that only supported “[traditional families](#)), [equal pay](#) (for the ‘same’ job, though it might be hard to determine what the same job is) and expectations are in place to significantly [oppose rights for LGBTQ populations](#). What should be concerning to CIES members is the overall lack of commitment to many critical women’s issues, such as health with [calls to defund women’s health providers and eliminate a woman’s right to chose](#), and [economic justice](#) with tepid if not limited support for equal pay laws. While the US is not a representative society of equitable policies around gender yet, the absence of leadership on any of these issues could hinder global progress. The recent [National Geographic’s](#) focus on the gender revolution finds only ten countries have reached some form of parity in health and education, no country in the world has achieved parity either economically or politically. The concern is that global gains made on health and education will also reverse as a result of any about face on global women’s issues.

The fear of greater repression for women and girls, as well as other minority and oppressed groups has facilitated greater interest in the [Women’s March on Washington](#), on January 21 st in an effort to advocate for ensuring human rights and dignity for all. The wide array of issues that are at stake require greater action, but for those whose work centers on ensuring the advances made for girls and women are not reversed, our vigilance must be higher. There are still critical challenges facing girls and women including understanding the continued impact of economic injustice on women, enhancing secondary school opportunities, leveraging opportunities for women to live their life in ways that are suited to their own choosing, and dismantling those structures that hinder those are doubly or triply marginalized in society. The role of the US in helping speak to those issues is one that while might stumble, has not been absent. The absence of the US in these matters can affect the projects, programs and policies here and elsewhere that are critical to support women and girls worldwide. It will take organizations like CIES and our members to ensure that voices are raised, attention is drawn and advocacy efforts supported to ensure there is a global voice on gender related issues speaking to the new administration. It is not the time for CIES members to be harnessed by fear or to become complacent on gender issues. CIES members can take a strong stance to ensure that we provide watchful and vocal witness to preventing further erosion of gender rights.

## After Obama: The Trump Administration and LGBTQ+ Protections

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“Upside-Down: Signs of LGBTQ+ Distress”

The Administration of Barack Obama has been the fiercest advocate in US history for LGBTQ+ rights and protections. The record is stunning: between 2009 and 2017, many dubious policies were eliminated, such as “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” which kept members of the armed forces in the closet; hate crimes against LGBTQ+ persons were covered by federal law, and the Administration lent support on crucial Supreme Court cases which ended the federal Defense of Marriage Act ( US v. Windsor), and eventually overturned state bans on same-sex marriage ( Obergefell v. Hodges). These policies also reached down into public schools, particularly in relation to transgender rights. Obama’s Department of Justice expanded the scope of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act banning discrimination on the basis of sex to include gender identity. In addition, the Administration’s “Dear Colleague” letter sent to school leaders in 2014 offered

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