

The Center for European Studies – East European Initiative

invites you to a talk

by

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Ukrainian Academy of Sciences
2011-12 Fulbright Scholar at Columbia University

***Choosing without Choice:* Berehynia and Barbie as Dominant Models of Femininity in Post-Soviet Ukraine**



Monday, October 10, 2011

**The Center for European Studies, 102
Nichol Avenue, Douglass Campus**

4:30 – 6:00 pm

In the twenty years since Ukraine became an independent state, prevailing gender ideologies have changed radically. The old communist ideology of the *Soviet Superwoman* was challenged by two forces: Ukrainian nationalism and “Western” consumerism. These competing ideologies produced two different models of normative femininity: *Berehynia* and *Barbie*. Unlike *Berehynia*, who is mainly assigned to the (natural and cultural) reproduction of the nation, *Barbie*’s body serves as an object of male aesthetic and erotic pleasure. In both cases, however, a woman’s primary function is to serve – either a man or a patriarchal nation-state.

Oksana Kis is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Ethnology, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Columbia University. She is a Director of the Lviv Research Center ‘Woman and Society’ and President of the Ukrainian Association for Research in Women’s History. Her current project is *Invisible Agency: Representations of Gendered Historical Experiences and Identities in the Ukrainian Women’s Personal Narratives*.

Light refreshments to be served

If any questions, email european@rci.rutgers.edu