



**Health Humanities Lecture Series:  
Non-Western approaches to  
health & illness**

**Anita Hardon**

**'GENDER AND NEO-TRADITIONAL  
SEXUAL ENHANCEMENT  
PRODUCTS IN INDONESIA'**

April 1st, 2021, 4 PM  
Online via Zoom

The lecture is open to everyone, but registration is necessary!

[Register here](#)

**Abstract**

The use of sexual enhancement products by young women and men in the eastern Indonesian city of Makassar reflects changing sexualities and gender relations. To examine the relationships between the use of these products and socially sanctioned gender roles, their 'gender scripts' were studied - the assumptions embedded in the products' design and advertising. What kinds of femininity and masculinity are expressed through their use? It was found that the most popular products - 'magic tissues' that promise to prolong erections and a 'neotraditional' vaginal wash that promises to cleanse, perfume, and tighten vaginas - espouse the dual purpose of promoting sexual pleasure and hygiene. While it was found that the images in advertising reflect changing gender relations in the field site, this research also points to enduring gender scripts in Indonesian culture: men should be virile, women should be clean and attractive.

**Bio**

Trained as a medical anthropologist and biologist, Anita Hardon has been engaged in ambitious multi-level, multi-sited and often interdisciplinary studies on immunization, new reproductive technologies, and AIDS medicines that have generated important ethnographic insights on the appropriation of these technologies in diverse social-cultural settings, their efficacy in everyday life, the role of social movements in their design, and the dynamics of care and policy-making in their provision.