

**ALMEIDA, ROCHELLE**

Professor, New York University, Liberal Studies Program, USA

*Panel 4.4: Negotiating Differences*

**Conflict of Interests: Political Incorrectness and Free Speech in India**

Increasingly, in recent times, India has leapt into global prominence for its tendency to ban books and films that are perceived as incendiary. Parties in power, afraid that their leaders and/or policies are either in danger of being exposed or challenged, have taken to calling for bans in violation of democratic rights granted by the Indian Constitution.

This presentation will examine three Post-colonial books written in English that called into question the rights and responsibilities of creative artists: *Two Virgins* by Kamala; *The Satanic Verses* by Salman Rushdie and *Such a Long Journey* by Rohinton Mistry.

My paper will scrutinize the current debate regarding freedom of speech in India and pose the question: In what ways do the ideology of India's leaders impact upon decisions pertaining to freedom of expression in Asia and the rest of the free world?