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Center for Race and Ethnicity Begins Seventh Year With New Publication Event

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Welcome to the Center for Race and Ethnicity! Founded in 2007, the CRE promotes intellectual collaborations and conversations on the complex span of issues surrounding race and ethnicity across the globe, regionally, and locally.

Since much of work involves collaborations and conversations among researchers at Rutgers, we thought it appropriate to start the year with an event celebrating new scholarship by Rutgers faculty from the past year – books and articles representing new scholarship in law, public policy, history, sociology, anthropology, literary studies, and too many other disciplines to list. (In keeping with our agenda to encourage conversation across academic centers across the university, the reception was organized in collaboration with the Rutgers University Press and new books from the Press were also on display.)

We invite you to read more about the scholarship advancing these topics of study in this newsletter. Also, be sure to read about our new programming initiatives, and meet our new graduate assistants, listed on page 3.

Mia Bay
Professor of History
Director, Center for Race and Ethnicity

WELCOME RECEPTION AND NEW PUBLICATION EVENT

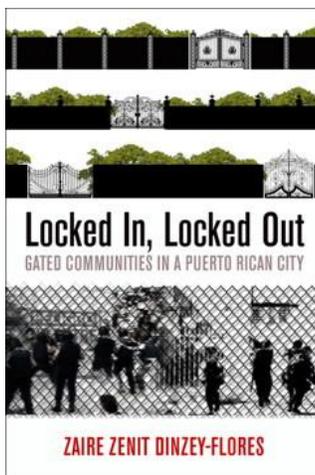
The CRE opened its fall semester with reception showcasing recent publications on race and ethnicity written by Rutgers University faculty and or published by University Press. The event illuminated the wide range of scholarly research and writing on race/ethnicity related subjects taking place on our campus and allowed those who attended to browse through the resulting publications. The texts featured at the reception



focused on many subjects, but highlighted several main themes.

Race, Space, and Place

In line with the theme of CRE's Sawyer Seminar series 2012-13, many of the scholarly texts published by Rutgers faculty include interrogations of race, space, and place. What do spatial patterns of retail and housing reveal about race, prestige, discrimination, and power? Scholarship from Women and Gender Studies, Sociology, and Human Ecology, address this question through research in areas of New York and Puerto Rico. Conceptualized differently, some of the texts question the social place that raced bodies occupy in societies today, or in other historical time periods, and explore how these configurations can then disrupt and de-stabilize the status-quo. Such scholarship raises questions about Muslims in a post-9/11 era, Tanzanians in a post-Apartheid Africa, and what it means to be indigenous in a neo-liberal world.



Locked In, Locked Out: Gated Communities in a Puerto Rican City (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), by Zaire Zenit Dinzey-Flores, Sociology, Rutgers-NB

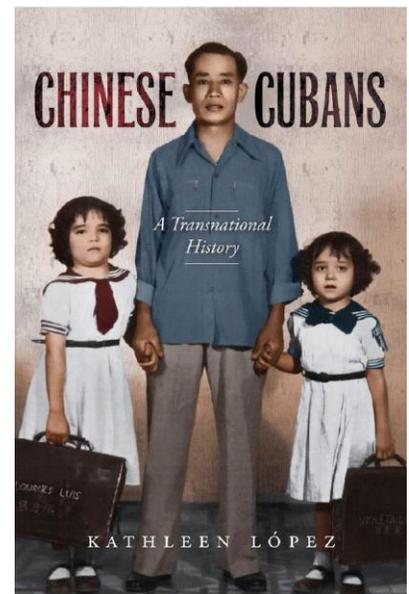
Race, Education, and Success

Many Rutgers faculty are interested in learning more about how minority students can achieve success in the classroom and how people of color can successfully navigate white-dominated workplaces. Focused on students at the K-12 and university levels, these scholarly texts investigate subject such as how to improve educational outcomes for students who face racial inequality and language barriers in the classroom. Strategies for such improvement at the secondary level include revamping teacher education curriculums to incorporate color consciousness and integrating pedagogy for ELL (English language learners) policy and Spanish immersion into classrooms. At the post-secondary level, the Rutgers researchers raise questions about how to provide more support for African American millennial college students in STEM fields to increase their retention and graduate rates. Devising new approaches to help students graduate and enter the professional world is a priority behind such work. But even in the corporate world, people of color face racial inequality. Additional scholarship about race and success in the workplace includes discussions of topics such as covert racial discrimination and minority job

seekers and employee can develop methods to succeed despite racial inequality.

National Identities and Citizenship

Drawing from psychology, anthropology, and education, a variety of the works featured at our event raised questions about belonging and immigration. A publication from a Rutgers faculty member in the anthropology department considers the experiences of white European immigrants living in Zimbabwe, while an education professor examines how Mexicans in a mixed-status family talk about citizenship. Other scholarship examines Spanish language proficiency and rejection in the Latino community; the role of language in the socialization process; and the ways in which citizenship and education affect homework completion rates.



Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History (University of North Carolina Press, 2013), by Kathleen López, History/Latino, Hispanic and Caribbean Studies, Rutgers-NB

Health and Well-being

Cutting across disciplinary boundaries of law, nursing, communications, and nutrition, scholarship on ailments such as diabetes, HIV, and cancer highlighted how some racial communities – African Americans, Latinas, Africans – are particularly affected by these devastating illnesses. Other recent studies on health considered the barriers to health information, explored the links between physical well-being and behavior, and raised questions about how to better improve mechanisms of health education outreach, the work environments for care practitioners, and the field of medicine at large.

Representations, Aesthetics, and Expressions

Several books and articles examined varied forms of expressions – speech, language, art, poetry, murals, fiction, non-fiction, legal documents, slave narratives, architecture, comedy TV shows, and popular media – to uncover connections between race representations and cultural identity, national identity, citizenship, racial



Nancy DiTomaso and Jeffrey Robinson, both of Rutgers Business School (Newark and New Brunswick) speak to Mekala Audain (back to camera), a Graduate Assistant at the CRE this year.

exclusion, modernity, and revolutions. The breadth of this scholarship is expansive and includes work from the Rutgers departments of psychology, communication and information, American studies, comparative literature, English, and African, Middle Eastern and South Asian languages and literatures. Rutgers University Press also has an outstanding line up of new books dealing with representations, aesthetics and expressions.

Re-configuring Gender and Activism

Rutgers researchers have also produced a range of books and articles addressing the subject of intersectionality of race and gender. They take up subjects such as the issues faced by young black male students, and Michelle Obama’s deployment of her raced and gendered identity in the 2008 political campaign. Matters of religion further compound the complexity of gender issues in this cluster of publications. Topics of women’s consumptive and activist practices are interrogated alongside their Islamic or diasporic identities. These books and articles span varied geographical dimensions and historical time periods: from Burma in colonial period to post-colonial Moroccan feminist movement, as well as the setting of a university campus in the 1990s.

For a complete list of books and articles featured at the event, see <https://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/cre/menu-iii/news-and-announcements/157-bibliography-of-new-books-and-articles-available>

Meet the CRE’s New GAs!

The CRE is pleased to welcome four new Graduate Assistants for the 2013-14 academic year. They hail from a variety of departments, and each brings his or her own interests and skill sets to the position. Look for these friendly faces at our upcoming events; they’ll be glad to answer any questions you may have!



Mekala Audain is a Ph.D. candidate in the history department and the 2012 winner of the Organization of American Historians’ Huggins-Quarles Award. Her dissertation, “Southern Canaan: U.S. Fugitive Slaves in Mexico and the Expanding American Frontier, 1804–1865,” examines fugitive slaves from Louisiana and Texas who escaped to Spanish territory and Mexico, and free blacks from the United States who voluntarily immigrated to Mexico in the antebellum era. Her project also explores the experiences of these black

men and women, and how they integrated themselves into nineteenth century Mexican society. Additionally, the dissertation investigates the challenges both free blacks and fugitive slaves faced while living in Mexico, such as racial discrimination, language barriers, and the threat of capture or enslavement by white Texans who illegally entered Mexico.

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Anandini Dar is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Childhood Studies at Rutgers-Camden from India. Her dissertation examines the everyday and political geographies of South Asian American teenagers growing up in Queens, New York. Her previous multidisciplinary training in English, Gender and Diversity Studies, and Sociology, along with her research work with non-governmental organizations and UNICEF, continue to inform her research interests on issues of childhood and youth, geographies, globalization, racial and ethnic identity, and children's rights.

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Kaia N. Shivers is a doctoral candidate in the School of Communication. She is finishing her work looking at identity and Nollywood consumption in Newark, NJ. Her research interests are identity & media; gender, race, class & the media; African and African diasporic media; social media and communities of color; and media framing. Prior to focusing on a career in the academy, Kaia worked in Los Angeles as a journalist then as a spoken word artist and advocate for underrepresented communities that is captured in her first book, *Bits & Pieces of My Truth*.

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Donavan Ramon is a fifth year Ph.D. candidate in English, with a specialty in African American Literature. His dissertation, tentatively titled "These Narratives of Racial Passing... Have Risen from the Dead," traces a new taxonomy for

twentieth-century narratives of racial passing. Don earned his B.A. in English and the Special Honors Curriculum at Hunter College, where he was a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow (MMUF). Today, he supports diversity through the Rutgers English Diversity Institute and the MMUF program as its summer coordinator. He is also the first Member-at-Large for Diversity on the board of directors of the Northeast Modern Languages Association.

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Call For Proposals: 8th Annual Faculty Forum on Race and Ethnicity

On Friday, December 6, 2013, the Center for Race and Ethnicity will host its 8th annual one-day forum for Rutgers scholars doing research relating to race and ethnicity. We encourage faculty from all parts of the university – ranging across schools, disciplines and departments – to join an already-forming group who will be sharing work, meeting colleagues, and hearing about new research at Rutgers. The meeting is part

of an ongoing initiative to promote interdisciplinary exchange and intellectual collaborations, and to shape the evolving agenda of the Center for Race and Ethnicity.

DEADLINE EXTENDED!
PLEASE RSVP by Wednesday,
Nov. 6:

Faculty who wish to present 5 minute descriptions of their work and to participate in conversation about research trends and developments are asked to send a brief description of their work, a CV, and contact information to: raceethnicity@sas.rutgers.edu. Please feel free to contact Professor Mia Bay, Director, mbay@rci.rutgers.edu, or Mia Kissil, Senior Program Coordinator: mkissil@rci.rutgers.edu with any questions. Recently-hired faculty members and post-doctoral associates are especially encouraged to attend and speak about their work.

Additional details about the event itself are available on the CRE's website at <https://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/cre/menu-iii/news-and-announcements/155-cre-announces-8th-faculty-forum-on-race-and-ethnicity>

***Just in Time for
 Thanksgiving: A
 Conversation with Soul
 Food Junkies Director
 Byron Hurt***

Mark your calendars! Next month, the CRE will welcome Byron Hurt to

Rutgers to screen his award-winning documentary, *Soul Food Junkies*, most recently seen on PBS earlier this year. The film begins with Hurt's search for the source of his father's death, which he ultimately discovers was partially due to a diet of soul food. Hurt's documentary discusses the history of soul food and America's continued love affair with it.

The screening and discussion will take place on Thursday, November 21st at 8PM at Hickman Hall, Room 101 on Douglass Campus (street address: 89 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901). Healthy soul food appetizers will be provided.

More information about his film can be found here: <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/soul-food-junkies/>

Please join us for a discussion with Hurt following the screening. Susan Stephenson-Martin of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) will comment on the impact of class and race on our food choices.



***Sawyer Seminar on
 Race, Place, and Space
 a Resounding Success***

Last year, Rutgers University and the Center for Race and Ethnicity sponsored an exciting year-long seminar titled "Race, Place, and Space."

Directed by Professors Mia Bay and Ann Fabian, the seminar explored the interplay of social, historical, and spatial forces in configuring racial formations, identities, and experiences in the Americas. Its thematic concerns were shaped by recent work in geography, history, anthropology, urban studies, critical race theory, and ethnic studies that underscore the importance of space and place to constructions of race and ethnicity.

The seminar consisted of bi-weekly seminar meetings, each of which focused on a specific paper submitted as a "work-in-progress" for group feedback and shaping; and four conferences. Both the Works-in-Progress meetings and the conference were organized around four, six week-long, thematic units: "Scale and Racial Geographies," "Borders and Belonging," "Race, Place and Nature," and "Cities, Towns and Suburbs." The Works-in-Progress meetings exposed participants to cutting-edge work, and became a forum for interdisciplinary discussions, which grew only richer as the seminar progressed. Likewise, our conferences featured illuminating papers, and fostered lively scholarly exchanges. Participants appreciated the Seminar for featuring innovative work from across the disciplines and across the hemisphere,

and for the intellectual community created among scholars from different disciplines, department, and localities.

One of the most satisfying aspects of the seminar was the opportunity it offered to set new directions for scholarly work. The seminar's broad interdisciplinary focus meant that all participants read and worked outside accustomed areas of expertise. Our conversations were fruitful and surprising. Over the next year, we will be working on a volume of essays crafted from the conference presentations and designed to capture the insights of interdisciplinary and comparative work on "Race, Space, and Place in the Americas."

We are grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the John E. Sawyer Seminars on Comparative Cultures for allowing us to create a year of rich intellectual conversations and scholarly collaborations on "Race, Space, and Place in the Americas."

The Center for Race and Ethnicity

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