

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Faculty Forum on Race and Ethnicity**

*“What a wonderful program! It's a fantastic way to make connections that seem otherwise quite difficult to do on such a sprawling campus.”*  
Vikki Katz.

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**5<sup>th</sup> Annual Faculty Forum on Race and Ethnicity**

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**A Fond Farewell and a Hearty Welcome**

*The goal of the Center for Race and Ethnicity's Faculty Forums is to draw faculty and students together across those disciplinary and school divides to encourage conversation and scholarship on problems in race and ethnicity.*

It has long been true that Rutgers has a breadth, depth, and diversity of scholarship on race and ethnicity that cuts across many departments and schools. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, the Center for Race and Ethnicity hosted its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Faculty Forum bringing together scholars to deepen our discussion of race and ethnicity in the world. The day-long forum consisted of five panels: “Movements and Migrations,” “Multiple Identities,” “Neighborhoods and Communities,” “Racial and Ethnic Orders,” and “Civic Engagements.” Each panel was followed by a productive discussion aimed at bridging the gaps between disciplinary approaches and exploring the significance of race and ethnicity in faculty research at Rutgers University.

**THE RACIALIZATION OF BODIES: FROM IRISH IMMIGRATION TO THE MEXICO BORDER**

Examining different sites and employing a variety of methodologies, the panelists of the first session explored the realities of the “American myth of mobility.” They looked at the restrictive, racist and often dangerous management of bodies through segregated transportation, unauthorized border crossing, and circuits of domestic labor. **Mia Bay** (History, RU-NB) displayed a number of archived images and texts, which unraveled the complex court history of segregated transportation in her contribution to a social history of transportation. With each new form of

transportation—automobile, bus, train, and airplane—there was new hope in the Black



*Mia Bay, History, RU-NB*

community for increased access to transportation and mobility. However, Bay argued, increased mobility was a myth, since Black bodies continued to be restricted and managed. Take for example airlines that attached secret codes to Black passengers and sat them together in an effort to maintain segregated transportation.

**Andrew Urban**

(History/American Studies, RU-NB) argued that movements and bodies are also controlled in the labor force. His research shows that certain populations of migrants



*Andrew Urban, American Studies, RU-NB*

are chosen to do certain jobs while others are vilified, so that social hierarchies between different racial and ethnic groups can be

maintained in the workforce. For example, he explained, the figure of the “biddy,” an insubordinate, belligerent Irish domestic servant emerged at a time when Irish workers had a monopoly on domestic labor in New York City. However, he also explained that the bourgeoisie thought that Whites were a superior race, so the idea of White servants did not fare well for too long. Thus, Urban argued, the Irish domestic servant was replaced by the more servile African American, and the less transgressive male Chinese laborer—described as an emasculated third gender.

**Rocío Magaña's**

(Anthropology, RU-NB) talk brought us to the contemporary United States, where opportunities in the labor market have a direct impact on migrant flows. Magaña described how she uses ethnographic fieldwork and mapping to investigate the policing and management of Mexican bodies during unauthorized border crossings in the Arizona desert corridor. According to Magaña, in the 1990's, border enforcement efforts sealed cities like Juarez and Tijuana and, as a result, border crossing was funneled to more hazardous areas where the tools of enforcement became the physical environment itself. Now enforcement of the border works through physical exertion, fatigue, fear and death. Thus, Magaña reported, approximately 300 bodies per year are recovered in the desert corridor, begging the question, “what do you

need to protect the migrants rather than the country?"



Rocío Magaña, Anthropology, RU-NB

The discussion following the panel presentation remained focused on the myth of American mobility: that bodies can migrate to the United States and within the United States without danger.

#### **MULTIPLE IDENTITIES AND THE POLITICS OF RESPECTABILITY.**

The second panel of the day focused on the challenges associated with sustaining multiple identities. **Diana Sanchez** (Psychology, RU-NB) spoke about her research on multi-racial identity in the US. In many ways, Sanchez related, the discipline of Psychology approaches race as singular. She asked "With the number of people identifying as 'multiracial' in the U.S. on the rise, how do we categorize multiracials and understand the ways they can potentially change attitudes about race?" Sanchez's work finds that our own level of



Diana Sanchez, Psychology, RU-NB

identification with a particular race changes how we see multi- and bi-racial others. For example, we may choose to identify the multi-racial other with only one of his multiple ethnicities, the one we may feel the closest to

***"The myth of American mobility relies on the idea that bodies can migrate to the United States and within the United States without danger. Sadly, this is not always true."*** -- Rocío Magaña

based on our own ethnic background and social surroundings. Alternatively, if we haven't been exposed to a variety of ethnic groups, we may be puzzled by the multi-ethnic or multi-racial other. Therefore, social interactions, inclusion/exclusion from group membership and everyday interactions become extremely important in shaping attitudes towards multi- and bi-racially identified peoples.

**Ariana Mangual Figueroa** (GSE, RU-NB) presented her work on the language socialization experiences of mixed-status Mexican families, beginning with an account from her fieldwork describing a conversation



Ariana Mangual Figueroa, GSE, RU-NB

between parents and their children about migratory status and the threat of deportation that they faced daily. This account was striking because it showed the audience how that family members of all ages are cognizant of the high stakes associated with being an undocumented migrant living in the U.S. and talk about these realities during everyday activities.

Post-doctoral fellow **Margarita Huayhua** (Anthropology, RU-NB) discussed social interactions in the Southern Andes, and the ways in which Quechua language speakers are discriminated against. Huayhua's ethnographic approach examines politicians and community members' thoughts and feelings towards Quechua speaking peoples. For example, state agencies and



Margarita Huayhua, Anthropology, RU-NB

workers often describe Quechua women as animals in everyday discussions. Looking at everyday interactions between Spanish and Quechua speakers, Huayhua explained that "processes of racialization not only happen in Peruvian political spaces, but they happen in public transportation and any other institutional and non-institutional space. That is, racialization is embedded in habitual forms of interaction."

The final panelist, **Whitney Strub** (History, RU-Newark), described his historical research on pornography, gay rights, and the new Right in America. Following the Gay liberation movement of the 1960's, the White-dominated homophile movement moved away from attempts of assimilation and plausible deniability of sexuality to representations of multicultural and gay America in erotic films. Strub explained that the body of the black man was eroticized and objectified to present a spectacle of public sexuality. Identifying queer porn and the public discourse surrounding it as central to the rise of the New Right, Strub's new book *Perversion for Profit: the Politics of Pornography and the Rise of the New Right* (Columbia University Press)



Whitney Strub, History, RU-Newark

places debates about pornography at the forefront of post-war American history.

***"The politics of respectability is the way upper-class-ness, whiteness, and heterosexuality become reference points and govern our everyday encounters."*** -- Audience member

During the question and answer session, the panelists discussed how the politics of respectability seemed to dominate the everyday encounters important to their research. "The politics of respectability," one audience member theorized, "is the way upper-classness, whiteness, and hetero-sexuality become reference points and govern our everyday encounters."

#### **RETHINKING GENTRIFICATION THROUGH RACE AND IDENTITIES**

The third panel on Neighborhoods and Communities, brought together wide-ranging scholarship and methodological approaches to consider the effects of race and ethnicity on neighborhoods. Two central themes emerged: first, that race plays a major role in determining the available services in a neighborhood; and second, that neighborhoods are shaped by the social and political racial agenda of those in power.

In her presentation, **Lauren Krivo**, co-author of the recently published book, *Divergent Social Worlds: Neighborhood Crime and the Racial-Spatial Divide* explained that "society is racially structured." Discussing findings from her study of more than 9,000 neighborhoods



Lauren Krivo, Sociology, RU-NB

in 91 large cities, Krivo reported that the socio-economic differences in neighborhoods are so great that people of different races in the United States are in fact “living in divergent social worlds, with very little overlap.”

Focusing on health services in two traditionally African-American New York City neighborhoods, Bedford-Stuyvesant and Harlem, **Naa Oyo Kwate’s** (Africana Studies/Human Ecology, RU-NB) talk



Naa Oyo Kwate, Africana Studies/Human Ecology, RU-NB

presented similar findings to Krivo’s, but through an entirely different methodology. Kwate’s study is based on thousands of hours of video data collected by cameras mounted to slowly-pedaled bicycles whose riders traveled throughout the neighborhoods in question. Thus, Kwate’s presentation literally showed what she called the “manifestation of racism at a neighborhood level,” offering moving images of vacant lots, highly-fortified and burned-out buildings, and a fundamental lack of

economic investment. Kwate called the visual and structural aspects of the neighborhoods she studied a “racism that gets under the skin.”

A new faculty member at Rutgers, **Timothy Stewart-Winter** (History, RU-Newark) showed that intersections of sexuality and race are more complex than they seem, when viewed in an historical perspective. Presenting a forty-year narrative of



Timothy Stewart-Winter, History, RU-Newark

urban development in Chicago, Stewart-Winter explained that black and queer Americans in fact forged coalitions during the late 60s, early 1970s period of “white flight” to the suburbs and, together, were instrumental in creating black-governed spaces in Chicago. This study, not only offers “an historical challenge to the notion that black Americans are hostile to gays and lesbians,” but also illustrates the power of collaboration between different communities to facilitate the development of low-income neighborhoods.

Just like Stewart-Winter, **Leonardo Vazquez** (Bloustein School, RU-NB), was also interested in identifying strategies that facilitate the development of low-income neighborhoods. He offered a pragmatic and productive perspective that complemented the work of his co-presenters. His talk focused on the challenges of attracting financial

*“Differences in neighborhoods are so great that people of different races in the United States are in fact living in different worlds, with very little overlap.”*

Lauren Krivo

investment in neighborhoods with a concentration of racial and ethnic minorities. In New Jersey, Vazquez explained, whites are no longer the fastest growing wealthy community. Thus there is in fact a lot of opportunity to “create investment for marginalized communities”



Leonardo Vazquez, Director, Professional Development Institute, Bloustein School, Rutgers-NB

from within marginalized communities. But to do so involves overcoming stereotypes and stereotypical marketing practices.

Everyone in the room agreed that thinking in terms of the category “neighborhood” enabled us to think about history, policy and economic and bodily circulations in important new ways.

### THE INVISIBLE LIVES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The fourth panel focused on the problematic invisibility of women and children in socio-political contexts shaped by

racialized injustice and violence. **Thea Abu El-Haj** (GSE, RU-NB), told an account of a teacher who, in the wake of 9/11, demanded the round-up and expulsion of all Palestinian immigrant students at his Philadelphia public school. This teacher, she explained, was one among many whose attitudes and actions compel a community of Palestinian-



Thea Abu El-Haj, Graduate School of Education, RU-NB

American children to continuously renegotiate their shifting relationship to citizenship, education and belonging in the United States. According to Abu El-Haj, as schools increasingly focus on “liberalizing Palestinian girls and tam[ing] and disciplin[ing] potentially violent Palestinian boys,” American educational institutions become new “sites [for] the war on terror.” Concluding, Abu El-Haj reminded those gathered that national education has often been a tool of imperialism, and wondered aloud how things might change if the goals of our schools could, somehow, be articulated differently.

New faculty member **Marisa Fuentes** (History/Women and Gender Studies, RU-NB) also spoke about the role of imperialism in disciplining—and rendering invisible—society’s most vulnerable subjects. Excavating



Marisa Fuentes, History, RU-NB

***“Women and children are rarely given attention, and when we do see them as subjects, it is usually as problems to be fixed or disciplined, or during moments of crisis.”*** Marisa Fuentes

Barbados’ past, Fuentes’ talk focused on enslaved women during British colonization and explored the paradoxical representation of enslaved women’s sexual victimization as a kind of rouge female agency. Discussing brothels in Barbados, the enslaved sex-workers were rendered doubly invisible: once by their lack of access to resources and state representation, and again by representations as dangerous, active agents.

Also concerned with the predicament of immigrant children, **Vikki Katz** (School of Communication & Information RU-NB), described the difficulties facing kids who serve as language-brokers for their parents. Katz’s studies of bilingual youth in South Los Angeles, rural California and, more



Vikki Katz, SCI, RU-NB

recently, New Brunswick, found young people struggling to have “their roles accepted by outsider English-speakers.” These children face the challenges of being invisible as both young people and as immigrants—and yet often bear sole responsibility for managing their families’ contact with the English-speaking world around them.

**Jacquelyn Litt**, (Dean, Douglass Residential College and Women and Gender Studies, RU-NB),



Jacquelyn Litt, Dean, Douglass Residential Campus and Douglass College, RU-NB

turned to the role of black women— this time in post-Katrina New Orleans. She described her research with care-workers and the process of locating residents who had remained or returned after the hurricane, to track down the families that left. In her talk, she described the failure of the government to keep track of these families, the alternative network of information provided by

women, and their individual systems of familial “record-keeping.”

Opening the conversation, former Center for Race and Ethnicity Director, Keith Wailoo commented that all of the panelists engaged questions of “how to study invisible laborers.” The discussion also considered *when* and *how* women and children became visible to the larger society. Fuentes explained that when we do see these subjects, it is usually as problems to be fixed or disciplined, or during moments of crisis.

#### **DEFIANCE IN THE CLASSROOM AND POLITICS: “THE ANGRY BLACK MAN”**

The final panel of the day explored the role of state ideological apparatuses, and the tensions between agency and social control in schools, universities, and during the electoral process. **Anne Gregory’s** (GSAPP, RU-NB) presentation focused on



Anne Gregory, Graduate School of Applied Psychology, RU-NB

how school discipline has emerged as a form of racialized social control. Since the 1970’s, and in particular since the passage of zero-tolerance rules for violent behavior in schools, Gregory explained, that African-American students tend to be over-represented by

nearly two to three times in school suspension rates. While these students are generally suspended for “defiance” and “insubordination,” Gregory’s studies reveal that in fact teachers’ personalities and modes of interaction with their students play significant roles in determining who is “insubordinate.”

***“National trends have shown African American students to be over-represented by nearly two to three times in school suspension rates”.***

Anne Gregory

**Melanye Price** (Africana Studies, RU-NB) turned our attention to the performance and display of race neutrality in her analysis of Barack Obama’s interactions with the black public during the 2008 Presidential elections, and his deployment of what she called “Black Blame.” She argued that Obama used Black blame to demonstrate his connection to Black America and to show Whites that he is a critic of the Black population in a campaign style that was de-racialized. Price described how Obama’s language and mannerisms changed as he “talked to” or admonished Blacks during public speaking engagements, in part to preempt any assignment of the “angry Black man” stereotype. Price argues that Obama’s “hyper-focus on race-neutrality” has made it difficult for him, and other rising Black politicians to be advocates for African-Americans.



Melanye Price, *Africana Studies*, RU-NB

"If politicians are not going to be advocates for African Americans," Price asked, "then who will be?"

**Donna Murch's** (History, RU-NB) presentation took the audience to a particular historical



Donna Murch, *History*, RU-NB

moment of advocacy, mobilization and resistance in the Black community by focusing on the hidden origins of the Black Panther movement in California's well-funded 1960s public education system. She argued, as she does in her new book, *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (University of North Carolina Press), that a California State institution like Merritt College in Oakland, could provide the structure and education that ultimately led to the insurgent Black Panther movement.

In agreement with Murch, **Ebelia Hernandez** (GSE, RU-NB) stated that "institutions of higher education are public spheres." Her research, focusing on Latino students, shows how



Ebelia Hernandez, *Graduate School of Education*, RU-NB

institutional policies and politics shape students' sense of selves, and vice-versa. She described students' concerned responses to Arizona Senate Bill 1070 as an example. As a form of political action intended to urge Rutgers University's President to take a stand on the new legislation, which will affect undocumented students' tuition rates, The Latino Student Council group strategically interrupted the President in his University-wide address. Hernandez explained that while these students might be reticent to bring their "Latino-ness" into the classroom with them, it shaped how and with whom they identified across their university.

This panel brought issues of social control and agency to the forefront of the conversation. In regards to social control in the classroom, Anne Gregory commented that "the idea of defiance is so subjective." Thus, we need to examine who is enforcing social control and the ways in which agency is enacted on microlevels. We agreed that uncovering the hidden origins of agency, from public education at community colleges in Oakland to the impact of racism on students' developmental processes in higher education, aided in understanding systems of domination and the way in which social change can be enacted.

## A FOND FAREWELL AND A HEARTY WELCOME

This spring the CRE bids farewell to founding Director Keith Wailoo, welcomes Acting Director Ann Fabian, and prepares to welcome a new Director, Mia Bay—the past Associate Director of the CRE

This fall's Faculty Forum marked a transition for the CRE, as it was the last event overseen by Keith Wailoo, and attended by Ann Fabian and Mia Bay as well.

Dr. Wailoo has accepted a position at Princeton University, where he will serve as the Townsend Martin Professor of History and Public Affairs, and is jointly appointed at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and the History Department. The Center for Race and Ethnicity, as well as the Rutgers community at large, will miss his leadership and guidance keenly.

The Center for Race and Ethnicity was Dr. Wailoo's brainchild, and he has

overseen everything from strategic planning to day-to-day operations since its inception five years ago when the first Faculty Forum on Race and Ethnicity was formed.

Since that time, the Center has become an important locus for discussing issues of race at Rutgers, and we are proud to carry on the work begun by Keith Wailoo. Ann Fabian, professor of American Studies and History and, until last year, the Area Dean for Humanities, has assumed the position of Acting Director for the CRE during the Spring semester of 2011. In the

fall of 2011, the CRE will welcome its new Director, Professor of History Mia Bay, who is currently on fellowship leave at the National Humanities Center.

We look forward to the leadership that Dr. Bay will provide and anticipate many fruitful programs and other events in the years to come.

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