Examining how systems of race, gender, ethnicity and other dimensions of inequality mutually shape and reinforce one another.
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

DR. RUTH ENID ZAMBRANA

This past year has been one of both reflection and high productive energy. We witnessed our first African American president take the oath of office. President Obama stated on the night of his election, “The road will be long, [and] our climb will be steep.”

President Obama’s words made me reflect upon our history at CRGE as we now complete our first decade at UM. This academic year, we engaged in the process of reviewing our numerous accomplishments and subsequently drew important and valuable lessons from our past and current experiences. CRGE is an important resource on the UM campus and increased outreach is important to our mission. As a result we invested in developing materials on our core activities such as a new CrISP brochure, a brochure explaining the work of CRGE and a report that chronicles our history and activities over the last ten years: A Decade of Work at the Intersections. A second addition of our directory of faculty engaged in intersectional scholarship at UM is in-progress and will serve as a valuable resource for administration, faculty and students in the UM community. Finally, we are expanding the Intersectional Research Database and our website is being redeveloped and updated.

We have also reviewed our accomplishments in core programmatic areas. Over the last seven years the CrISP program has contributed to the advancement and graduation of underrepresented graduate students of color. Our CrISP scholars have received enhancement awards, summer fellowship awards and a dissertation award. We are pleased to congratulate CrISP scholar, Clare Ching Jen, who received her Ph.D. in December, 2008. Dr. Jen’s research report can be found on page 8.

We gauge our success by the success of our CrISP scholars and we believe this program of mentoring and support is a national model of how to create a pipeline which assures the graduation of historically underrepresented and minority students from doctoral programs. In evaluating the CrISP program, we have discovered three factors which contribute to the success of students in the program. Students are most likely to benefit from the research training and mentoring at CRGE if:

- They already have a Masters degree,
- They are committed and interested in the intersectional approach for their own scholarship, and
- Their departmental advisor perceives the merits of the program and supports the participation of their graduate students.

These conclusions have helped us better target students for the program. We have also expanded the range of skills and tasks assigned to students which provides them with an opportunity to learn firsthand the processes of research, publication, and administration in a research center setting. Our 2007 CrISP Scholars finish their formal mentoring and training this May. CRGE has been strengthened by the work of Lynette, Tamyka and Maria and we cannot wait to witness their future scholarship. Further information on our 2007-2009 CrISP Scholars can be found on page 15.

The CRGE Colloquium was expanded for the academic year 2008-09 and included three intellectually provocative seminars on intersectionality as a tool for theorizing on social change, race, power, gender, and sexuality. Our CrISP scholars also presented their intersectional research work in progress. The attendance was well over 100 participants for each event which demonstrates our campus visibility, our reputation for engaging programming and the interest of faculty and students in intersectional approaches. For the spring semester, the theme of our colloquium series is Performance as an Intersectional Tool (co-sponsored with the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center), and the fall, 2009 colloquia will focus on Implications for Public Policy at the Intersections of Race, Gender, Ethnicity, and Class. On Thursday, April 2, 2009 CRGE will facilitate an Intersectional Policy Conference Panel & Book Signing (see page 5).

We continue to build our collaborative partnerships and have spent the year writing and submitting grants with the Maryland Population Research Center (MPRC) and faculty from the School of Public Health and the Department of African American Studies, as well as working on projects.
with the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and the David C. Driskell Center. Our joint collaboration with MPRC, focusing on CRGE’s Qualitative Research Interest Groups (QRIG), has provided funding for seven faculty to conduct intersectional work. For more information on Seed Grant Awardees and their projects, please see page 12. In addition we have worked closely with ARHU’s Dean Harris, Associate Dean Beth Loizeaux and Vice Provost Phyllis Peres to launch the U.S. Latino Studies Minor which will be transitioning to another unit in the fall of 2009.

We are grateful for the contributions of our new communications coordinator, Ms. Beth Douthirt-Cohen, a doctoral student in the Socio-cultural Foundations of Education, College of Education, and our new Assistant Director, Dr. Laura A. Logie. Ms. Douthirt-Cohen has been instrumental in the redesigning of CRGE materials, publicity and dissemination of important events by CRGE and its collaborators. Our new Assistant Director, Dr. Laura A. Logie, whose introductory message is below, has worked diligently on grant writing and numerous events promoting increased collaborations and visibility on campus.

We have received noteworthy encouragement and support from the administration, the graduate school, ARHU and especially the Department of Women’s Studies. CRGE represents an important unit of diversity and scholarship on this campus and its presence is welcomed and embraced by our UM community. We do not foresee an easy future, for indeed our road has been long and our climb has been steep in the past decade, but we do envision a significant future where CRGE continues to make important contributions to UM and the larger community.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
DR. LAURA A. LOGIE

It is with much excitement and great privilege that I introduce myself as the Assistant Director of the Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity (CRGE). Though new to this prestigious position, I have been honored to be a part of CRGE over the last ten years. I first served as a research assistant under Dr. Ruth E. Zambrana in 1999 for the research project entitled: “Latino Children: Providing a Research Synthesis for Promoting Relevant Child Health Policy” funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. From 2000-2001, I continued as research coordinator with the project “Promising Practices in Family Support for Latino Families with Young Children” funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

In Fall 2001, I enrolled in the Department of Women’s Studies doctoral program where I began my seven year journey as a graduate student. As a graduate assistant at CRGE I began to explore an intersectional approach to apply to my dissertation research. My work aligned with CRGE’s research program area Health and Social Well-Being of Low-Income Women, Children and Families where I gained knowledge in theoretically driven interdisciplinary and intersectional models that were gender and ethnic specific and embedded in constructs of inequality in the community context.

I received a PhD in Women’s Studies in May, 2008. My dissertation project, An Intersectional Gaze at Latinidad, Nation, Gender and Self-Perceived Health Status, examined the intersections of Latinidades, health, gender, and nation, using a sample of Central and South American immigrants. Drawing from both quantitative and qualitative data, the study interrogated biomedical knowledge production by theorizing the importance of the intersection of race/ethnicity and socioeconomic position as central in explaining health disparities (see page 6).

I am honored and excited to be an integral part of the important work of CRGE as we enter our second decade.

White Logic, White Methods, edited by Tukufu Zuberi and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, a collection of works by leading scholars in the social sciences, critically interrogates the use of poorly conceptualized racial terms, biased statistical manipulation and data interpretations based on hegemonic assumptions and theories. This book is for scholars or students grappling with social science constructions of race and methods used to observe the effects of race on marginalized groups. The authors argue that race is inappropriately defined and its impacts are incorrectly measured in current social science studies due to the methods and methodologies of some social scientists which are often irrevocably influenced by a racialized way of thinking which they call White logic.

The term White logic “refers to a context in which White supremacy has defined the techniques and processes of reasoning about social facts. White logic assumes a historical posture that grants eternal objectivity to the views of elite Whites and condemns the views of non-Whites to perpetual subjectivity” (p. 17). This construct supports the notion that the majority’s observations of realities are superior and real. White methods are “the practical tools used to manufacture empirical data and analysis to support racial stratification in society” (p.18). The authors reject the dominant white logic, race-oriented theories and techniques of observing the behaviors of marginalized groups, and seek to infuse more transparency and objectivity in race studies.

The book is divided into six sections. The first three sections focus on race as a term and variable of analysis, and explores the method of aggregating racial groups into a single identity. The term “race” is problematic because other “controlled” variables such as class, ethnicity and gender are often ignored by researchers. The authors critically question commonly held views on racial ideology and race meaning, presenting their own personal experiences and anecdotal observations. These sections closely examine the methods used in scientific studies which observe “causal interpretations” or effects of race. Acknowledging the accepted meanings and definitions of race, the authors caution against the use of race as a causal factor in research (p. 109).

The last two sections explore the concept of color-blind racism, highlighting methods in which race is seen as insignificant in social science research. Traditional methods associated with concepts such as racial segregation are critiqued for not describing the full effects of institutionalized racism on impacted groups. The authors interrogate current research methods that diminish the impact of race, and compare groups across racial lines ignoring the privileges and access of certain groups. A conscious distinction is made between “race effects,” as too racialized (and inherently essentializing), and “racism effects,” where the majority of White researchers discount race as a factor. The authors criticize the social science field for its failure to adequately comprehend the complexities of demographic changes in society. Sociological epidemiology is critiqued as too simplistic, and “feel good” in the field’s conscious effort to fade out the significance or treatment of race issues.

This new book on racism and methodology provocatively synthesizes a trend within social sciences around race conceptions and quantitative data collection and analysis. From the inadequate use of race definitions and comprehension, ignoring the multiple and diverse identities within racial groups, to the downplaying of race effects and institutionalized racism on affected groups, the contributing scholars of this book challenge the social science field to observe the effects of race relations both in data collection and analysis. These scholars, who are sometimes discounted in their respective fields as being too subjective, are demanding more objectivity in methodologies that explore race in the US. In the conclusion, Zuberi and Bonilla-Silva propose a paradigm shift that removes misleading “data, arguments, counter-narratives, and all sorts of intellectual ammunition,” (p. 338) while downplaying the importance of racial groups and racial inequalities, and instead makes efforts to be race conscious and “engaged in a systematic analysis of racial stratification and its efforts” (p. 338).

Lynette K. Boswell is a Ph.D. Student in Urban and Regional Planning and Design and a 2007–2009 CrISP Scholar.
INTERSECTIONAL POLICY CONFERENCE

& Book Signing Event

The Consortium on Race, Gender and Ethnicity is pleased to present an Intersectional Policy and Inequality Conference in concurrence with a book signing for Emerging Intersections: Race, Class and Gender in Theory, Policy and Practice (Rutgers University Press, 2009), on Thursday, April 2, 2009. Edited by Dr. Bonnie Thornton Dill and Dr. Ruth E. Zambrana, the book showcases innovative contributions that expand our understanding of how inequality affects people of color, demonstrates the ways public policies reinforce existing systems of inequality, and shows how research and teaching using an intersectional perspective compels scholars to become agents of change within institutions.

The panels will present two main interest areas of diversity. The first panel of the conference will examine Implications for Public Policy and the second panel will present Inequalities in Access, Higher Education & the Legal Professions. Instrumental to issues of diversity and equity, this conference will have the opportunity to look at the problems of inequality and oppression from new angles and promote intersectionality as an interpretive tool that can be utilized to better understand the ways in which race, class, gender, ethnicity and other dimensions of diversity shape our lives today. The panel presentation will conclude with a book signing by the editors and authors. Registration is free.
An Intersectional Gaze at Latinidad, Nation, Gender and Self-Perceived Health Status

By Laura A. Logie, PhD

Introduction
Empirical misconceptions of Latinos as a homogeneous ethnic group lacking within-group diversity impede efforts aimed at providing appropriate care to Latino subgroups and contributes to continued health disparities and inequalities. This study examined selected health care factors that are associated with self-perceived health status among Central and South American immigrants. Five research questions guided this study: Are there differences by gender on health access, English language proficiency, literacy levels, health behaviors, perceived discrimination and depression? Are there differences by gender in reported number of chronic conditions, sources of health information, and the use of complementary/alternative medicine (CAM)? What factors are most likely to predict self-perceived health status by gender? What complementary and alternative medicines are Central and South Americans most likely to use by gender? And what sociodemographic factors distinguish Central and South Americans from other Latinos subgroups?

Embedded in the socially constructed framework for studying these intersections is a central inherent tenet: Central/South American women constitute a socially-defined category that has historical roots in Latinidad and their social position in the matrix of existing power hierarchies create a unique set of lived experiences that reflect the multiplicative nature of intersecting oppressions such as racism, limited access to health care resources, poor quality care and fear of deportation due to INS raids.

Data and Methods
This study was a secondary analysis of survey data collected from Central and South American residents in Montgomery County, Maryland. Mixed methodologies characteristic of research projects in Women’s Studies were used since the questions posed cannot be sufficiently addressed by single-discipline approaches to research. This study included statistical analyses of cross-sectional survey data, recoding of open-ended responses into broader health-related categories, and comparative analyses of the survey data (demographic, health status, health access, and other health indicators) with national data to assess differences across Latino subgroups by gender. Participants were recruited in October of 2005, at the Latino Health Initiative’s (LHI’s) health fair in Montgomery County. To be included in this study, participants had to meet the following criteria: ability to speak either English or Spanish; be 18 years of age or older, reside in Montgomery County, and identify as Hispanic/Latino or of Latin American origin.

The study included 132 participants, 69.2% female and 30.8% male with a mean age of 43.4 years. The 51-item survey instrument was compiled from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), the National Day Labor Survey, the Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Care Quality Survey, and questions developed in collaboration with the Latino Health Initiative. Fifteen (15) Items from the 51-item survey were selected as sociodemographic indicators. Six indices were created to measure: Health Access, English Language Proficiency, Literacy Levels, Health Behaviors, Perceived Discrimination, Depression and three self-report measures on number of Chronic Conditions, Sources of Health Information, and Reported use of CAM. Additionally, a numerical score of Reported Chronic Conditions, Sources of Health Information and Complementary/Alternative Medicine were analyzed by gender. For three of the selected variables: Chronic Conditions, Sources of Health Information, and CAM use, an open-ended response option was included. Qualitative content analyses were conducted for all open-ended response options. Multi-level analyses were conducted to obtain sample description, differences by gender for all study variables and predictors of major dependent variable.

Results
Participants ranged in age from 18 to 75 years with a mean age of 43.4 years. More than 75% of the study population were female (69.2% n=90) and 30.8% were male (n=40). Half of the study population identified their country of birth in Central America (48.4%) and half in South America (42.6%) with 9% identifying themselves as US/Caribbean, with over 14 countries represented. The majority of females and males preferred to speak Spanish. Education level data showed that a larger percentage of males (22.5%) compared to females (16.7%) either never attended or attended grades 1-8 only. However fewer females (13.3%) than males (22.5%) were college graduates. One quarter of the total sample was single, 23.3% of females and 22.5% of males were college graduates. One quarter of the total sample was single, 23.3% of females and 22.5% of males with a higher percentage of females (15.6% vs. 2.5%) reporting their status as divorced, widowed or separated.

Over one-third of the females (34.4%) compared to only 5% of males report being unemployed or not in the labor force. Of the females employed, approximately one-third earned between $100 and $300 per week. By contrast, only one fifth of males earned that much. Approximately 60%
of males and females reported living in households with an average of 2-4 people. A larger percentage of males than females moved to the United States less than 10 years ago.

The health behavior index was substantially higher for men than women. The majority of all male and female respondents (89.4%) reported never smoking cigarettes, though men had a tendency to smoke ‘most days’. Seventy-four percent of the total sample reported no alcohol use within the last 30 days. On the depression index, women were more likely than men to respond ‘nearly every day’ on the two items (little interest or pleasure in things) 7% versus 1.5%, and (feeling down, depresses or hopeless) 8% versus 0.8% of women and men respectively. Among the total sample, respondents were more likely to report no health insurance coverage (66%) than those who reported some health insurance coverage, including Medicare and Medicaid (34%). Overall, about one fourth of males and one half of females reported no health insurance coverage. Differences by gender were not supported by data on use of Complementary/Alternative medicine. Studies show that most respondents use conventional sources of health care (e.g., primary care physicians) to a far greater extent than traditional or folk sources.

Two variables were significant predictors of self-perceived health status: education level and number of chronic conditions. Education level contributed the largest increase in the odds of having good/very good/excellent self-perceived health status. Those with higher levels of education were also more likely to report good/excellent health status. These results suggest that improvement efforts that rely on aggregate population data for Hispanics as a single group could miss important opportunities for more targeted initiatives that meet the needs of medically underserved and less well-educated subgroups within the Central and South American community. Recognizing these significant intra- and inter group differences also allows healthcare policymakers at the local level to more appropriately target services at Hispanic subgroups at greater risk of healthcare disparities.

**Research Limitations**

Several limitations are inherent in this study. The use of a convenience sample means that the results may not be generalized to Latinos in other geographic regions or to other subgroups such as Mexicans or Puerto Ricans. Further, this research uses a cross-sectional design that measures a person’s health status at one moment in time. Thus, the health information may either under-estimate or over-estimate their health and may not accurately reflect their actual sense of overall physical well being. Another limitation of the survey instrument is that it includes a binary variable of male/female as defining only two categories of gender and gender identity. Thus this measurement was narrowly defined although it is recognized that gender as an analytic category is fluid and constitutes a continuum of gender identity. Some members of the transgender community therefore may not have been identified. Those who agreed to participate were asked to base their responses on personal knowledge and data are subject to recall bias and may be under-reported, over-reported, or subject to self-report bias. Further, the respondents may not have accurately recalled diagnoses of chronic conditions and medical record data were not available to validate diagnoses.

**Implications and Contributions**

As has been observed by scholars, differences exist among Latina/o subgroups by gender, nation, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic position (SEP). Immigrant groups do not share identical experiences. A great deal of variation exists across immigrant groups regarding their political, social, and socioeconomic position both before and after immigration and within immigrant groups by race/ethnicity, SEP and geographic residence. This study underscores health disparity as a product of the intersection of recent immigration policy, economic and political context, and discriminatory practices. Future research is needed to highlight health disparities as the product of multiple factors, among them psychosocial factors, nation, health behaviors, access to health care, socioeconomic status, quality of care factors and domestic policy factors.

This study also provides an opportunity to foster a critical dialogue in intersectional scholarship that informs social science theorizing and empirical health research, bridges gaps between theory and practice, and enhances efforts to eliminate the social inequalities that drive persistent disparities in health by gender, race, ethnicity, immigration status and class.

Dr. Laura A. Logie is the Assistant Director at CRGE.
“Masked Asian/American Woman”: Matters of Risk, Responsibility, and National (In)Security in SARS Discourse

By Clare C. Jen, PhD

The field of public health is predominantly conceptualized using population health and biomedical frameworks. While these frameworks increasingly address health disparities across race, gender and socioeconomic status, they have traditionally ignored public health as a discursive site that produces race, nation, and gender formations. Debates within the burgeoning field of public health ethics arise from its uncertain social responsibilities to marginalized communities. In such contestations, public health’s advocacy role is often placed in opposition to the field’s professional guise of objective scientific neutrality and its stark adherence to utilitarianism at the expense of civil liberties. This study shifts the conceptualization of public health towards an intersectional, interdisciplinary approach that more broadly conceives of what constitutes public health discourses.

“SARS,” or severe acute respiratory syndrome, is produced as a public health anxiety by social worlds and arenas other than epidemiology and infectious disease research. During the multi-country SARS outbreak of 2002-03, a media blitz assaulted the public. Constant, repetitive coverage—such as, white space-suited figures disinfecting Hong Kong apartment buildings, Asians accessorized in the latest knock-off designer face masks, Mayor Bloomberg lunching on Chinatown spring rolls to defuse myths of Yellow Peril’s latest invasion—all saturated the nation’s imagination.

“SARS digital folk art” pieces launched a thousand mouse clicks, with each click potentially reinscribing meanings of disease and danger upon bodies and spaces (See Figure 1). Public health experts framed the SARS outbreak as a post-September 11th national security concern. During the height of the outbreak, a public health authority stated in a Science editorial:

“Unanticipated outbreaks will continue to be a reality, and the world must be ready to move in whatever direction is needed. Infectious diseases do not respect national boundaries. One important implication of September 11, 2001, is that the security of the United States increasingly depends on…identifying potential health threats...”

The U.S. Congressional-Executive Committee held a hearing entitled “Dangerous Secrets—SARS and China’s Healthcare System.” In Congressional hearings, the American public was urged to “self-police themselves,” with respect to SARS symptoms, as part of their “obligations as good citizens.”

An intersectional approach seriously considers all these SARS discourses from the science, media, and public policy worlds.

This study is particularly interested in discourses constitutive of public health anxieties that produce biopolitical subjects/objects. I use public health anxieties to denote public health events or situations that are deemed worthy of attention, concern, and panic. Emerging infectious diseases—compared to other public health concerns such as racial-ethnic health disparities and chronic diseases—are represented, especially in mainstream news media, as more spectacular objects of concern and anxiety. Drawing from Foucault’s notion of “discourse” and “apparatus,” this research approaches public health discourse as an apparatus comprised of more than the

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texts and practices of the biomedical and public health science arenas. With a focus on the SARS outbreak, I ask the following questions: What are the central concepts in each social world’s SARS discourse? In what ways is the socio-cultural construction of risk central to the discursive construction of SARS? In what ways does each of the social worlds produce biopolitical subjects in formations of race, nation, and gender? What are these formations? What are the underlying public health ethics? The articulation of this issue of study, the formulation of these questions, and the methodological approaches to data analysis, require an interdisciplinarity that places into conversation numerous areas of inquiry: critical race studies; feminist studies of science; public health ethics and social inequalities in public health; media framing of diseases; and grounded theory.

This study analyzes data sources across three arenas—science, media, and public policy—and specifically four social worlds—government-science, non-government-science, mainstream news media, and government-public policy. Data sampling units consists of written text and visual images published in public health reports, scholarly papers, newspaper and magazine articles, Congressional hearing transcripts and prepared witness testimonies (See Figure 2). A six-month period—March 1, 2003 to August 31, 2003—was chosen as the sampling time frame.

The principle configuration in overall SARS discourse is a trio of human-technology figures: unmasked white man, masked Asian woman, and masked white American. First, photographs of public health experts, authorities, and government officials overwhelmingly represent these human roles as unmasked white men. Representations of Asian women, whether masked or unmasked, are almost completely absent in these leadership roles. On the other hand, images of masked Asian women and girls far outnumber any other un/masked race-nation-gender category of visually represented non-experts and non-authorities. Third, the masked white American human figure is featured as the cover image in each of the three U.S. mainstream news magazines in the same week. These cover images identify their readers as at-risk subjects (See Figures 3, 4). This trio of visual images embodies many of the claims constructed in these social worlds’ SARS discourses. Produced as configurations of anxious, contested boundaries, they are engaged in narratives of risk and regulation, individual responsibility and self-surveillance, and are situated in ideologies and practices that have historically framed raced and gendered immigrant bodies and spaces as diseased, dirty andthreateningly contagious to the nation’s health, security and identity.

As an expression of public health ethics, SARS discourse manifests ethical tensions in relation to theorizations of justice. It simultaneously produces two moments. First, SARS as a “crisis situation” operates upon a utilitarian framework that justifies civil liberty infringements for the public good by excluding marginalized groups from the national body. In SARS as a “crisis situation,” the public in need of defense—the Homeland, the at-risk subject, the public’s health and national security—is universalized into a seemingly non-contextualized national body. In other words, the unmasked white man intervenes for a public good that is embodied by the masked white American. The national body is raced-nationed as responsible, at-risk white Americans. The intervening
entity is raced-nationed-gendered as responsible masculine heroes and as government, scientific, and public health leaders. The crisis from which the unmasked white man protects the masked white American is configured as the masked Asian American woman. She embodies: (1) SARS risk, (2) the irresponsible and blameworthy origin of emerging infectious disease, and (3) the feminine bioterrorist threat. She is distinct from the white American Homeland that is in need of defense. That these elements are discursively raced-nationed-gendered is integral to the utilitarian framework of SARS as a crisis situation. SARS discourse’s production of a crisis situation necessarily universalizes the public as a ‘we’ and ‘you’ that, at the same time, excludes those who do not belong to the national body. If the “othered” are not considered part of the public good, then utilitarian public health policies need not tend to their claims to happiness.

Second, SARS as the “new normal” offers biopolitical subjects “free choice,” through technological means, to demonstrate their responsibility to risk containment, often through the donning of face masks. However, this liberalism of “free choice” is a façade for biopolitical subjects already raced-nationed-gendered as risky through discursive frames operating within a public health ethic that justifies coercive measures and paternalistic civil liberty violations, based upon only the mere “uncertainty” of risk. “Free choice” manifests differently according to a subject’s social location and the community’s historic public health inequalities, such as a history of racist and sexist public health, labor, and immigration practices justified by “science.”

![Image](image1.png)

I consider this trio as, not only a visual and discursive configuration produced in SARS discourse, but an analytic construct in an intersectional approach to public health discourse analysis. The significance of each figure resides in its relation to the triad. Drawing from Asian American critical race studies’ theorizations on Asian/American subject formations, I reconceptualize the masked Asian woman as the masked Asian/American woman. Asian Americanist work addresses the production of the nation, its (un)stable borders, and its (in)coherent identity, as well as the ways race, nation and gender constitute each other. Alternately, it addresses the production of the immigrant, the citizen, the terrorist, the enemy alien. According to Leti Volpp, “We should remember that the idea of transnationality is not solely one where immigrants function as agents in maintaining diasporic ties, but can be one where a state or its people brands it citizens with foreign membership, extraterritorializing them into internment camps….”3 Furthermore, centering the masked Asian/American woman as a trans/national human-technology figure highlights the ways in which practices of risk containment and individual responsibility become inadequate gestures of “citizenship” during times of crises, war, and national (in)security.


Dr. Clare Jen is a CrISP Scholar from 2002-2004 and has a Ph.D. in Women’s Studies.


A key program area of the Consortium on Race, Gender and Ethnicity and co-sponsored by the Maryland Population Research Center, the Qualitative Research Interest Group (QRIG) is a working group composed of faculty and graduate students who are engaged in enhancing knowledge and utilization of qualitative methods in research and teaching.

One of the highlights of Fall 2008’s QRIG Speaker Series was “All Yah’s Children: Toward an Urban Ethnography of Global Black Hebrewism,” presented by Dr. John Jackson of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Jackson described the history of the Black Hebrews, a group of African Americans who left the US in 1968 in order to reclaim what they believe is their African/Jewish heritage as one of the lost tribes of Israel. This population exists as a community in flux in a variety of ways. They’ve only recently been granted the status of permanent residents in Israel, the nation in which they’ve made their home for decades, and are facing a simultaneous disbursal and rejuvenation as their young people take advantage of opportunities to work and travel outside the carefully delineated boundaries of the main Black Hebrew community. This need to work and travel has led to an economically complex, transnational web, one that includes complicated family structures and businesses such as vegan soul food restaurants in the United States.

Dr. Jackson then described the “impossibility” of doing conventional ethnographic work during the immediate media accessibility of this particular social and political moment, especially when working with a subject population as technologically savvy as the Black Hebrews. He described his experiences working with a population aware of their marginalized position and deeply invested in controlling the type of research produced about them. He further described the issues that arise when such a population is also invested in spin control – on the one hand, it can be easier to get an interview, but on the other, it can be harder to engage in extended, in-depth ethnography and historiography. He ended by describing the joy he felt when engaged in such complex, interdisciplinary research, emphasizing that part of his project involved designing the research methodology as well as simply engaging in the research.
This year, we were pleased to receive many applications for the third round of a seed grant program for faculty at UM engaged in research using qualitative research methods. Assistant Professors had particularly high priority in this funding cycle but all faculty were eligible. The grant applications were for studies that primarily use research methods of participant-observation, life histories, and/or in-depth interviewing.

Congratulations to the following faculty community of qualitative researchers who were awarded the 2009 QRIG Seed grants for their innovative research.

Leslie Felbain, Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre | The Journey

The Journey is a performance installation piece, the focus of which is to examine the diasporic journey. An outgrowth from prior research project, Rachelinek which was an exploration of various Jewish women named Rachel and the subsequent tracing of their stories across time and geography. The response I received to Rachelinek made clear to me that there are many people with similar histories. As communication becomes broader and faster, and the world becomes smaller, the interface between cultures is increasing. The ramifications of this development are of great interest to me and motivating this area of exploration and creative expression. The purpose of this research and performance is to expose the similarities and differences in the diasporic experiences of a variety of world cultures, exploring the larger social and political issues of a cultural Diaspora as well as the journey of an individual through life cycle and transitions.

Christina B. Hanhardt, Assistant Professor, American Studies Department | Safe Space: The Sexual and City Politics of Violence, 1965–2010

“Canaries of the Creative Age?: FIERCE Visions of Just City” is the last chapter of my book manuscript Safe Space: The Sexual and City Politics of Violence, 1965–2010. It is primarily an ethnographic look at present-day debates about violence, safety, and crime in New York’s Greenwich Village neighborhood. A significant part examines the campaigns of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) youth of color activist group called FIERCE (Fabulous Independent Educated Radicals for Community Empowerment) as they fight heightened policing and the privatization of space in the neighborhood. Based in participant observation at community board meetings and public protests as well as interviews with present and former activists, the chapter highlights how FIERCE has developed original analyses of violence, urban development, and activism. It examines the significance of these visions in the context of dominant municipal and social movement responses to contested community development and violence.

Sahar Khamis, Assistant Professor, Department of Communications | New Meanings, New Identities: Egyptian Rural Women, Television and Social Change

This feminist, ethnographic audience study will investigate the impact of the ongoing process of social change on Egyptian rural women’s shifting maternal and feminine identities, their multiple roles, and their media
reception experiences, which consequently influence their meaning production processes, especially around televised public awareness messages targeted at them. Relying on triangulation of three qualitative research methods, namely: in-depth participant observation, in-depth personal interviews, and focus group discussions, the study will explore how these women's complex meaning production processes overlap and intersect with the equally complex processes of social change, identity transformation and multifaceted resistances.

Kris Marsh, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology | “I Ain’t No Nerd:” Comparing Racial Identity between High Achieving Young Black Women and Men

Signithia Fordham (1988, 1991) proposed that, to maintain high achiever status, academically successful Blacks must de-emphasize all racial and ethnic labels while in school—a notion that she terms “racelessness.” Fordham (1988) purports that racelessness in Black students may be influenced by gender, insisting that young Black male students “mask their raceless personae to a far greater degree than their female counterparts in the school context” (p.80). The initial study, using direct observations, interviews, and questionnaire data gathered from high achieving Black students in a selective honors high school course, disputes Fordham’s theory. For the second phase of this study, I am proposing a project that will analyze gender differences in the racial orientation and expectations of young Black high achieving students, as they move from their racially homogeneous home schools to a racially integrated setting, as a means to: a) determine any presence of racelessness; b) determine the nature and distinction between their work and social groups with regard to race and gender; and c) highlight the social club and college Selection choices of young Black women versus young Black men. One initial finding from the proposed study is that young Black women are as Black-identified as young Black men, if not more so.

Connie North, Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction | Reading and Writing the World: a Study of an Inquiry-to-Action Teacher Group

The term “social justice” pervades educational publications, programs, and curricular materials. Rarely, however, is the substantive meaning of this label made explicit or publicly debated outside of the university settings. Moreover, the isolated nature of teaching in many US schools prevent the collaboration on K-12 educators who are committed to positive social change. This study presents an opportunity for five teachers from diverse school settings and a university teacher educator to study and act on the potential power of social justice. It also builds on North’s previous cross-institutional, collaborative inquiry into the meanings, implications, and promise of teaching for social justice. Through monthly meetings and qualitative case study methodology, the inquiry group members will examine their varying educational philosophies, practices, and teaching sites. Subsequently, they will develop and implement an action plan on a collectively chosen social issue in education.

Lori Simon-Rusinowitz, Associate Professor, School of Public Health | Better Training, Better care: Identifying Training Needs of Caregivers and Older Consumers with Mental health Diagnoses in a Consumer-directed Personal Care Program

With a growing elderly population, there is an increased need for caregivers to assist disabled elders with daily living activities that may allow them to remain in their homes. Disparities in quality of home health care exist for minority elders; especially for individuals with mental health issues. There is also a nationwide shortage of caregivers and difficulty recruiting and retaining these workers. A consumer-directed (CD) approach allows for greater flexibility and control of personal care services, and may increase the satisfaction and well-being of caregivers and elders with mental health diagnoses. There is, however, a need to develop training informed by the views of consumers and caregivers to enhance CD services. To develop a pilot training program, we propose in-depth interviews with consumer teams to better understand their needs, and ultimately lead to better outcomes. This study will build on current research and contribute to plans for a larger project.

Edmonds, C., & Killen, M. (in press). Do adolescents’ perceptions of parental racial attitudes relate to their intergroup contact and cross-race relationships? *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*.


Lynette Boswell, Urban and Regional Planning and Design

As a CRGE (Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity) Interdisciplinary Scholar and PhD student I have been exposed to a stimulating and wonderfully intellectual, interdisciplinary research environment. The experience has been eye-opening and encouraged me to look more critically at my field, Urban and Regional Planning. Being a CRGE scholar has helped me to better articulate and conceptualize intersectional research methods within my discipline and re-evaluate how researchers observe the impact of urban phenomenon and environments on people. I highly valued the intellectually engaging discussions, seminars and colloquia, and am eager to utilize the knowledge and advice I obtained in my pursuits for higher education. Although I am inspired to engage in multi-faceted, and diverse intersectional work, saying goodbye to CRGE supportive staff is difficult. They have been instrumental in cultivating my research interests in interdisciplinary ideas. Therefore, as I say goodbye, I say thank you to CRGE for their support and contributions to my journey to be a well-rounded, contributor to the academy.

Tamyka Morant, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Being a CrISP scholar has been one of the best experiences of my academic career. As a CrISP scholar I have been able to work closely and learn from top researchers and scholars, participate in scholarly discussions and debates at CrISP seminars, engage in thought-provoking, cutting edge research related to intersectionality at colloquia, and further develop my own research and writing skills as a research assistant. I leave CrISP with a better understanding of intersectionality as both a research field and a methodology and look forward to contributing to the field as I continue on my own pathway of scholarship.

Maria Velazquez, American Studies

While working at CRGE, I have been lucky enough to develop academically and professionally through the mentorship opportunities CRiSP has afforded me. Since joining CRGE, I have been mentored by both rising and established scholars, including Dr. Logie, Dr. Nieves, Dr. Zambrana, Dr. Dill, and Dr. Sies, and have learned that anti-racist academics are both amazing researchers and efficient project managers. In working with Tamyka and Lynnette, my research interests and methodologies have evolved to include an awareness of the impact intersectional identities have on the teaching styles and contexts of marginalized groups. Because of this, I have been paying more attention to the intersections of dance, teaching, and subaltern resistances. I leave CRGE with great sadness, but am deeply proud of both the work I did while involved with the Consortium, and of the work the Consortium will do in the future.