

**Annual Report**  
**Institute for Research on Women, Rutgers University, 2013-2014**

Nicole R. Fleetwood (Director) & Sarah Tobias (Associate Director)

**I. OVERVIEW**

2013-2014 was a year of successful transitions at the Institute for Research on Women (IRW). Nicole Fleetwood began her term as Director in July 2013 and the institute has flourished under her leadership. Our core programming (the seminar, Distinguished Lecture Series and Undergraduate Learning Community) revolved around the theme of “Decolonizing Gender/Gendering Decolonization” and reflected a dynamic range of interdisciplinary scholarship. In addition to our core programming, we ran a professional development workshop for graduate students, and continued to support programming for the Women of Color Scholars Initiative as well as for our two working groups: *Disorientations* and *Transnational Feminism and Queer Theory*. We also hosted two Global Scholars, two IRW Mellon Fellows, and incorporated postdoctoral fellows housed in three additional departments into our seminar. The Director and Associate Director continued to cultivate significant relationships and pursue possible collaborations with many Rutgers units and community organizations.

In other transitions, this fall IRW said goodbye to its Program Coordinator Marlene Importico who retired after 15 years of working with the institute. Colleen Martin joined the staff as our new Administrative Assistant in December 2013. Additionally, Tenisha Howard began working with the institute in a part-time position as Learning Community Coordinator in Fall 2013, replacing Yomaira Figureroa, who held the position for the previous two years. The following report provides a brief summary of the IRW’s activities and initiatives in the 2013-14 academic year.

**II. CORE PROGRAMMING**

**IRW Interdisciplinary Research Seminar**

As mentioned above, the theme for the IRW’s 2013-14 interdisciplinary seminar—and for all of its core programming—was “Decolonizing Gender/Gendering Decolonization.” Throughout the year we engaged in a broad conversation about the ways in which decolonization relates to women, gender and sexuality. In total 18 individuals participated in this year’s seminar: 5 faculty members, 5 graduate students (including 1 from Michigan State University), 2 Global Scholars (from the University of Iceland and Seton Hall University), two Mellon Postdoctoral Fellows, and visiting postdoctoral affiliated with RCHA, Critical Caribbean Studies, and Race and Gender History. Two additional faculty members and one advanced undergraduate student also attended the seminar on a regular basis. Scholars attending the seminar were associated with African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures and the Graduate School of Education as well as the departments of English (Camden), Sociology, History and Women’s and Gender Studies. Seminar participants came from a diverse array of countries including Iceland, Morocco, Puerto Rico, England, Lebanon, and the United States. Seminar fellows’ projects encompassed methodologies and theoretical perspectives that ranged from feminist economics to anthropology to literary analysis. Seminar discussions showcased participants’ research on topics as varied as “Schooling Palestinian American Youth during the ‘War on Terror’” and “Scientific Knowledge, Gender, and Coloniality in 16th and 17th Century Américas.”

In addition to presentations by fellows and guest lecturers, the IRW held a workshop on scholarly publishing for seminar members. Led by Mary Hawkesworth (Women’s and Gender Studies and editor of *Signs*) and Peter Mikulas (Rutgers University Press), seminar members learned about the intricacies of publishing in academic journals and how this process differs from publishing scholarly monographs.

Final evaluations by participants praised the supportive interdisciplinary environment of the seminar: “The interactions were collegial, supportive, and intellectually stimulating,” said one seminar member. “The lines between faculty and students were really blurred so that everyone had an equal voice.” Several participants described the way in which being part of the seminar fostered their work—“It has been super helpful in introducing me to new approaches and interdisciplinary scholarship on sexuality,” one graduate student noted. “[It] helped me to think of how to make my work accessible to scholars in multiple fields.” The seminar has also catalyzed new social and intellectual relationships between participants. In addition to “meeting wonderful, inspiring new colleagues and friends,” they describe crafting courses together, organizing panels, and sharing research proposals. In short, the IRW seminar continues to provide a truly interdisciplinary and diverse space, exemplifying the kind of academic environment that SAS and Rutgers value.

### ***The IRW Seminar on Decolonizing Gender/Gendering Decolonization***

“The interactions across disciplines have been great.”

— *Graduate Student*

“I have been intellectually stretched! My work has been profoundly enriched.”

— *Faculty Member*

“Overall, a transformative experience!!”

— *Faculty Member*

### **IRW Distinguished Lecture Series**

During the 2013-14 academic year, the IRW hosted talks by six Distinguished Lecturers, esteemed academics from within and outside the University. Each lecture attracted an audience of 80-100 people, including faculty, graduate students and undergraduates from departments including American Studies, History, English, Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies, Anthropology, Sociology and Women’s and Gender Studies departments, the Institute for Women’s Leadership and the members of the IRW’s Undergraduate Learning Community, as well as local community members interested in public intellectual debates and issues. We incorporated our lectures in the SAS and Douglass passport programs and in consequence many undergraduate transfer students attended our lectures. Faculty teaching courses in several disciplines also encouraged students to attend.

- In *Vision, Value and the Burden of Humanism* (September 19, 2013), Mino Moallem (University of California-Berkeley) discussed the naturalization and normalization of feminized exploitative labor since colonial modernity, using as examples specific transnational commodities, such as Persian carpets, that represent cultural and civilizational difference. She argued that while current discussions of Islam, Muslims, and the Islamic world are narrowly focusing on the realm of politics, there is a need to focus on commodities as they link culture and economy. She focused on humanism as a site of 'imperiality' in which the benevolent and the violent are reconciled through the separation of labor from commodity and the investment of value in the image of a stranded female figure.
- In *The Gendered Intimacies of Global Health* (October 24, 2013), Julie Livingston (Rutgers) considered the massive and increasingly influential global health industry through the lens of nursing care. Livingston argued that caregiving is a grounded instantiation of moral philosophy, one that reveals the human body to be a moral condition, and serious illness to be a relationship. Based on ethnographic work in a hospital in Botswana as a case from which to think about the gendered stakes and meanings of bodily care and the global crisis in nursing, she resituated a discussion of global health away from salvific narratives that rely on suffering strangers and technological solutions, and towards the social realities of labor, pain, and bodily vulnerability.
- In *Are You Listening?: Tilted Pedagogies in Enclosed Spaces* (Thursday, November 14, 2013), Marisa Belausteguigoitia (UNAM) analyzed the ways in which sexuality, activism, academia and art intervened inside enclosed spaces in three Mexican scenarios: prisons, the Zapatistas autonomous regions and the classroom. In the Zapatistas autonomous regions (Los Caracoles or the Spirals) and also in a women's prison in México City, spirals represent the re-appropriation of territory, body and desire through pedagogical and artistic work centered in one of the most important and creative art forms in Mexico: muralism. Belausteguigoitia discussed the ways in which the classroom could be inclined (tilted), placed in contact with the body and its emotions of outrage and desire through contact with these pedagogical and artistic experiences.
- In *The Four Figures of Sexuality: Sexuality, Power, Geontology* (February 20, 2014), Elizabeth Povinelli (Columbia University) extended her discussion of late liberalism in *Economies of Abandonment* by examining how the contemporary crisis of climate change demands not merely new figures of sexuality but new models of late liberalism that shatter the frameworks of biopower. Povinelli drew on Michel Foucault's claims that four figures—the hysterical woman, the Malthusian couple, the masturbating child, and the perverse adult—mark the transition from discourses of alliance to discourses of sexuality even as they provide a foundation in which the biopolitical concept of population operates. Povinelli argued that these four figures matter because they signal and allow a transition from one form of power to another.
- In *Gender, Legality and Public Ethics: Sites of Contestation* (March 6, 2014), Zakia Salime (Rutgers) discussed the public debates that took place over the suicide of Amina Filali in Morocco, in March 2012. Amina caused a public outcry when she took her life after she was wedded to her rapist. Amina's suicide brought to the surface the intensity of frustrations that social media activists, feminist groups, and others have with the state and its masculinist

moral order. This was the first time that a woman's physical body and body parts were at the core of a heated public debate, revealing the rise of new subjectivities and subject positions, mediated by modern technologies ranging from TV shows to social media. Amina became the icon of the new 'subjects of rights', the youth and the frustrated, while enabling feminist groups to force their entry into the gated and well-guarded state legal system.

- In *Can a Woman be a Chief?* (April 10, 2014), Drucilla Cornell (Rutgers) discussed a controversial decision in 2011, when one of the major tribes in South Africa selected a woman as chief through their royal consultation process—a decision with major ramifications for law and gender politics. She also focused on the Rural Women's submission, which powerfully argued that living customary law involves a completely different conception of law than dominant positivist conceptions in the Anglo-European world. Cornell argued that this case reveals much about the recognition of policulturalism and legal pluralism in South Africa.

### **IRW Undergraduate Learning Community**

Since the 2007-8 academic year, the Institute has pioneered the development of an undergraduate learning community based in a research institute, offering advanced undergraduate students an intimate yet rigorous environment for intellectual growth. With the support of the Office of Undergraduate Education, the IRW ran two semester-long learning communities (fall 2013 and spring 2014) during the academic year led by Tenisha Howard. Ms. Howard is a doctoral candidate in the Department of African American and African Studies at Michigan State University and is writing her dissertation *Women of Color in STEM*. She is a former Rutgers undergraduate and Ronald E. McNair Scholar.

Under Tenisha's guidance, a total of 17 students from a variety of majors, ranging from Cell Biology and Neuroscience to History and Anthropology, participated in the IRW's learning community during 2013-14. Participants attended the IRW's Distinguished Lecture Series, gathered to discuss related readings, developed their own research/activist projects related to the IRW's annual theme, and worked with mentors (faculty, visiting scholars or advanced IRW graduate student fellows). In addition, participants met with Women's and Gender Studies librarian, Kayo Denda, for a research methods class tailored to the learning community theme and objectives. In the spring semester students enjoyed an on-campus visit from Hunter College scholar Dr. Consuelo Martínez-Reyes, who gave a talk entitled "Foreign Directors, National Cinema: Race, Gender, and the Birth of the Puerto Rican Film Industry." End-of-year evaluations described the Learning Community as "more intimate" and "personal" than a regular class, enabling students to pursue research topics they really cared about but were unable to develop in other contexts.

Next year's learning community will be led by Ghassan Moussawi, a doctoral student in the Sociology Department at Rutgers-New Brunswick. Mr. Moussawi, who was an IRW Seminar Fellow during the 2013-14 academic year, is writing a dissertation entitled "Queering 'Progress,' Interrogating the 'modern:' the construction and narration of contemporary Lebanese Sexual subjectivities." His research interests include gender, sexuality, representations, and feminist theory. His commitment to community building is a great fit with IRW's mission and goals, and he is certain to contribute a great deal to the 2014-5 learning community.

### III. OTHER INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMING

#### A. Spring Symposium: *New Directions in the Study of Gender and Islam*

On April 25, 2014, IRW organized a one-day symposium on new directions in the study of gender and Islam. The symposium was convened by Sylvia Chan-Malik, Assistant Professor of American Studies and Women's and Gender Studies, and Nadia Guessous, IRW/WGS Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow. The event was co-sponsored by the department of Women's and Gender Studies, American Studies, and the Women of Color Scholars Initiative, and attended by approximately 75 students, faculty and local community members. The symposium brought together a new generation of scholars who are working on questions of gender and Islam from different positionalities, disciplinary perspectives and geographical areas. Speakers came from different institutions located in the Northeast including Harvard, Yale, Brown, George Washington University, and NYU. By bringing together scholars of gender and Islam from fields as different as American Studies, Anthropology, Ethnic Studies, Sociology, History, and Literature, the symposium sought to cross-disciplinary boundaries and to obtain a wider sense of the work currently being done on this topic.

The symposium was organized into three parts, enabling the audience to consider questions of gender and Islam from an interdisciplinary, comparative and transnational perspective. The first panel focused on questions of Islamic transnationalism by looking at the authority of the *Shaykha* (female religious scholar), transnational pedagogical networks in Syria, Egypt and the US; transnational Muslim women, Islamic *da'wa* and cosmopolitanism in Kuwait; and the genealogy of American Islam through the figure of Fard Muhammad. The second panel explored questions of ethics, agency and power by looking at gender and social justice in Muslim bioethics; gender and sexuality in Europe's Muslim question; and sexual difference, secularism, and sectarianism in Lebanon. The day ended with concluding remarks by Rutgers Professor Ousseina Alidou. She commented on the incredible richness of the field, and the fact that a new generation of scholars are working on topics not historically seen as pertaining to questions of gender and/or Islam (such as bioethics, the politics multiculturalism, pedagogy, secularism, etc.). She also remarked that not a single panel/speaker focused on questions of women's oppression or lack of agency, tropes that have historically dominated (and limited) the field of women, gender and Islam.

#### B. *Negotiating Basics for Women Entering the Academic Job Market*

On Wednesday, November 6, 2013, the IRW sponsored its sixth annual professional development workshop for graduate students designed to demystify the process of negotiating for an academic job, making participants aware of the kinds of resources and perks that could be asked for and how these vary by discipline. This year's panel featured five faculty members of different ranks and from different disciplines: Cynthia Daniels (Professor, Department of Political Science; Associate Douglass Campus Dean), Nina H. Fefferman (Assistant Professor, Department of Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources; Co-Director, Tufts University Initiative for the Forecast and Modeling of Infectious Disease); Rocío Magaña (Assistant Professor, Anthropology); Rebecca Wright (Professor, Department of Computer Science; Director, DIMACS); and Sylvia Chan-Malik (Assistant Professor, Women's and Gender Studies & American Studies). Each panelist spoke briefly about their own experiences negotiating for salary, research allowances, and other benefits, and then answered questions from the audience. During lunch, the panelists met in smaller groups with participants to answer disciplinary-specific questions. Every participant also received a two-page handout on negotiating tips prepared by the IRW. This event was co-sponsored by the Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics.

### **C. *Disorientations* Working Group**

During the 2013-14 academic year, the IRW continued to support *Disorientations*, a working group led by Professors Allan Punzalan Isaac and Rick Lee, which addresses how gender and sexuality shape developments in comparative race histories, visual and performative cultures, and transnationalism in the study of Asians in the Americas and the Diaspora. The *Disorientations* working group comprises of 13 members (7 faculty, 4 graduate students, and 2 staff members), representing disciplines ranging from AMESALL to Anthropology and from American Studies to Women's and Gender Studies.

In conjunction with the Tyler Clementi Center, *Disorientations* invited Martin F. Manalansan IV as a Visiting Scholar for a week-long residency at Rutgers from March 23-28, 2014. Manalansan is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Asian American Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and a leading scholar in LGBTQ Studies. Professor Manalansan shared his scholarship on transgender identity at two events—one targeted for an undergraduate audience and another aimed for a more scholarly audience. This week-long residency aimed to build on the IRW's work on "Trans Studies: Beyond Hetero/Homo Normativities" in the 2012-2013 academic year. As part of Professor Manalansan's residency, the Tyler Clementi Center additionally organized a roundtable entitled "The Future of LGBTQ Studies at CIC Institutions," which was held on March 26. Participants included Marilee Lindemann, Associate Professor of English and the Director of the LGBT Studies program at the University of Maryland; Martin F. Manalansan IV; Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel, Professor of Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies and Comparative Literature at Rutgers University, and former director of the Institute for Research on Women (2011-13); and Debra A. Modellmog, Professor of English and the Coordinator of the Sexuality Studies program at Ohio State University.

*Disorientations* also co-sponsored "Mapping Across the Borders of Asian and Asian American Studies," a panel discussion organized by the Collective for Asian American Studies on February 18, 2014. This event featured four faculty members from Asian Languages and Cultures, History, Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies, and Sociology: Chie Ikeya, Suzy Kim, Catherine Lee, and Kathy Lopez.

### **D. *Transnational Feminism and Queer Theory* Working Group**

During the 2013-14 academic year, the IRW hosted a new working group, "Transnational Feminism and Queer Theory: Epistemological Challenges," led by former IRW Director Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel and supported by the Center for Global Advancement and International Affairs. The group's research focuses on South-North dialogues about queer theory and involves the collaboration of 3 faculty members and 2 graduate students affiliated with the IRW and 3 faculty members and 3 graduate students from the Programa Universitario de Estudios del Género (PUEG) and the Programa de Posgrado of the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).

During 2013-14, the group designed and offered two graduate courses: one based at Rutgers (Fall 2013) and another based at UNAM (Spring 2014). It also organized a 4-day workshop at Rutgers in the Fall 2013, and a 4-day workshop at UNAM in Spring 2014. Future plans involve short-term visits by members of both teams to Rutgers and UNAM to continue advancing relevant research. The group is also organizing two sessions at the Latin American Studies International conference in Puerto Rico in May 2015. These panel presentations include a collaboration with the "Queering Paradigms" Initiative, coordinated by Professor Carlos Decena and María Amelia Viteri (Facultad

Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Sede Ecuador). After the presentations at LASA 2015, the group plans to compile a dossier on South-North Dialogues about Queer studies to be submitted for publication in *Debate feminista* in México and *GLQ* in the United States.

### **E. Women of Color Scholars Initiative**

The IRW continued to offer mentoring to the Women of Color Scholars Initiative (WoCSI), this year under the direction of Professor Sylvia Chan Malik (Women's and Gender Studies & American Studies) and to host the group's events at the Ruth Dill Johnson Crockett Building. Nicole Fleetwood served as the group's senior faculty liaison. WoCSI held five events during the 2013-14 academic year, advancing its broader goals of fostering community and networks that support the retention and promotion of women of color faculty at Rutgers. During the Fall 2013 semester, WoCSI put on two events, a Welcome Cocktail Hour and Dinner on November 7, 2013 at Tula Restaurant and a Holiday Party on December 11, 2013. At the Welcome Dinner, approximately 25 WoCSCI members attended from all three Rutgers campuses. The Holiday Party featured speakers Kayo Denda (Margery Somers Foster Center and Women and Gender Studies Librarian) and Dr. Cheryl Wall (Board of Governors Zora Neale Hurston Professor of English).

In Spring 2014, WoCSI hosted three workshops for its it members. The first, held on February 7, 2014, featured Dr. Kathryn Gines speaking on the topic of "Work/Life Balance for Academics: Moving from Guilt and Stress to Peace and Productivity." The second event took place on April 4, 2014, in which nutritionist and health counselor Molly Lee talked about "Energizing Nutrition," specifically how to eat for energy and balance. The final event of the semester took place on May 30, 2014, and was sponsored in collaboration with the Objective Analysis of Self and Institution Seminar (OASIS) and the Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Technology and Mathematics at Rutgers. It featured Dr. Kerry Ann Rockquemore, President and CEO of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, leading a workshop with participants titled "Writing, Procrastination, and Resistance: How to Identify Your Writing Blocks and Move Through Them."

### **F. Trans Studies Book**

Former IRW Director Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel and IRW Associate Director Sarah Tobias have continued to work on an edited volume designed to encourage a broad conversation about the most recent redefinitions in Women's, Queer and Sexuality Studies in dialogue with debates in Trans Studies. The volume will feature the work of speakers in IRW's 2012-13 Distinguished Lecture Series as well as writings by participants in the 2013 spring colloquium. Yolanda and Sarah have edited 13 book chapters in two formats: academic essays of up to 8,000 words and shorter reflections or critical pieces by activists of up to 4,000 words. They are currently drafting the book proposal.

### **G. Co-sponsorships**

As part of our commitment to collaborating with other units, the IRW continued to co-sponsor a large number of events with a diverse spectrum of centers, departments and institutes, including the Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Technology and Mathematics, the Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities, the Tyler Clementi Center, the American Studies Department, the Department of History, and Africa Studies. The Director and Associate Director continue to cultivate significant relationships and pursue possible collaborations with many Rutgers units. The range of our collaborative and co-sponsored activities in 2013-14 can be seen in Appendix B, the IRW's calendar of events.

#### IV. FELLOWS AT THE IRW

During 2013-14, the Institute for Research on Women hosted two Global Scholar and two Mellon Fellows. Our Global Scholars were Thorgerdur Einarsdottir (Professor of Gender Studies in the Faculty of Political Science at the University of Iceland) and Simone James Alexander (Professor of English at Seton Hall University). Dr. Einarsdottir is working on a project entitled *Transgender, Queer and Cis: Feminist Resistance or Resistance against Feminism? Gender Equality and Trans issues in Iceland and the US*. Her work involves exploring queer and transgender issues in Iceland, comparing and contrasting them with the United States. Her project is a part of a larger collaboration with Professor Jyl Josephson (Rutgers-Newark) on Icelandic and US relations, covering research and teaching. Dr. Alexander's project is entitled *Black Freedom in (Communist) Russia: Great Expectations, Utopian Visions* and it chronicles the migrations and movements of black people, including Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson, Claudia Jones, Angela Davis and Audre Lorde to (communist) Russia. Examining the gender, race and class specificities of these travels, she argues for a more-inclusive gender politics, challenging the male-centric representation of blackness that The Soviet Union has eagerly embraced.

This academic year we also continued to host Dr. Nadia Guessous, our second Mellon Fellow, shared with the Women's and Gender Studies Department. Dr. Guessous has a Ph.D. in Anthropology from Columbia University. Her research investigates the shifts in North African feminism from leftist (socialist and communist) to liberal sensibilities. Far from being confined to the Moroccan case, this shift captures the broader historical changes that have shaped neoliberal affiliations and identifications in North Africa in the post 9-11 era. Dr. Guessous has been a fabulous interlocutor at our weekly seminar meetings, where her contributions have always been trenchant and erudite. Moreover, she played a key role in developing this year's IRW spring symposium, "New Directions in the Study of Gender and Islam," working with Professor Sylvia Chan-Malik to shape the event's theoretical orientation, develop the program, and invite speakers.

We were also delighted to welcome Dr. Annie Fukushima, our third Mellon Fellow, during the 2013-14 academic year. Dr. Fukushima has a Ph.D. Ethnic Studies from the University of California at Berkeley. Her dissertation, entitled "Asian and Latina Migrants in the United States and the Invisible / Visible Paradigm of Human Trafficking" explores the sex trafficking of Asian and Latinas/os into the United States from countries as diverse as Peru, Korea, and the Phillipines. Through an analysis of case studies, she explores the shifting meaning of trafficking through a series of dichotomies (such as visibility/invisibility; victimhood/criminality). Her work makes scholarly interventions in the fields of Women's and Gender Studies, American studies, ethnic studies, media studies and law. Dr. Fukushima has been an active participant in the academic community at Rutgers, giving several talks about her work and, together with Professor Suzy Kim (Department of Asian Languages and Cultures), planning a conference that will be held in the 2014-15 academic year.

#### 2013-14 Mellon Fellowship Search

During the 2013-14 academic year IRW, in partnership with the Women's and Gender Studies Department, participated in an extensive search for their third joint postdoctoral fellow funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. IRW Director Nicole R. Fleetwood chaired the search committee, and together with IRW Associate Director Sarah Tobias, and three faculty members

from the Women's and Gender Studies Department—Abena Busia, Ethel Brooks and Alison Bernstein—scrutinized 197 applications for the position.

We are delighted that Dr. Maya Mikdashi (Ph.D. Anthropology, Columbia University, 2013), has accepted our offer of a Mellon Fellowship at IRW/WGS for 2014-6. Dr. Mikdashi's dissertation, entitled "Sex, Secularism and Sectarianism: Practicing Citizenship in Contemporary Lebanon" explores how economic, religious and historical phenomena shape Lebanese law, which in turn serves to transform religious and secular Lebanese practices. Her focus is on the practices of strategic religious conversion and advocacy for a secular personal status. In her book manuscript, Dr. Mikdashi focuses on the gendered aspects of these practices to investigate the occurrence of secularism in a Muslim majority country. Her work traverses the fields of queer theory and legal anthropology and raises questions about how feminism, liberalism, secular modernity and religion are conjoined and disjoined in a legal context.

## **V. TOWARDS 2014-2015**

The IRW annual theme for 2014-2015 is "Feminist Optics: Gender and Visual Studies." The theme will traverse our core programs and explore the past, present and futures of visual studies and feminist theory's impact on the field's development. Influenced by literature, cinema and media studies, art history, technology studies, and neuroscience, visual studies has emerged in the past four decades as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry that engages what has been described as "the visual turn" in knowledge production and reception. From interpretations of the female nude in art history to inquiries about the phallogocentric gaze of cinema to studies of fashion sign systems, pornography and digital culture, feminist scholarship has opened up new avenues of engaging the visual world and has been foundational to the field of visual studies. Our theme will attract and create interdisciplinary synergy between a strong cohort of faculty and graduate students working in fields including History, Dance, Music, English, and Engineering, as well as other departments and programs in the School of Arts and Sciences.

In addition, on October 8-10, 2014, the IRW, in conjunction with the American Studies Department, will host "Marking Time," a multi-component project whose goal is to bring together scholars, writers, artists, and activists from across the nation and from overseas to explore the cultural aspects of imprisonment through a focus on art produced by prisoners and in response to mass incarceration. The project consists of a two-day symposium on prison art and activism—the first of its kind—that will include scholars, artists, activists, and community groups. In addition to the symposium, there will be a curated exhibition of art by current and formerly incarcerated individuals. Renowned poet and author Reginald Dwayne Betts will be a keynote speaker at the conference. Other participants and artists will include Jesse Krimes, Ron Levine, Michelle Handelman, Phyllis Kornfeld, Regina Austin, Jillian Hernandez, Pete Brook, and Marc Falkoff. Artwork will be displayed at the Zimmerli Art Museum, the New Brunswick Public Library, Alfa Art Gallery, the Helderich Hotel and the Rutgers Art Library. The Ford Foundation and the Puffin Foundation are helping to fund this initiative. We hope that the School of Arts and Sciences and the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs will continue to support our infrastructure and programming as we continue these important endeavors.

<b>IRW Staff 2013-14</b>	<b>About the IRW</b>
<p><b>Director</b> Nicole R. Fleetwood, Ph.D.</p> <p><b>Associate Director</b> Sarah Tobias, Ph.D.</p> <p><b>Program Coordinator</b> Colleen Martin</p> <p><b>Undergraduate Learning Community Coordinator</b> Tenisha Howard</p>	<p>At the forefront of feminist research for over thirty years, the Institute for Research on Women (IRW) advances feminist cutting-edge, interdisciplinary scholarship on gender, women and sexuality. Part of the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, IRW was founded in 1977 by faculty and administrators seeking to expand feminist scholarship and activism beyond the university's fledgling Women's Studies program. Today, IRW supports a broad range of programming designed to stimulate research on women and gender within and across the disciplines, throughout and beyond Rutgers. Promoting faculty and student connections and building intellectual community are also central to IRW's mission. Affiliate members of IRW currently include almost 900 faculty, graduate students, and advanced undergraduates drawn from a wide range of disciplines at the New Brunswick, Newark and Camden campuses.</p>