

Guest Speaker

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From Feminist Fieldwork to Collaborative Praxis: Can analytical frameworks travel across North/South Borders?

Professor Richa Nagar

Department of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies
University of Minnesota

**3:30 pm, Thursday May 7
1080 Derby Hall**

When the content of formal knowledge is evaluated in isolation from the making of that knowledge and from its deployment and dissemination in multiple locations, a hierarchy of theory, method and outreach is crystallized in which issues of relevance and accountability are sidelined. In academia, this general problem becomes pronounced in the contested realm of ethnographic and field-work based research, especially when the producers of academic knowledge are located in the global North and their research subjects are located in the global South. The task of imagining new possibilities for knowledge across North/South divides must begin by grappling with a series of difficult questions, including: Who controls the production and distribution of the knowledges produced? Who forms the intended and actual audience of intellectual production? How do these production processes intersect with the politics and economics of publishing, literacy, access to and distribution of literature? What can be done to reconstitute the systems of knowledge production and dissemination? This presentation considers how feminist engagements with these issues can be advanced through multi-institutional alliances across geographical and sociocultural borders. My discussion will be based primarily on an ongoing transnational collaboration with members of a rural women's collective called Sangtin in Sitapur District of Uttar Pradesh (India).

Richa Nagar is Professor of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies at the University of Minnesota (USA) and a founding member of Sangtin Kisaan Mazdoor Sangathan (SKMS), in Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh. She has co-authored *Sangtin Yatra* (2004) and its updated English version, *Playing with Fire: Feminist Thought and Activism through Seven Lives in India*. Richa's academic research on gender, race and communal politics among South Asian communities in postcolonial Tanzania and subsequent work has resulted in numerous articles and essays in anthologies and journals including *Feminist Studies*; *Signs*; *Society and Space*; *Ecumene*; *Gender, Place and Culture*; *Women's Studies International Forum*; and *Economic and Political Weekly*.