Check-In: 9:30 a.m.
Lissa and Cy Wagner Hall – Foyer

Welcome & Keynote: 10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
Lissa and Cy Wagner Hall – Room 135
Faculty Keynote Speaker: Dr. Rockey Robbins – Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology and Program Director, Professional Counseling Program – University of Oklahoma

Session A: 11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

The Role of Gender Equality in Development: A Case Study of the Roma Minority in Europe - Room 145

Their names are as mysterious as their origins: Often called the Roma people, they’re also known as Gypsies. Europe is home to over 9 million Roma, yet many Europeans are unable to answer the basic question, “Who are the Roma?” Although the Roma are not a single, homogeneous community, this diverse borderless nation experiences social exclusion even in the most developed regions of the EU, leading to disparities in economic and social development. Roma women are even more sidelined and excluded, although they could be the very center of the development process.

Presented by Benjamin Ignac – Geography, Undergraduate Student

Is Sexual Objectification a Legitimating Myth? – Room 280

In group-based social hierarchies based on a patriarchal system, men tend to hold disproportional social and political power compared to women. According to social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), social hierarchies are maintained to a large extent through legitimizing myths. These myths correspond to ideologies that suggest, among other things, that members of subordinate groups deserve their subordinate status and should not challenge their social rank. We propose that the belief that it is permissible to view women as sexual objects (i.e., sexual objectification) serves as a legitimizing myth used in the maintenance of patriarchy. We tested this assumption in two experimental studies that explored the extent to which sexually objectifying attitudes about women underlie the relationship between social dominance orientation (i.e., SDO) and attitudes supporting patriarchy.
The Right to Eat – Room 240
Do you know what is in the food you eat? Have you ever thought about how that long list of words under “ingredients” gets onto a nutrition label? Or how the FDA regulates taglines such as “whole grain”, “organic”, or “fat free”? Each year, thousands of people across the United States are diagnosed with food related medical conditions that impact their health and quality of life. From heart disease and cancer, to asthma and arthritis, many of these problems can be traced back to the food we put in our bodies. Current FDA and USDA regulations are often skewed by politicians appeasing big donor corporations at the detriment to America’s health. Unfortunately, this means that the negative side effects of our food industry impact marginalized populations the hardest. We as consumers and as human beings deserve real, healthy food sources and the knowledge of how our food arrives in the grocery stores.

The Retreat from Childbearing seen in Childbearing-Aged Adults in the U.S. and Japan – Room 245
To explore the retreat from childbearing seen in highly developed societies, we assessed the relationship between labor market conditions and fertility in sequential, cross-sectional samples of childbearing-aged adults in the U.S and Japan. We used a Poisson regression model to estimate the effects of country, sex, and employment status on people’s fertility choices. Findings were congruent with our hypothesis that precarious employment correlates with retreat from fertility. Interaction effects among sex and country variables suggest that precarious employment substantially negatively correlates with fertility for Japanese men, while the reverse is true for Japanese women. We found no such effect in the U.S population. These findings suggest that the strong link between marriage and childbearing unique to Japan makes labor market effects especially salient for the Japanese population.

American Habits cause Racial Consequences – Room 235
This presentation will entail the social inequalities of race, ethnicity and political racism. These subjects will be broken down into specific context on (1) How they reconstruct and influence minds; (2) Brings forth another era of society; and (3) Explaining the many laws passed and actions taken to overcome these social inequalities. Inequalities such as these held most of their popularity in the Post-Civil War movements striving to establish a foundation of power specifically for African Americans. The main theme regarding this racism is targeted through
films. Censorship legislation, such as these, often regulated the film companies and all forms of media from publishing what African Americans believed to be “obscene”, “indecent” and “immoral” cinematic elements. I will then further explain how this “societal re-direction” has continued in our daily lives through films and media. These minor habits serve as a major dilemma towards those who suffer because of them.

Presented by Alexandria Williams – Professional Writing, Undergraduate Student

Lunch: 12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Lissa and Cy Wagner Hall – Room 135
“Thank you to Housing and Food and Coca-Cola for their sponsorship”

Session B: 1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Deconstructing Racism – Room 145

Racism is first and foremost subjective. It takes place in the brain. The human brain possesses this universal capacity to conceptualize. This is what we do from the youngest age. From the learning of a language to the learning of life, our brain constantly creates concepts through the mediation of experiences. The quality and quantity of the experiences are important in the formation of these cognitive concepts. What if an extracted concept is wrong?

By drawing a parallel between the psychological aspects involved in language learning and in racism, we will intend to understand the formation of stereotypes, deconstruct it and suggest possible solutions. I will use second-generation immigrants from African and North-African descent in France to illustrate some concepts that will be developed during the presentation. The presentation will end with a discussion on possible teaching implications.

Presented by Noumane Rahouti – Second Language Acquisition, Graduate Student

Growing Change: Environmental Justice as a Means of Global Activism – Room 280

Within marginal communities, the hegemonic status quo has historically sought to divide, other, and conquer. In response to this aggressive tactic, we often times seek political advocacy in which commonality amongst marginal groups can exist and flourish, i.e. the 99% movement of Occupy Wall-Street. These social media campaigns are effective in presenting a unified front for issues of social justice, but practically do not seem to be gaining much traction as truly subversive movements.

Instead of these reactionary movements of unification, I’d like to propose a model of advocacy which is highly inclusive and increasingly important in our current
neoliberal era—the strategic essentialism of all marginal communities under the banner of environmentalism. Over the course of this presentation I will discuss the advantages of viewing social, economic, and political inequalities through the hermeneutic of environmental justice.

Presented by Matt Kliewer – English, Graduate Student

**Sex & Money: Ending the Stigma of Sex Work** – Room 235

Hook ups and one night stands are not uncommon, yet the moment money is exchanged between two parties, the act immediately becomes both illegal and immoral. What is it about sex and money that incites such strong opinions regarding sex work?

This presentation will provide a brief overview of the types of sex work in the sex industry and the stigmatization sex workers face. From racial profiling to violence against women, sex workers face the same fears and dangers that many marginalized populations do, but they lack the legal protection and social acceptance because of the stigma against their work. This presentation will dismantle the reasons behind the stigmatization of sex work and discuss the impact that stigma has on those in the sex work industry.

Presented by Leslie Tran – English Writing, Undergraduate Student

**Students and the Sweatshop Dilemma** – Room 245

As students, it is very easy to feel disempowered and incapable of enacting change on the world, especially when it comes to the large problems like sweatshops. However, it is actually the case that we have more power to fight exploitation around the globe during our years as members of a university. This is due to the strong ties between corporations and the university. As students, we can influence what our university supports financially, thus impacting workers around the world. In this presentation, attendees will learn about one student’s trip to meet directly with garment factory workers in the Dominican Republic and the impact that this journey had on our campus through the founding of Sooners Against Sweatshops. Learn how students across the world have united to use their influence to better the lives of workers, demonstrating that students are never powerless.

Presented by Charity “Leah” Kennedy – Music Composition, Undergraduate Student

**Behind Blurred Lines: Rape Culture in Our Society** – Room 240

This presentation is a picture of rape culture in present day America. It examines the origin of this cultural phenomenon and its prevalence in our society. First, we address the issue of skepticism and then move on to discuss exactly how tremendous of a problem we have before us, citing Time Magazine, RAINN, and
Rape: The All American Crime. After guiding you through the history and statistics of rape culture with real life examples, we will examine possible solutions to this problem and how we can work together as a society to acknowledge the realities of rape culture.

Presented by Emily Berch – English and Women’s and Gender Studies (Pre-Law), Undergraduate Student

Session C: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

We’re Here, We’re Queer: Homonormativity and Representation in a Changing Social Landscape – Room 240

A lot has changed for queer Americans in the last several decades. With marriage equality on the horizon, Don’t Ask Don’t Tell struck down, and more LGBT representation in the media than ever before, it can seem like the fight against inequality is all but won. However, the threat of homonormativity looms large in the upcoming fights for queer representation and equality. This presentation will explore the concept of homonormativity, its relationship to homonationalism, how it manifests in our media and activism, and what we can do to combat its harmful messages.

Presented by Alex Ruggiers – English Education and Women’s and Gender Studies, Undergraduate Student

The Power of Words: Using Inclusive Language – Room 145

Words are perhaps the most powerful form of interpersonal communication. What we say can have a very real impact on those around us. Thus, advocates for social justice must be equipped to communicate effectively in increasingly diverse environments. But how do we ensure that our language is inclusive of the identities around us? “The Power of Words: Using Inclusive Language” seeks to address a need for language awareness skills for members of a university community specifically, and society generally. It encourages critical examination of commonly used words and phrases that—often unintentionally—perpetuate the marginalization of individuals and groups.

By participating in this program, you will learn: 1) why using inclusive language is beneficial to your communities, 2) what commonly used words/phrases are non-inclusive and why, and 3) how to be an active bystander when non-inclusive language is used in your presence.

Presented by Lena Tenney – Adult and Higher Education and Public Administration, Graduate Student
Is “Travel Fatal to Prejudice”: Spaces for Race and Violence in the Built Environment of Guerrero’s Early Tourist Industry – Room 245

The disappearance of forty-three students in the Mexican state of Guerrero last September was the latest traumatic episode in a series of state-sanctioned violence in the region’s history. Post-revolutionary Guerrero (1920-50) was no exception. Nevertheless, this was the period that the state was remodeled into Mexico’s first crucible of tourism. To do so, the federal army built and monitored highways to stimulate developing tourist areas. Alas, non-tourist satellite communities were also marginalized in the process. That said, in 1928, Will Rogers asked why U.S. aid for the construction of Mexican highways had to be military aid. Rogers’s query points to another question: did U.S. financing of Mexican highways help to stabilize or destabilize Mexico? Focusing on semi-isolated Afro-Mexican communities, this work asserts that tourist highways provided social mobility to be sure, albeit in uneven ways. This encourages following intersections of race, state violence, and tourism within Guerrero’s built environment.

Presented by Jayson Maurice Porter – History (Latin American Environmental History), Graduate Student

Fluoride Removal from Drinking Water: Experience from Ethiopia and India – Room 235

High concentration of fluoride in drinking water supplies is one of the common health problems in many parts of the world. It is estimated that more than 200 million people living all over the world consume water with fluoride concentration above the World Health Organization’s guideline value of 1.5 mg/L. Dental, skeletal and crippling fluorosis are among the human health impacts of consuming water with elevated fluoride level. Therefore, for areas with higher fluoride concentrations in drinking water sources, it is important to either find an alternative water source or implement fluoride removal techniques. To date, various treatment methods have been investigated to remove excess fluoride from drinking water supplies. This presentation provides an overview of the University of Oklahoma’s Water Technology for Emerging Regions (WaTER Center) and its ongoing efforts to mitigate the health impacts of excess fluoride in drinking water supplies in the Rift Valley of Ethiopia.

Presented by Teshome Lemma Yami – Civil Engineering, Graduate Student, Anisha Nijhawan – Civil Engineering, Graduate Student, and Junyi Du – Environmental Engineering, Graduate Student


The objectification of bodies, normalization of rape culture, systematic violence, mass slavery. These issues are all the object of liberatory struggles in social justice.
Let’s edit that. These issues when applied to humans are the object of social justice advocacy. Social justice advocates have systematically ignored the plight of non-human animals and their oppression. But why? Social justice cares about racism and sexism because they arbitrarily deny others their rights based on factors like race or sex. If it’s wrong to arbitrarily deny “the other” rights, why do we completely deny animals their rights? Are animals not others, worthy of ethical consideration? What’s the distinction between race, sex and species? Why is okay to use the latter to justify slavery, but not the former? This presentation will explore these questions, and expose why speciesism is ethically no different from racism or sexism.

Presented by Jeremy Allen – Economics and Environmental Sustainability, Undergraduate Student

Natives and the Academy – Room 140

This presentation will address an argument that demonstrates the various ways the University of Oklahoma has systematically silenced, marginalized, and erased the voice of its native bodies, historically and today. This presentation will draw from interdisciplinary approaches and will incorporate intersectionality by combining critical race theory, campus justice, Native American studies, history, and spoken word poetry. Methods will be used to engage the audience and to inform about this important - and grossly ignored - issue at the University of Oklahoma.

Presented by Ashley McCray – History of Science (Indigenous knowledge, public health in marginalized communities, and race & the university), Graduate Student and Jesse Robbins – Native American Studies, Undergraduate Student

Session D: 3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Costly Illusions: Minorities in For-Profit Higher Education – Room 145

Valued as the traditional path to success and the “American Dream,” education holds a position of prime importance in American society. However, the recent rise in popularity of for-profit higher education threatens this achievement. In theory, for-profit schools, which offer flexibility and career relevance in their programs, should be able to bring an education to those students who are traditionally under-served. Yet for-profit schools remain sadly unregulated. Presenting an illusion of success and opportunity, they prey on students with aggressive and deceptive recruiting techniques, provide a low-quality education, and leave individuals with major student debt. Many students, disadvantaged when they enter, leave in equally as poor of a position. There is an urgent need for additional regulation to ensure transparency in the for-profit sector, both in order to safeguard taxpayer money and especially to protect students from investment in an “education” that could leave them worse off than before.
Hometown Women and Rap: The Socioeconomic Origins of Misogyny – Room 235

Rap music, though increasingly popular, is often identified with misogyny. This paper explores the relationship between this widespread misogyny and individual rappers’ characteristics and environmental influences, including socioeconomic conditions and gender equality in their hometowns. First, the analysis documents stylized facts, which empirically confirm that misogyny is pervasive throughout the genre. Second, this pervasiveness extends to female rappers who, although providing a smaller sample size, employ misogyny at equally high rates as male rappers. Third, the data reveals a stronger presence of misogyny in lyrics of younger rappers, suggesting that misogyny in rap is unlikely to disappear anytime soon. Finally, the evidence suggests that exposure to gender-related socioeconomic forces influence the presence of misogyny within rap music. On average, rappers raised in areas with higher female participation in the labor force and with a higher female to male earnings ratio are less likely to employ misogynistic lyrics in their music.

Climate Justice: The Emerging Frontier of Environmentalism – Room 240

This presentation will explore the history of the environmental justice movement and give an overview of the issues that environmental justice encompasses, as well as its connections with other areas of social justice. We will focus in on climate justice and outline the current main campaigns of the climate justice movement, as well as its origins, issues, tactics, and successes.

The Housing First Model: Working to End Homelessness for US Military Veterans – Room 245

One of the most fundamental human needs is to have shelter from the elements. Without shelter, it becomes more difficult to meet other needs. These other needs include getting treatment for mental and physical health concerns and being able to obtain employment. There has been a paradigm shift on how to best end homelessness. The Housing First model, an evidence based practice, has begun to take the place of the traditional model that required adherence to treatment before a person could be housed. In the Housing First model, the barriers to housing are reduced or eliminated, allowing a person to be housed without being required to engage in services. The Housing First model is currently being successfully implemented by several agencies in Oklahoma City to reduce the population of homeless veterans, with the hope of ending veteran homelessness by the end of 2015, and ending homelessness completely by 2015.
Utilizing Entertainment-Education to Prevent Sex Trafficking: An Oklahoma Perspective – Room 280

Entertainment-education has been successful in many countries, tackling issues such as reproductive health, family planning, adult literacy, HIV prevention, gender equality, women’s empowerment, environmental conservation, community living, substance abuse, and issues facing youth. It is clear that entertainment-education can be used for a variety of issues to create social change. This presentation will, from a theoretical framework, bring awareness to the issue of sex trafficking in Oklahoma and address the effectiveness of entertainment-education and the implications it could have on curtailing sex trafficking in the United States.

Closing Remarks & Keynote: 4:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Lissa and Cy Wagner Hall – Room 135
Keynote Speaker: Lena Khader – School Counseling Graduate Student and Social Justice Graduate Fellow