

**organizer:** Gender Studies Programme, The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
**sponsor:** Lee Hysan Foundation

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES  
ON **GENDER STUDIES** 2010  
性別研究公開講座系列

topic:

# From Feminist Fieldwork to Collaborative Praxis: Lessons from the Sangtin Movement in India

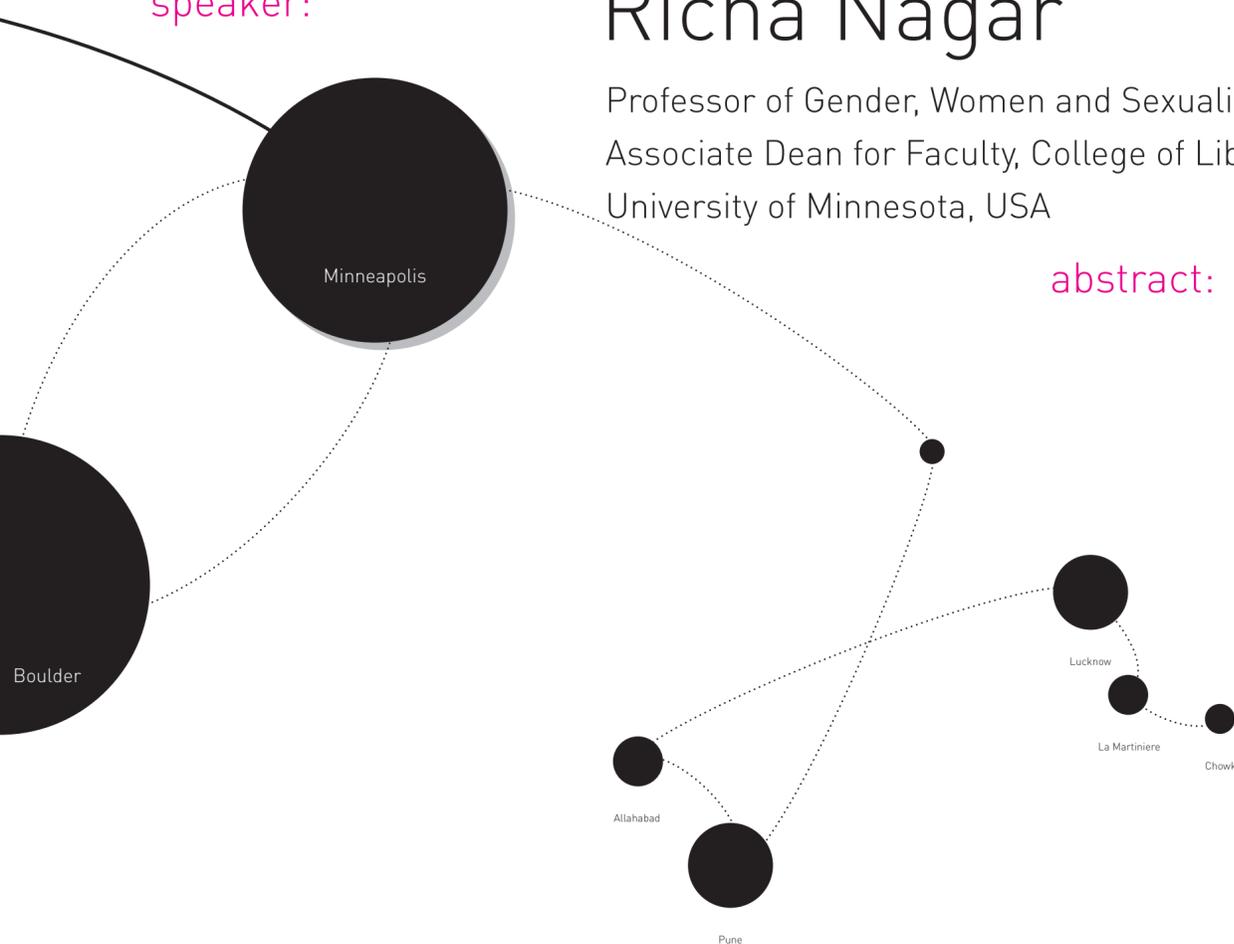
speaker:

## Richa Nagar

Professor of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies  
Associate Dean for Faculty, College of Liberal Arts  
University of Minnesota, USA

abstract:

Much 'cutting-edge' knowledge produced in academic institutions of the global north often proves to be of little value to the socioeconomically marginalized communities of the global south, even when those communities are themselves the focus of the study. This problem is tied to a series of difficult issues that are built into the dominant systems of knowledge production and distribution, including questions of who defines the research question and methodology, who evaluates the results, to whom is the researcher accountable, and who controls the distribution of the knowledge produced. Professor Nagar will address these questions by focusing on her ongoing collaboration with the Sangtin organization in India. This movement of 5000 rural peasants and laborers began as a collective of nine authors who critically reflected on how caste, class, religion, and gender shape the lives of poor rural women, and shape the internal processes, effectiveness, and limitations of non-governmental organizations that work on their behalf. The lecture will highlight the key moments in this journey, as well as the transformative dialogues triggered by the collaboration among rural and academic communities, NGOs, activist collectives, and donor agencies.



bio:

**Richa Nagar** is Professor of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies and Associate Dean for Faculty in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota. She is a founding member of Sangtin Kisaan Mazdoor Sangathan (Sangtin Peasants' and Workers' Organization) in Sitapur district of Uttar Pradesh (India). She has co-authored *Sangtin Yatra* (in Hindi), *Playing with Fire: Feminist Thought and Activism through Seven Lives in India*, *A World of Difference: Encountering and Contesting Development*, and she has co-edited *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis*. Richa's academic research on gender, race, and communal politics among South Asian communities in postcolonial Tanzania and her subsequent work have resulted in numerous articles and essays. Since 1996, her research, organizing, and creative writing (in Hindustani) have focused mainly on collaborative efforts that seek to reconfigure the political terrain and processes associated with 'empowerment' projects aimed at 'the poor'. Richa was a resident fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford in 2005-2006 and was named a Scholar of the College in 2008.

chair:

Marie-Paule Ha  
Associate Professor  
Department of History, The University of Hong Kong

inquiries:

**tel:** 2696 1026 **fax:** 2603 7223  
**email:**  
genderstudiespls@cuhk.edu.hk  
**registration:**  
www.cuhk.edu.hk/gender/publiclecture.htm

# 07.28

**date:** Wednesday, 28 July 2010

**time:** 7:30pm-9:30pm

**venue:** Room 202, Duke of Windsor Social Service Building, 15 Hennessey Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong (Wan Chai MTR Exit A2)