



College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

Department of Anthropology Professional Development Speaker Series

Sources of Structural Authority Behind Traditional Knowledge

During "*La Cuarentena*"

Lisa J. Waugh, RN, PhD

La cuarentena refers to the "quarantine" or forty days of recovery for Mexican women after the birth of a child. Expanding the existing literature in cross cultural birth and reproduction, which focuses primarily on the structural hegemony of biomedicine, this research investigates the sources of structural authority behind traditional knowledge during "la cuarentena". Through ethnographic research with forty immigrant women and their family members, participants revealed their contested and negotiated understandings of postpartum recovery. The practice of 40 days of rest, isolation, and purification postpartum is defined in the Old Testament (Leviticus 12: 1-5), exposing the authoritative knowledge behind la cuarentena as rooted in Biblical sources. This research proposes an expanded exploration of authoritative knowledge, one that acknowledges the influences of structural authority within traditional knowledge.

Dr. Waugh is a recent graduate of the doctoral program in Health and Behavioral Sciences. Her research on postpartum cultural practices comes from working as a public health nurse with immigrant families during pregnancy and the postpartum period. She works as a Health Policy Specialist for the state Medicaid program.

6:30 p.m. Thursday February 16, 2012

Conference Room 200

2nd floor, Administration Building

1201 5th Street, Auraria Campus

Refreshments Provided

Check With Department Regarding Course Extra Credit