Why does knowledge continue to travel only from North to South? To understand the powerful continuity in this exchange, this presentation will start with a historical reconstitution of its creation and functioning. Even in an increasingly decentered world we still witness the hegemony of academic exchange in which North produces theories and South is seen as a space for collecting data or applying Northern theories to particular cases. Knowledges are created under institutional frames that connect them to power interests. During the end of 19th century, for example, evolutionism created a kind of alliance between intellectual and ruling classes in different parts of the world. Later, after World War II, this same alliance was recreated with a new objective: spreading a modernization ideal based on the assumption that West - the US in particular - was the model for the Rest (of the world). Beginning with the 1960s, with the historical event Foucault called “the insurgence of subalternized knowledges”, we saw the rise of a set of studies connected to once overlooked inequalities inside the so called West. These studies challenged the old ways of creating knowledge and connected their work to the interest of subalternized groups like women, colored people, gays, lesbians, colonized peoples, and, more recently, queer persons. Unfortunately, this important historical inflection that created specific fields like feminist, post-colonial and queer studies has not changed the flux of knowledge production from North to the South.

Bio:
Richard Miskolci is Professor of Sociology at the Federal University of São Carlos in São Paulo state, Brazil, and Researcher at Núcleo de Estudos de Gênero Pagu, UNICAMP. A key figure in the debate on queer theory in Brazil, Miskolci has authored several books, including Thomas Mann, the Mestizo Artist (2003), O desejo da nação: masculinidade e branquitude no Brasil de fins do XIX (2012) and is the editor of Dissident Sexualities (2007), the first Brazilian Queer Studies anthology. Dr. Miskolci is a Visiting Scholar in Feminist Studies at UC Santa Cruz this year.

Additional Reading: Dr. Miskolci will present work in dialogue with a recent essay. to be posted as a PDF at feministstudies@ucsc.edu.