Friday, 7 February 2014

4:00 – 6:00 pm • Duke University • Carr Building • Boyd Seminar Room

MARY BETH CHOPAS
(University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

Law, Security, and Ethnic Profiling:
Italians in the United States during World War II

The presentation explores the federal government’s policies of selective internment and other restrictions on Italians residing in the United States during World War II. Through legal analysis of the processes for examining aliens prior to internment, it fills a gap in the historical scholarship that has focused on narratives of people affected by wartime policies. Based on the case files for 343 Italian civilian internees, the paper argues that the U.S. government disregarded civil liberties in the implementation of national security policies. By the time it corrected its policies, many had already suffered the disgrace of being treated like enemies without justification.

MARY BETH BASILE CHOPAS is a Ph.D. candidate in History at UNC Chapel Hill where her research interests are military, legal, and twentieth-century history. She has taught at several law schools, including Harvard and UNC. She has published articles in law journals and co-authored a treatise on mercantile law.

For more information see: www.unc.edu/mhss/

Co-conveners: Triangle Institute for Security Studies