Friday, 24 January 2014

4:00 – 6:00 pm • UNC Chapel Hill • Institute for Arts and Humanities • Hyde Hall

KARA DIXON VUIC
(High Point University)

“Look, but Don’t Touch”:
American Women as Military Entertainment

In every twentieth century war the U.S. military sent women entertainers to war zones. They opened canteens where soldiers could find a friendly face, performed on stage, played games and engaged in conversation, and brought a momentary reprieve from the war to the battlefield. This presentation examines the history of these programs, the military’s intentions for the women, and the meanings women ascribed to their work. It reveals the ways that feminine sexuality formed a central part of the state’s efforts to maintain an effective fighting force, construct martial masculinity, mobilize homefront support, and export American culture to foreign countries.

KARA DIXON VUIC is Associate Professor of History at High Point University. A historian of gender and the U.S. military, she is the author of Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War (2010). She is writing a history of military and civilian agencies’ use of women to entertain American troops during World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and recent wars in the Middle East.

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