



Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society  
Indiana University, Bloomington

## CRRES Speaker Series, Fall 2016

### “From ‘Different’ to ‘Similar’: An Experimental Approach to Understanding Assimilation”

Thursday, November 10 • 4:00-5:30pm  
Persimmon Room, IMU

**Ariela Schachter**

Department of Sociology  
Washington University in St. Louis

Professor Schachter’s talk will address assimilation from both the immigrant and native-born perspectives. Assimilation is theorized as a gradual process in which immigrants and native-born populations develop a subjective sense of social similarity with one another, an outcome that Prof. Schachter refers to as *symbolic belonging*. Existing scholarship offers little evidence as to whether and how immigrants’ gains—in terms of language ability, socioeconomic status, neighborhood integration, or intermarriage—cause changes in the perceptions of the native-born U.S. population. Prof. Schachter will discuss her findings from a nationally representative conjoint survey experiment to explore native-born whites’ perceptions of *symbolic belonging* and capacity to grant *symbolic belonging* to immigrants in U.S. society. She examines how these results may be optimistic in terms of potential immigrant mobility, but cautiously so due to explicitly racialized lines of division that remain just below the surface.

