GFE Brown Bag lunch talk by

LILLY IRANI
GFE, and Ph.D. Candidate, Dept. of Informatics

Designing Consumers, Designing Development: Selling "Safe Water" in India

Wednesday, April 21st, 2010

Humanities Gateway 3200

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

This paper explores the role of user-centered design practices in contemporary development projects in India. I describe a project to design a bacterial water filter for the households of "the global poor" - a water filter that, designers discovered, very few real people seemed to want (yet). By investigating everyday practices of research planning, negotiating with clients, selecting trial users, and producing research documentation, I explore how these user-centered practices configure politics, refine technologies and infrastructures of consumerism in India, and reinvigorate the business of development. This paper draws from a 7-week pilot ethnography of a design firm in India, traversing Delhi, Bangalore, and rural Andhra Pradesh in Spring 2009.

A light lunch will be served.
Please RSVP to bbaliga@uci.edu by April 19th, 2010