

# Graduate Student Research Day 2014

## Florida Atlantic University

### **DOROTHY F. SCHMIDT COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS**

#### **Three Women Potters in Iran: Issues of Art, Craft and Gender**

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Iran's long history of pottery making goes back ten thousand years, and it is as diverse as the country's geography and ethnic composition. Clay as a material connects contemporary Iranian society to its ancient roots, and it permeates daily life in terms of the economy, technology and even gender roles. This presentation focuses on the lives of three women potters in northern and western Iran, one in the village of Jirdeh Central Gilan province, another in the village of khomar Mahaleh East Gilan, and the third outside of the City of Marand West Azerbaijan province. Each woman represents a particular genre of handmade pottery from functional to sculptural work, and she establishes a unique identity in terms of production, commercial distribution and her personal relationship to the social and geographic environment. A selection of interviews, photographs and video clips taken during the summer of 2012 illustrate how these women work and thrive in their leadership, independence and creative artistry. Key concepts include: 1 Land place, home, 2 Technique and work process, 3 Gender roles, 4 Tradition and why their works are considered traditional, and 5 Authenticity and what makes their works authentic. The solitude that separates and yet connects these women offers a contrast to the nature of ceramics in the contemporary art world of Tehran and also opens a dialog for gender and feminist issues that are relevant to study of art technology, design and the roles of women in Iranian society today.