**Maasai Migrants Trigger Films: From Field School Production to Post-Screening Discussion**

Peter Biella (San Francisco State University) and Leonard Kamerling (University of Alaska, Fairbanks)

For three summers, San Francisco State’s Maasai Migrants Field School has worked in Tanzania to produce social intervention, Maa language, ‘trigger films’. Our documentaries explore health and discrimination in Tanzania’s cities – to which migrating Maasai youth and displaced wives are pulled – as well as problems in traditional homesteads – where alcoholism, partner abuse, and impoverishment push people away.

Trigger films have theoretical roots in Freirian pedagogy and the *STEPS for the Future Project* of Southern Africa. Valuable descriptions are found in Fisch (1972) and Ber and Alroy (2001, 2002). Trigger films depict real events and elicit emotional reactions, but their stories avoid conclusions and lack narrative closure. The incompleteness of these narratives invites audiences to express their own emotions, conclusions and suggestions. Post-screening discussions thus resemble group therapy and capacity building events.

The field school’s films were shot in central Tanzania, but this VRC presentation will feature the reaction of Maasai audiences from the north. The geographical distance has important consequences. Maasai from the region where we filmed are known for being worldly and attracted to non-Maasai influences. But their escalating HIV rate is now found throughout the diaspora: the same push and pull factors for migration and HIV-exposure are everywhere increasing. Thus the often tragic stories from the south are both predictive and preventative for northern Maasai who are less acculturated and less worldly-wise: our trigger films can give others crucial information that will help them make informed decisions about city life, sexuality and alternatives to migration for poverty eradication.