February 5, 12, and 19, 2013 at 7 pm in Tribble Hall C216, Wake Forest University

Tues. Feb. 5—“In the Family.” Directed by Joanna Rudnick, 2008

This powerful documentary chronicles the filmmaker’s struggle with the consequences of testing positive for the BRCA genetic mutation, which indicates that she is genetically predisposed to contracting breast and ovarian cancers. Rudnick also traces the stories of several other young women with cancer histories in their families who undergo genetic testing. The film explores the medical decisions they subsequently make—including prophylactic mastectomy—and the impact of those choices on their lives. Produced by Kartemquin Films, this award-winning documentary runs for 83 minutes.

Pink Ribbons, Inc.


This feature documentary exposes the corporate underbelly of mainstream breast cancer culture. Although millions in North America consider wearing a pink ribbon or buying pink products in October an important form of breast cancer activism, this film examines how the disease “has become the poster child of corporate cause-related marketing campaigns.” The commercialization of breast cancer often obscures its devastating realities, the filmmaker posits, and it is not always clear where the money from product sales actually goes. Based on a scholarly study by Samantha King and produced by the National Film Board of Canada, this thought-provoking film runs for 97 minutes.

Tues. Feb. 19—“Baring It All: The SCAR Project Documentary,” Directed by Patricia Zagarella, 2011

This inspiring documentary explores photographic portraits taken by fashion photographer David Jay of young women with breast cancer—a series entitled “The SCAR Project: Breast Cancer Is Not a Pink Ribbon” that has been exhibited in galleries throughout the United States. The film’s focus is on four women in their twenties, in various stages of the disease, who became Jay’s subjects in order to raise awareness by exposing their scars and telling their stories. Produced by Lost in Vision Entertainment, this documentary won a Daytime Emmy Award; it runs for 47 minutes.

A 20-minute discussion of each film following the screening will be led by Dr. Mary DeShazer, Professor of English and WGS at WFU and the author of two scholarly books on women’s writing about breast cancer. This film series is free and open to the public and is held in conjunction with “HerStories: Breast Cancer Narratives and Counter-narratives” a March 1-2, 2013 symposium sponsored by the Wake Forest Humanities Institute. For details, visit https://pdc.wfu.edu/event/5769.

The Breast Cancer Narratives Documentary Film Series is sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at Wake Forest University.