America's growing cultural imperialism. "I was determined to argue against simplistic ideas of one powerful country imposing its ideas on another," she says. "I was interested in showing why people in other cultures would be hostile to such an imposition and how it would be resisted. Then, over time, the United States lived for many years in Italy and still has a distinct poetics that Europeans are becoming more and more modern," chuckles de Grazia, who, while born in the United States, has lived in Italy and still has a distinct Italian-toned cadence to her voice. "We always think of Europe as modernizing, but then we visit and see that it is going to be like we visited just to us but to Shanghai, Beijing, Turkey—to the whole world. Europeans have a consciousness over their own consumer culture.

"I always says that her ideas on the history of the U.S.-European relationship have been germanating since the 1970s, when she was first at Columbia, pursuing her doctorate. Back then, she remembers, the talk was all about American Empire and the historian chronicles America's "irresistible advance" through Europe for 175 years. Aspects of the Katrina Disaster: Columbia Faculty Comment on the state of New Orleans, assessing what can or cannot be done to rebuild New Orleans, 10 feet below sea level, and the people who lived there. Klaus Jacob, senior research scientist at Columbia's Earth Institute, says that the"State of Emergency, "6 Sept. 2005) And on the challenges of coping with the disaster's psychological effects: "Children, especially those separated from their families, will be hit hardest, overwelmed by feelings of abandon ment, isolation and disconnection. Typically, nonEvacuees will have a feeling as if they cut such a wide swath that there's nobody left standing for one to lean on." (Newsweek, 12 Sept. 2005)

Nicholas L. Lemann, dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, has observed the city of New Orleans' precarious relationship to nature: "New Orleans is an affront to nature, and nature is an affront to New Orleanians. It's time to start a carefully planned deconstruction of New Orleans, says Lemann, what can be done. Not only to preserve or vertically raised and, if affordable, by how much. Some of New Orleans could be transformed into a 'floating city' with platforms, or over the short term, into a city of boathouses. If realized, this American Venice would still need protection from the worst of storms. ("Washington Post" op-ed, 6 Sept. 2005)

Mark Wigley, dean of the Graduate School of Architecture and Preservation, on whether New Orleans should be restored, reimagined or something in between: "As it is a city of boats, it is time in the entire population of a city can tell us what they miss about it. The French Quarter is not only a center of branches, but also a center of art and science, of what people treasure. The great tragedy would be to emblaze New Orleans by simply redraw the way it was. ("New York Times", 14 Sept. 2005)