

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 18, 2012 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

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CULTURAL NARRATIVES

Session Moderator: Valerie Manusov, Communication

Mary Gates Hall 228

3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Adoption, Adaptation, and Attachment: Narrating the Trans-Racial and Trans-National Ecology of Ethiopian Adoption Through Lived Experience

Ryan Mateo Sharnbroich, Senior, Anthropology: Medical Anth & Global Hlth, Public Health-Global Health

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: James Mutitu, Anthropology, Depression Project

In 2011, over 18% of all international adoptions to the United States were from Ethiopia; an increase of over 1,000% in the past decade. Ethiopian adoptees have also shown to have better health outcomes and less behavioral issues than adoptees from other regions of the world. Even though Ethiopian adoption to the United States has become an increasingly prevalent phenomenon, virtually no research has been done to explore the complex and unique processes of trans-racial family building, attachment, and identity formation experienced by Ethiopian adoptees and their families. While adoptees are integrated into new social and cultural settings, adoptive parents are forced to navigate their family through a new social and cultural space within a heavily racialized society, and facilitate these complex processes for their children and themselves. Why has Ethiopian adoption become such a recent popular trend? How do adoptive parents of Ethiopian adoptees navigate the critical experiences of family building/attachment and identity making/re-making? What strategies and resources do they use or create to facilitate these processes? In order to explore these questions, this project has been developed to investigate and analyze the lived experience of Ethiopian adoption by Euro-American parents to identify and understand these complex and poorly understood processes. Six case studies have been generated through semi-structured interviews, narrating the adoption process from the perspective of adoptive parents living in the Seattle area who retrospectively examined the experiences they faced and continue to face as Euro-Americans adopting from Ethiopia. Key informants, such as a pediatric physician specializing in adoptive medicine, have been consulted to provide further input and direction in analysis and theory de-

velopment. Data is qualitative and the analysis interpretive with a goal of understanding these complex, unique, and challenging processes of identity making/re-making, cultural reconciliation, trans-racial family building, parent-child attachment, and other critical fundamental transitions.

Worth the Weight: Heavy Asian-Americans are Seen as More American

Caitlin Handron, Recent Graduate, Psychology, Italian

Undergraduate Research Conference Travel Awardee

Mentor: Sapna Cheryan, Psychology

Mentor: Jennifer Wang, Psychology

Despite an increasing US-born population, Asian-Americans are often regarded as perpetual foreigners and unrecognized as 'American.' The present research examines whether Asian-Americans that are heavier, a stereotype commonly associated with Americans, are perceived as more American than normal weight Asian-Americans. Sixty-eight students were randomly assigned to see a photo of one of three Asian-American women. The same three women were used in both conditions and photos were edited to reflect a change in weight (the weights estimated by participants differed on average by 46 pounds between conditions). Results showed that heavier Asian-Americans were rated as more likely to have been born in the US and rated as worse at math than normal weight Asian-Americans. This research suggests that weight may reduce the extent to which Asian-Americans are perceived as foreigners and increase acknowledgement of their American identity.

Strengthening the Capacity of the Seattle Vietnamese Community

Khieyton H (Ton) Nguyen, Senior, Biology (Bothell Campus)

Trang Le, Senior, Biochemistry, Psychology

Amy Van, Senior, International Studies

Chi Hoang, Senior, Sociology

Khoi Nguyen, Senior, Bioengineering

Mary Gates Scholar

Michelle Tran, Senior, Psychology

Francis Tran

Anh Doan

Tony Vo, Senior, Individualized Studies, American Ethnic Studies

Vivian Dao, Sophomore, Pre-Sciences

Minh Phuc H Nguyen, Sophomore, Pre-Sciences

Mentor: James Hong, Vietnamese Friendship Association

Mentor: Dieu-Hien Hoang, School of Nursing

The Community Action Research and Empowerment Project (CARE), launched in September of 2010, is a participatory action research project where elders and youth work together to assess the strengths and needs of the Vietnamese community in Seattle, and develop a long-term plan to address those needs and advance the community. Data from 16 focus groups, 85 interviews, and 316 surveys were collected. We learned that the Vietnamese community members have a broad range of concerns, such as youth and education, housing, jobs, health and social services. During Phase 2 (2011-2012), a strategic action plan will be created with extensive input from community members to address the issues identified—thereby creating a shared vision for the Vietnamese community.

A Story of a Seattle's Chinese American Family in the 1900s

Gengwu (Edward) Wang, Junior, Exchange - Engineering

Zhe (Alice) Fan, Junior, Exchange - Arts & Sciences

Anbang (James) Dai, Junior, Exchange - Arts & Sciences

Mentor: Stevan Harrell, Anthropology

In Wing Luke Asian Museum located in Chinatown Seattle, the Archive collection owns more than two hundred personal letters and five photos of one Chinese American family in Seattle. Some of these letters are from China; others come from other family members in the United States and Canada. A letter from home is a priceless treasure. The recipients of these letters are Huang Shuozhang and Huang Jiren (father and son), who ran a company in Seattle Chinatown, named London Company importing food and materials from China to America during that time. We as volunteers are working on these letters this quarter, translating them into English and using PastPerfect (a museum collection management software) to catalog them. While translating these letters, we have

found many sophisticated relationships within this big family, including family members and associated business partners around the United States and Canada. These letters reflect not only the hardship of Chinese Americans at that time, but also a heartfelt story. We intend to collect more primary resources from Wing Luke Asian Museum and Special Collection of the UW library to uncover the story. Meanwhile we will also do some research on the Internet, e.g. we will look for Information of the census and maps of the Seattle Chinatown in that period of time to support our opinions. However, the story of this family as early Chinese American pioneers struggling for their true identities and success in United States should not be forgotten in history.

Born in Unincorporated America: Citizenship and Nationality in Territorial Philippines and Puerto Rico

Jacqueline (Jacqueline Wu) Wu, Junior, Chemistry

Mentor: Moon-Ho Jung, History

The Fourteenth Amendment attributes citizenship to all those born within the “jurisdiction” of the United States. However, the acquisitions of the Philippines and Puerto Rico by the United States challenges conceptions of citizenship, as both colonies’ inhabitants were neither entitled to citizenship nor were able to stake claims on American identity upon annexation. Through a legalize investigation centering on Supreme Court cases and legislations, I will show the manipulation of citizenship to politically disenfranchised colonies while promoting empire. The Insular Cases amplify the complexity of territorial citizenship, by stating that the Philippines and Puerto Rico are “foreign to the United States in a domestic sense”—a paradoxical relationship where the Philippines and Puerto Rico are prohibited from establishing independence, yet alienated within the United States. However, the Jones Act (1917) administers U.S. citizenship over Puerto Rico, inferring a preferential treatment towards Puerto Ricans over Filipinos. In actuality, transcripts of Congressional hearings and committee debates pontificate different tactics of U.S. policymakers to remedy resistance and independence movements within the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Economic incentives, evidence of Americanization, but most importantly, the racial conception between the two parties justifies the granting of citizenship for Puerto Ricans over Filipinos. The varying racialization coupled with the intimate connection between citizenship and American identity influenced not only politicians but national sentiment as to who is and is not an American. The examination of U.S. citizenship between Filipinos and Puerto Ricans ends with the enactment of the Tydings-McDuffie Act (1934), granting the Philippines independence and self-government after a period of time. In retrospect and comparison to contemporary issue, the idea of citizenship is subject to change and is closely linked to national identity. Nonetheless, the administration of citizenship defines and denies power and privilege among groups of peo-

ple.