

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 17, 2013 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

POSTER SESSION 1

Commons West, Easel 40

11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Sorry, No Hablo Mixteco: Transnational Migration, Indigenous Language, and the Promotion of Ethnic Consciousness via Hybrid Discourse

Ramiro Antonio (Ramiro) Reyes, Senior, International Studies, International Studies: Latin America

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

For the Mixtecos from Oaxaca, Mexico, their native language has functioned as an indicator of “inferiority” and “backwardness” due to prevalent stigmatization and stereotypes associated with indigeneity throughout Latin America. Now as the fastest growing indigenous population in the U.S., Mixtecos are challenged with the recent proliferation of the Mixteco/Spanish/English language divide that has emerged within Mexican-American communities throughout the U.S. west coast. In the face of the more dominant Spanish and English languages, the Mixteco language has seemingly been relegated to a “useless” language in the eyes of some Mixtecos. However, this view is not shared by all, and therefore the question arises as to how discourse regarding language is shaped for the transborder Mixteco communities in the United States. By using language as an indicator of the dynamics of power and cultural celebration within Mixteco satellite communities in the U.S., I address the paradox regarding the simultaneous decrease of Mixteco speakers and the increase of discourse via subaltern public spheres promoting the revitalization of the Mixteco language. By employing a comparative discourse analysis of the dialogue within their grassroots organizations and personal narratives, I examine the agency of the Mixtecos in forming their own suitable discourse to tackle the issues they face as transnational migrants. I suggest that via their grassroots organizations, the Mixtecos are creating a new hybrid language by incorporating Mixteco with other forms of discourse in order to advocate their indigenous consciousness and cultural celebration against constant discrimination and stigmatization of their language, culture, and voice. By addressing the agency of the Mixtecos, this research will contribute to the study of indigenous migration and social movements from Latin America.

POSTER SESSION 1

Commons West, Easel 39

11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

El Motor de Conocimiento: Mercedes Sosa, el Conocimiento Indígena y la Política Involucrada

Gabriela (Gaby) Wright Trejo, Senior, Global Studies (Bothell)

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies

Mentor: Simon Trujillo

Mentor: Raj Chetty

Grounded in subaltern studies, a body of work that analyzes the viewpoints of those who are outside of the social, political and geographic power structure, this paper strives to illuminate the Nueva Canción, or “New Song” movement. Emerging in Latin America during the 1960s, Nueva Canción celebrated the lives of indigenous and laboring class communities, but was largely made up of figures from positions of racial and economic privilege within the larger system. Investigating the seemingly contradictory politics of representation present, this paper discusses how the movement sought to champion disenfranchised figures, while simultaneously casting such figures as incapable of representing themselves; thus rendering them voiceless. At the center of my inquiry is Mercedes Sosa, a prominent Nueva Canción figure of local and international recognition, who, as a woman of mixed European and indigenous ancestry, attempted to traverse the gap between the movement and its sentimentalized subject matter. By using Sosa as a focal point, this paper aims to illustrate the complex dynamics of the social and political climate in Latin America from 1960-1982, that enabled Sosa to function neither as producer or subject, but as what can be referred to as a “knowledge mover,” circulating the dominant ideology at the same time as effectively challenging it.

SESSION 1G

ONLINE SPACES: THE EPHEMERA AND RITUAL, THE ARTISTIC AND SUBVERSIVE

*Session Moderator: Kristin Gustafson, School of
Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, UW Bothell*
242 MGH

1:15 PM to 2:45 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

NSFW: The Subversive Cultural Logic of Anonymous Online Culture

Jordan Taylor Augustine, Senior, English

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

*Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic
Studies*

Mentor: Raj Chetty

Mentor: Simon Trujillo

NSFW (“Not Safe For Work”) is an acronym used to indicate that a website, a picture, or a link contains inappropriate (usually pornographic) content. One could say that all of 4chan.org is NSFW. 4chan is an imageboard where communication takes place in the form of pictures and images posted by anonymous users and deleted minutes after they appear online. This anonymity and ephemerality of communication unleashes levels of racism, sexism, homophobia, and general malevolence unseen in Social Web communities like Facebook. However, 4chan operates with virtually no advertisement (or profit-motive) while Facebook is now a publicly traded corporation, with a mandate to generate revenue for its stockholders by monetizing its assets, which happen to be the words, pictures, jokes, and plans of its more than 1 billion users. Discourses surrounding the Social Web speak in terms of “openness,” “connectivity,” and “transparency,” promising a more civil online community. However, these trends make personal data and communication susceptible to appropriation by capital. How has 4chan remained a largely non-commodified space in the midst of the corporate colonization of the Social Web, and what do we make of its sociopathic ethos? I studied the community and signifying practices of 4chan’s random board /b/, finding that although the fundamental anonymity and ephemerality of communication on the board free up participants to be racist, sexist, homophobic, and generally malevolent to degrees unseen in the Social web, these same conditions create a space for truly free speech (in both the monetary and behavioral sense), creating a novel mode of signification and a space for subversive political consciousness in the process.

SESSION 2B

THE AMERICAS REVISITED: LOCAL VOICES CHALLENGING AND OCCUPYING CONSTRUCTED NATIONAL IDENTITIES

Session Moderator: Julie Villegas, English
171 MGH

3:45 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Ecuadorian Nations 500 Years Later: Exploring Contradictions in the Formation of Indigenous Political Voice

Travis Galloway, Senior, International Studies, Spanish

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

The levantamientos of 1990 and ’92 in Ecuador demonstrate the incredible ability of indigenous political organizations to present local concerns at the national level. After 500 years of resistance and oppression, the government was forced into serious political negotiations. I hope to add to an ongoing conversation regarding indigenous political organization in Latin America by studying the specific case of Ecuadorian indigenous peoples of the Oriente, and the construction of political voice in response to government policy, the actions of private companies, and the involvement of international lending organizations that led to years of unfettered, destructive practices of extraction and colonization in the last half of the 20th century. Through an analysis of documentary film, academic writing, and media coverage, this project looks to show that this struggle has been wrought with contradictions and unintended consequences and characterized by a high level of coordination at the local and national level. Emphasizing contradictions in the construction of political voice is appropriate in a discussion of political representation of historically marginalized or excluded peoples, who more than ever occupy an uncertain borderland space. I think it is crucial to understand that, in the construction of indigenous political voice, contradictions reinforce the borderlands they seek to escape, or the dominant power structures.

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THE AMERICAS REVISITED: LOCAL VOICES CHALLENGING AND OCCUPYING CONSTRUCTED NATIONAL IDENTITIES

Session Moderator: Julie Villegas, English
171 MGH

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Old War, Nuanced Soldiers: 'Generational Borderland' Catalysts of Chilean University Movement

Sara Jane Alstrom, Senior, International Studies
Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies

Mentor: Raj Chetty

Mentor: Simon Trujillo

The infamous dictator Augusto Pinochet came to power through a bloody coup on September 11, 1973 and drastically changed the face of the Chilean government. His regime instituted strict policies of neoliberalism that led to the privatization of the university system. Forty years after the coup, many of these policies remain in place, untouched and accepted as the reasons behind Chile as the 'economic miracle' of South America. However, tensions under these neoliberal policies, specifically in the university system, fomented a recent eruption of political activism in May of 2011. Why is it that Chile, one of the most economically 'successful' countries in South America and the 'pride' of the IMF and World Bank models, is seeing the rise of a powerful student movement against neoliberal legacies? My research juxtaposes the master narrative of Chile as a 'model country', in terms of hegemonic modernity, against the experiences of the Chilean university students who have fought to challenge it. I argue that the catalyst behind the student movement can be in part explained by the legacies of Pinochet's repression and the political struggles of past generations. This contradictory temporal space forms a 'generational borderland'. These generational ruptures combined with the legacies of repression, have led to the emergence of new forms of innovative and marketable protest, cultivated longevity for the movement through the mistrust of politicians, and inspired a reinvigoration of the Communist Party of Chile.

SESSION 2U

STEREOTYPING AND PREJUDICE

Session Moderator: Allison Master, Psychology
175 JHN

3:45 PM to 5:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

The Power of Discourse: Politics and Construction of the DSM

Anne Kennebeck (Anne) Wolken, Senior, Psychology, Anthropology: Medical Anth & Global Hlth

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

Early medical philosophers describe psychiatric illnesses as natural, biologically bound entities with clear definitions. However, other thinkers have begun to trace the source of these definitions to a more political root. I argue that the very language we use to diagnosis, define, and treat mental illnesses is influenced by the social and political climate, and that this language has been creating an increasing number of borders within the spectrum of human experience since the introduction of the DSM (the primary mental health diagnostic tool in the U.S.) in 1952. Using discourse analysis as a tool to examine the four editions of the DSM, I will discuss how the change in language of the last 60 years has followed political and social movements of the times. In particular, an investigation into the changing language describing and defining gender and sexuality disorders will uncover these changes. Psychiatry has been using particular language to create and negotiate the line between "normal" and "abnormal" since the origin of the field. Individuals labeled using this fluctuating language have to negotiate all the legal, social, political and cultural consequences of this line, and understanding the origins of these borders will shed some light on the human experience behind them.

POSTER SESSION 3

Balcony, Easel 87

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Imagining a Novel Nation: The Indian English Novel and the Indian Independence Movement

Kali Swenson, Senior, English

Mary Gates Scholar

Mentor: Raj Chetty

Mentor: Jos?? Antonio Lucero, International Studies/CHID

Mentor: Carolyn Pinedo Turnovsky, American Ethnic Studies

Mentor: Simon Trujillo (svtrujillo@gmail.com)

How did the Indian English novel function within the Indian independence movement? Literature illuminates unique narratives not necessarily communicated by other forms of print media like newspapers and history books, and these stories exert a very different kind of influence. In the particular instance of Indian English novels around the time that India gained independence from Britain, literature established power through its inherent cultural capital, its role in imagining nations, and its critical abilities. These novels embodied traits of both the colonized and the colonizer, allowing them to occupy a position of notable political and cultural influence. Drawing on theories on literature and nationalism, this study employs close readings of novels by Rabindranath Tagore and Mulk Raj Anand within the context of historically evident politics and cultural phenomena of the time period to explain the role Indian English novels played in revolutionizing India. An understanding of the factors enabling the novel's influence will illuminate how India's independence was imagined and realized. Situating Indian English novels of the Indian independence movement in their historical and social context may yield further understanding to the way historical events played out and reveal more of literature's effect on the societies in which it is produced.