

Ethnography in Racial and Ethnic Communities

ETHN 107/USP 130

Summer Session I

2008

Professor: Thuy Vo Dang, Ph.D.

Email: t5vo@ucsd.edu

Class time: T/Th 6:00-8:50pm

Location: SEQUO 147

Office: SSB 249

Office Hours

Tuesday 4:00-6:00pm

Thursday 5:00-6:00pm

or by appointment

Course Description

This course employs ethnographic field methods to study racial and ethnic communities in urban sites throughout Southern California, home to highly diverse communities along lines of race, class, nationality, and sexuality. Each student will design a project and conduct an individual ethnography that will be reviewed by his/her peers as well as the instructor. This structure will allow the class to perform a wide range of methods and explore topics in urban ethnography centering on student interests in a collaborative academic environment. The student researcher will be able to consider, among other topics, social geography, access to resources and social mobility, neighborhood and community formation and representation, cultural values, inter-ethnic relations, and group mobilization.

The course will emphasize critical, collaborative ethnographic practices from project design, through data collection, interpretation, and writing. In-class sessions will focus on developing critical reading and writing skills, contributing appropriately and extensively to class discussion, as well as giving and receiving peer feedback. In the field, students will practice critical listening, observing, and analyzing, and will also engage research through participation and conversation.

Because of the condensed time frame for Summer Session, students are expected to commit a minimum of 4 hours of field work per week, in addition to time completing reading assignments and preparing for class. Attendance is vital to the success of this course, so any student who has more than one unexcused absence will not be able to receive a passing grade.

Required Text (the book is available at Groundwork Bookstore: 858.452.9625)

Situated Lives: Gender and Culture in Everyday Life (REFERRED TO AS "SL" IN COURSE SCHEDULE)

Editors: Louise Lamphere, Helena Ragone, and Patricia Zavella

Publisher: Routledge, 1997.

ISBN: 0-415-91807-3

All other course readings listed in the syllabus are available on ERESERVES on the UCSD Library website.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation:	10% (2 or more unexcused absences will result in a failing grade)
Presentation	10%
Field Observation Paper	25%
Interview Paper	25%
Ethnography Paper (final)	30%

* Late papers and assignments will not be accepted.

* To pass this course and/or receive a final grade, all course requirements must be completed satisfactorily.

* Detailed paper guidelines will be handed out in lecture.

Schedule (subject to change)

*All readings must be done prior to attending the class lectures.

Week 1

Tuesday, July 1

Introduction to Ethnography
Project Brainstorming

Thursday, July 3

- SL, pp. 1-19.
- Harrison, Faye. "Ethnography as Politics"
- Van Maanen, John. Excerpts from *Tales of the Field*
- Gupta & Ferguson. "Culture, Power, Place: Ethnography at the End of an Era"

Week 2

Tuesday, July 8

- SL, pp. 42-61.
- Emerson, R. Chapters 2 & 3 from *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*

Thursday, July 10

- Ong, Aihwa. "Making the Biopolitical Subject: Cambodian Immigrants, Refugee Medicine, and Cultural Citizenship in California"
- Duong, Lan. "Desire and Design: Technological Display in the Vietnamese American Café and Karaoke Bar"

Week 3

Tuesday, July 15

*OBSERVATION PAPER DUE TODAY.

- SL, pp. 142-156.
- SL, pp. 235-251.
- Stack, Carol. Excerpts from *All Our Kin*

Thursday, July 17

- SL, pp. 255-270.
- George, Sheba. Introduction from *When Women Come First*

Week 4

Tuesday, July 22

*INTERVIEW PAPER DUE TODAY.

- SL, pp. 292-310.

- Wolf, Margery. "Writing Ethnography: The Poetics and Politics of Culture"

Thursday, July 24

- Vo, Linda Trinh. "Performing Ethnography in Asian American Communities: Beyond the Insider-versus-Outsider Perspective"
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Writing Against Culture"

Week 5

Tuesday, July 29

- SL, pp. 400-419
- Behar, Ruth. "Translated Woman"

Thursday, July 31

- SL, pp. 23-41
- Rosaldo, Renato. Excerpts from *Culture & Truth*

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8: FINAL ETHNOGRAPHY PAPER DUE 10:00 AM – 12 NOON in my office.

*******Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD*******

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of "interest" yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate Advisor, at 858-534-3277 or yescamilla@ucsd.edu.