This project addresses the salient factors that contribute to the demographic changes in East Asia, with a focus on the future prospects of multiculturalism. Drawing expertise from scholars in Asia and the United States, the project seeks to bring attention to the imminent changes in East Asia to the larger audience in the U.S., Korea, and elsewhere through expert group discussions, public forums, publicity efforts, and publication of academic manuscripts. Situated in the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, the Department of Ethnic Studies at Colorado State University, in collaboration with the Institute of Modern Korean Studies at Yonsei University, the international gatherings of scholars will be used as a forum for vibrant discussions and intellectual inquiry about the causes, the consequences and the policy implications pertaining to the demographic changes in Asia.

We are hopeful that this conference will bring awareness about Asian affairs to new audiences, stimulate academic research on international migration to Asian countries, establish academic ties between research centers and institutes in the U.S., Korea and other Asian countries, and create a basis for future collaborations among scholars on the topic.

Upcoming Conference

Conference Date
Friday January 30, 2009
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Venue
Colorado State University

For more information contact
Dr. Joon Kim at
joon.kim@colostate.edu
Ethnic Studies Faculty

Richard Breaux, Assistant Professor. He holds a B.A. in English from Dartmouth College; a M.A. from University of Iowa in African American World Studies; and a Ph.D. also from the University of Iowa in History of Education & African American History.

Roe Bubar, Associate Professor. She holds a B.A in Psychology from the University of New Hampshire and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Colorado.

Maricela DeMirjyn, Assistant Professor. She holds a B.S. in Biopsychology and a M.A. in Women’s Studies from San Diego State University; and a Ph.D. in Education, Cultural Perspective Emphasis, from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

May Fu, Assistant Professor. She holds a B.A. in History & English, University of California, Los Angeles; a M.A. in History from the University of Minnesota; and a M.A. and Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies from the University of California, San Diego. She is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Michigan for the 2008-09 academic year.

Eric Ishiwata, Assistant Professor. He received a B.A. in Liberal Arts from Colorado State University and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Hawaii, Manoa.

Joon Kim, Associate Professor. He holds a B.A. from The New School of Social Research in Sociology and Urban Studies and a M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, in Ethnic Studies.

Ernesto Sagás, Associate Professor. He holds a B.A. in History of the Americas from the University of Puerto Rico; a M.A. in Latin American Studies and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Florida.

Norberto Valdez, Associate Professor. He holds a B.A. in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Colorado, Boulder; a M.A. in Cultural Anthropology/Archaeology from the University of Idaho; a M.A. in Social Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison; and a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the University of Wisconsin.

Irene Vernon, Professor, Chair of the Ethnic Studies Department, and Assistant to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. She holds a B.A. in Native American Studies from the University of California, Berkeley; a M.A. in History from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque; and a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies from the University of California, Berkeley.

Ethnic Studies Staff

Jodi Griffin has worked in the Ethnic Studies office for six years. She enjoys dealing with faculty, staff and students. Jodi is a proud grandmother of Tate and Mason.

Cynarra Tweed has worked with the Ethnic Studies Department since 2004. Cynarra is a Communication Studies major and a graduate of the Ethnic Studies program.

Maria Reyes has worked as a student assistant at the Ethnic Studies Department since fall 2007. Maria is a Business Administration major with a minor in Ethnic Studies.

Brent Adams joined the Ethnic Studies Department in fall 2008 as a student assistant. Brent is a double major in Political Science and Ethnic Studies with a Business Administration minor.

Brad Vogler is the Graduate Student Assistant in the Ethnic Studies Department. He holds a M.L.S. (Library Science), and began work on an M.F.A. in Creative Writing in fall 2008.

CAFAQ

Martha Burnside is a Researcher and holds a B.A. from Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Andrea Israel is a Researcher and holds a B.A. in Sociology from Colorado State University.

Barbara Pledett is a Research Scientist and holds a B.A. and M.S. in Psychology from Wayne State University and a Ph.D. in Education from Colorado State University.

Pamela Jumper Thurman is a Senior Research Scientist, Project Director, and Clinical Psychologist. She holds a B.A. in Psychology and a M.S. in Counseling Psychology from Northeastern State University, and a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from Oklahoma State University.

Associates & Instructors

Associates
Dr. Eric Aoki, Department of Communication Studies; Dr. Cindy Griffin, Department of Communication Studies; Dr. Jane Kneller, Department of Philosophy; Dr. Robert Hoffert, Faculty Emeritus; Dr. Kathleen Pickering, Department of Anthropology; Dr. Donna Rouner, Department of Journalism and Technical Communication; Dr. William Timpson, School of Education; Dr. Raymond Yang, Department of Human Development & Family Studies

2008-2009 Instructors and their Classes
Nooie Brantmeier, Indigenous Women Children & Tribes; Monica Collins, Ethnicity and the Media and Ethnicity, Class and Gender in the U.S.; Dennis Goeltl, Introduction to Ethnic Studies and Ethnicity and the Media; Blane Harding, A Century of Black Cinema; Chris Linder, Ethnic Studies Research Methods and Writing and Ethnicity, Class and Gender in the U.S.; Deborah Lombard, Africa and African Diaspora; Carmen Rivera, Ethnicity and the Media; Julie Sullivan, Introduction to Ethnic Studies, Ethnicity and the Media, Native American Cultural Experience and Native American History

If you would like to contact anyone from Ethnic Studies, please visit our website at http://ethnicstudies.colostate.edu
Dear Students, Friends, and Colleagues,

As we begin to face an economic crisis it is more important than ever to come together to address important issues that we all face. Higher education will encounter many challenges in the next year and I will be working on the creation of an innovative plan to support our mission while managing our budget. As we prepare for an economic downturn we must also remember to acknowledge the blessing that we have and continue to receive under difficult circumstances.

Last year’s move of all faculty and researchers into a common area was the beginning of many blessings that we have received. In addition, in August 2008 the Colorado Board of Governors approved the new Department of Ethnic Studies. When the Center of Applied Studies in American Ethnicity became the Department of Ethnic Studies we also received approval to offer a Master’s Degree in Ethnic Studies, effective August 2009.

I anticipate this upcoming year to bring more exciting news with the movement of our minor and major from the College of Liberal Arts to the Department of Ethnic Studies. The paperwork has begun and I see no obstacles. However, the most thrilling news is the beginning of our M.A. degree program and the upcoming first class of graduate students. The M.A. program will be the only Ethnic Studies Master’s program in the state of Colorado. The program will address issues related to the growing diversity of U.S. society and workforce, ethnic conflict worldwide, and globalization. To deliver our new program we have new faculty, Drs. Ernesto Sagás and Maricela DeMirjyn, each bringing new and fresh ideas and strengths to the program. We have already begun to receive applications for our graduate program and we welcome you passing the word along. You can call for more information or access information about the program through our website http://ethnicstudies.colostate.edu.

In closing I ask each and every one of you to think about how we can work together to face the challenges ahead, because our welfare and well-being as a nation depends upon it. We must continue to work on behalf of higher education, creatively and collaboratively. Our commitment toward continued access, affordability, and quality education for all our students is an essential priority. My door is always open and I look forward to a visit.

Best,

Dr. Irene Vernon

Message from the Chair

New Faculty Highlight

Maricela DeMirjyn

DeMirjyn is currently working on researching “Las Morenas,” or the brown and black Madonnas of the world, in relation to how they correlate with social movements, in particular, to gender and racial or ethnic-based liberation activism. She is investigating the representation of Madonna figures as feminist figures of spiritual and cultural resistance by analyzing the ways in which the traditional iconic imagery merges with the modern via artistic and daily applicable interpretations. She was raised in San Diego, California and her family is from San Miguel de Allende, GTO, Mexico.

DeMirjyn attended the University of California, Santa Barbara, where she completed her doctoral research on Chicana educational life-stories and was recognized as a Chicana Dissertation Fellow by the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies. While living in Santa Barbara, Maricela also worked as a drug and alcohol counselor for probationary teens using art therapy as a modality and she participated in a co-ed competitive crew team.

Ernesto Sagás

Sagas is currently working on a book manuscript entitled Transnational Ballots: Overseas Voting among U.S. Latino Immigrants. The book examines the participation of Latinos in the overseas elections that several countries in Latin America nowadays hold. The study is based on hundreds of exit polls conducted during the presidential elections of the Dominican Republic, Honduras, and Colombia, as their emigrés cast ballots at local polling places in the United States. The book also examines the rise and causes behind this new electoral trend in Latin America, and looks at its potential implications for our understanding of the concept of citizenship, transnational politics, and the reception of Latina/o immigrants in American society.

He will also begin research on his next book project entitled “The New American Nativism” during the Summer of 2009. This research project will take a look at the current immigration debate and how it mostly scapegoats Mexican immigrants, who are pictured by right-wing groups as not only taking American jobs, but also destroying the fabric of American society. The project will compare and contrast the current anti-immigrant discourse with 19th and 20th century Nativism in order to show how dominant discourses are used to justify the status quo and to defend the interests of groups in power, and will also examine the unique components that Mexican migration brings into the New American Nativism, such as the role played by the U.S.-Mexico border in the dominant discourse, the use of the Spanish language by Mexican immigrants, and the way NAFTA affects the economies of both nations.
Maquilas, Money, and Mujeres de Juarez: An Act of Solidarity in the Quest for Justice
Norberto Valdez

Alternative Spring Break in Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico! What a fantastic learning experience! Our connection with the Juarez community was sponsored by Student Leadership, Involvement and Civic Engagement (SLiCE) at CSU which has worked jointly for two years with the Chicago-based Mexican Solidarity Network (MSN) to organize this week-long series of lectures, discussions, field trips, home stays, and community service activities.

So it was that nine students, two student organizers, and two Ethnic Studies faculty (Monica Collins and Norberto Valdez) spent the week of March 15-23 2008, in Juarez to learn about the murders and violence against women occurring in that city. Our hosts Veronica and Felix, key community activists, introduced us to our very hospitable host families where students spent each night sharing tasty food, warm companionship, and solidarity. During the week, they escorted us all over the city to visit with families of victims, a people’s museum, legal, labor, and religious advocacy groups, and grassroots organizations struggling for lands and rights.

While the Juarez femicides were our primary focus, our group soon realized that we had an intense week ahead of us that combined lessons in international and class relations, globalization and neoliberalism, environmental justice, and community organizing. Our visits with community organizations taught us about the seriousness of narcotrafficking and government corruption and the impunity with which the violence continues and with which families of murdered women have to contend.

At our first meeting, our hosts warned us that understanding the Juarez femicides and also the living conditions of Juarez families required familiarity with several important contextual factors. First, the role of neoliberal economic policies on the urban and rural working class not only in Mexico but all over Latin America. Also that poverty is increasingly rampant and justice for poor people is seldom a reality.

Second, the violence against women in Juarez is not unique. There has been even more violence against women in Honduras and Guatemala for about 20 years under repressive governments without evidence of justice.

Third, the economies of Mexico in general and Juarez in particular are dependent on that of the United States. Thus, to understand local violence one must study the nature of U.S.-Mexico economic relations, particularly the role of assembly plants (maquiladoras) in Juarez in which poor women comprise most of the labor force.

Our hosts explained to us that Mexico as a Third World country is a junior partner with Canada and the United States in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Juarez, as a border town in the Border Industrialization Program that created the maquiladora phenomenon, has become “the laboratory of neoliberal globalization.” Juarez is forced to offer carte blanche concessions to attract foreign capital and retain the maquiladoras, while duty-free products move freely and rapidly from south to north, from the busy hands of female labor to the shelves of Wal-Mart and Best Buy.

City authorities have no control over powerful CEOs or police over the drug cartel and local gangs, all of whom contribute to the exploitation of, and violence against, workers and their families. While some of the 470 young women that have disappeared or been tortured, raped, and murdered were not workers in the plants, it is interesting to note that most of the killing rapidly intensified after the inauguration of NAFTA in 1994 and the largely uncontrolled urban sprawl in Juarez that followed industrialization.

“For the wealthy, free trade evidently does not imply free people.”

Elizabeth and Daniel at CETLAC, a labor advocacy agency, explained that there are more than 400 maquiladoras in 38 industrial parks in Juarez which are located in the eastern and southeastern part of the city. We were amazed that over ¼ of the city’s population, or 350,000 people, are employed in these plants and that wages are approximately $5 per day or little more than $100 monthly.

The dependency on the maquiladoras leaves families very vulnerable to the demands of employers, especially for women if they are single parents or their husbands have migrated elsewhere for work. Approximately 90,000 children under age 4 are not in day care while parents are working.
The maquiladoras operate 24 hours a day, thus many women are entering or leaving their shifts in darkness and company buses do not guarantee women’s safety when they are driven to their neighborhoods. Aside from low wages, workers and neighborhoods are also exposed to environmental hazards produced on both sides of the border. We stood along the banks of a grossly polluted segment of the Rio Grande River and gazed at the massive smokestack of the ASARCO copper smelter. Activists have protested against the flow of toxic effluents into the river and also the heavy metals that are blown from the stacks into neighborhoods. The maquiladoras themselves have also been known to dump toxic wastes into streams, especially during rains when this illegal action is less evident.

One of the saddest struggles involves about 58 families at Lomas de Poleo whose communal lands are being privatized by Juarez’s most wealthy family, the Zaragoza brothers. Since these lands are targeted for industrial development under a NAFTA collaboration with New Mexico and Texas, their value has skyrocketed. The families have refused to be expelled so the Zaragozas have built a concrete and barbed-wire fence around the entire property, and have hired armed guards with dogs to harass and repress the residents. Although the repression keeps residents virtually incommunicado with outsiders, their resistance bravely continues. We were astounded by the symbolism of this “concentration camp,” as it is called locally, and how Mexicans are subjected to fences, harassment, attacks, incarceration, and murder on both sides of the border. For the wealthy, free trade evidently does not imply free people.

Our final activity was a visit to ALDEA, another model of community resistance to bad government where our delegation contributed its painting skills on the walls of the workshop. It is a grass-roots organization with 30 active members, almost all from poor families and without formal education. They have built a home and activity center, rough adobe buildings nestled among neatly stuccoed and brightly painted government housing that has been built for maquila workers. Leaders Veronica and Antonio explained that they have struggled to keep their land and build their neighborhood center.

Their organizing philosophy is based on the Zapatista strategy in Chiapas of having no leadership hierarchy, practicing gender equality, and promoting self-determination among its membership. Like the Zapatistas, they have disengaged from government agencies and official political parties, asking for no favors or permissions. ALDEA offers classes to teach crafts and skills, provides day care, and shows films weekly in its Peoples’ Theater to promote political consciousness. A testimony to their success was recognition by the Zapatistas and the personal visit that Subcomandante Marcos made during his Other Campaign for the presidency in 2006. In return, they have honored the Zapatistas and their efforts with a mural on the wall behind their center.

At the end of this intensely emotional and intellectual week, we shared gifts with our host families, hugs with bright-faced children, and promises to carry the stories that we had heard back to the United States. We pledged our solidarity as we listened to Veronica and Felix thank us for “coming out of our bubble of security” to learn from each other. They stated that “we need to learn together how the wealthy elites work together on both sides of the border to globalize the economic realm, then use these same tactics to globalize solidarity. When there is justice and peace for working people in Mexico, there will be no forced migration to the United States.” They echoed the motto popularized among the Zapatista movement in Chiapas and which is commonly expressed by community groups in Juarez: “Another World Is Possible.”

UPCOMING ECUADOR TRIP

While Ecuador has traditionally suffered from high poverty and inequality in a land of plentiful natural resources, it has also served as an excellent model for some of the most far-reaching efforts to provide ecologically and socially-sustainable alternatives to the corporate global economy.

In this service learning partnership with San Francisco-based Global Exchange participating Colorado State University students will meet with politicians, journalists, organizations, farm-workers, and native communities who will introduce them to some of the harmful local, regional, and global effects of corporate globalization— and share some of the best local and international efforts to bring environmental justice to the Andes and the Amazon.

From food sovereignty to fair trade, from intellectual property rights to indigenous healing methods, this trip will explore the diversity of challenges and successes that Ecuadorians have experienced in the highlands and the Amazon Basin. Ultimately, students will learn about how they can support environmental justice and human rights internationally and at home, making connections between citizens of the north and south, and imagining how to achieve standards of human and environmental rights that would benefit everyone.

This trip will be led by Dr. Clayton Hurd and Dr. Ernesto Sagás. Both teach for the Department of Ethnic Studies. For more information visit: http://tilt.colostate.edu/sl/students/ecuador.cfm
Major: Art  Minor: Ethnic Studies

“It is my longing to construct a sense of community that drives me to create art. As an art major with a concentration in painting, I believe that art is a high-profile form of communication and with this gift for dialogue it is an artist’s responsibility to impact society in a positive manner. I wish for people to see my art and gain a sense of understanding and enlightenment. My work is my medium for creating an internal space where oppressed peoples can find a common voice. My paintings are meant to confront audiences while developing a conversation that leads to a celebration in difference and diversity. Through this recognition of otherness, I hope that all minorities can find similarities that will unite their causes.”

The Alliance Program

The research faculty of the Ethnic Studies Department, Commitment to Action for 7th Generation Awareness and Education (CA7AE), has entered into a collaboration with Colorado State University’s Division of Enrollment and Access on a very timely project focusing on the Alliance High School Program. The program works with 10 high schools throughout Colorado in an effort to unite the community in envisioning education beyond high school so that more students will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to enter higher education.

The Alliance Award Program provides students who attend Colorado State University with a base award of $2,000 per academic year and they may receive an increased award, up to the amount of Colorado resident tuition and fees. The Alliance Program also connects students with various University services. CA7AE has provided training using the Community Readiness Model in an effort to increase the readiness of the community to engage parents to support higher education for their children. Both a school-specific and a community-specific readiness action plan will then be developed consistent with readiness level, thus increasing the potential of success of the strategies. CA7AE looks forward to this exciting project.

Poetry in The Bay

Brent Adams

From November 6-9, I attended the Eighth Biennial Radical Philosophy Association Conference entitled “Art, Praxis, and Social Transformation: Radical Dreams and Visions” at San Francisco State University. I was invited by Bob Stone, Betsy Bowman, and Cliff Durand, three founders of the association, to perform poetry I had written while in Guanajuato, Mexico, on a research internship. My audience included a number of academics presenting on and attending a panel titled “Globalized States.” This crowd was wholly different from the typical poet crowd I am used to performing for. They received the poem well and asked me to stay and participate in the discussion. I loved it! At first I was a little intimidated, you know, but after a while I realized that my Ethnic Studies courses and professors had left me familiar enough with all of the terms, concepts, and philosophies being discussed. But, I couldn’t help but wonder how these discussions were going to contribute toward radical changes in world systems. I couldn’t help but wonder how this was praxis. Largely, I sensed that professors advocated the teachability of this moment of failure in the domestic economy.

That is, they argued that if there were ever a time students would be receptive to alternate governmental/economic systems... that it was now. I agree. The recession helps with the discourse, but a thorough and inclusive discussion of the history of globalized capitalism will obviate that it has always been failing millions somewhere. I think that this failure has just hit home, so to speak—or taken away the home, so to speak... Anyways, on the whole, the conference and my participation in it allowed me a rare chance to test the academic waters, and I wouldn’t have been able to go if it weren’t for the Ethnic Studies Department, since they funded it and all :) ya dig?

M E D I A  L I B R A R Y  Ethnic Studies is proud of our rich collection of current, historical, educational, mainstream, independent, and political DVDs and videos. Feel free to stop by the office for more information about checking out a film. Our media library can be accessed on our Website at http://ethnicstudies.colostate.edu/documents/video_library.pdf.
In memory of
KEITH FOSKIN
(1956-2008)
To a friend, supporter,
artist, kind soul,
social activist ...
we will miss you!
“Think of yourself, question authority”
— Timothy Leary
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