Overview

In this course we will immerse ourselves in a variety of experiences: reading, discussion, and engagement with outside speakers, in order to probe the experiences of (im)migrant youth through an ethnographic lens. We will read full-length ethnographic texts, some shorter ethnographic reports, and at least one novel. With one eye on methodology, and another on content, we will consider what questions about (im)migrant youths' experiences are foregrounded and backgrounded in each text, how theoretical framings shape what is seen and understood (as well as what is missed). By looking across these texts, we will consider how ethnographic explorations can illuminate the complexities of immigrant youths’ experiences both in and out of school, and how, together, these portraits of different groups' localized experiences contribute to our understanding of the experiences of (im)migrant youth. We will also identify gaps exist in the field. Readings and invited guest speakers will address citizenship and documentation status issues, contexts of reception, language . Four times in the quarter (as noted on the schedule), class will include a public presentation by an outside speaker.

Required Texts


Schmalzbauer, Leah. (2014). *The Last Best Place: Gender, Family and Migration in the New West.*

Choose one for April 22:


Choose one for May 6:


Muslim Youth.

Choose one novel about immigrant children and families from a list that will be distributed in class for June 3.

Grades and Assignments

I. Participation and Engagement 25%

Please come prepared to discuss specific details of each reading, including its approaches to the themes of the class, the larger genre of which it is part, and details of methodology and analysis. We will consider what each piece contributes to our understanding of immigrant youths’ experiences, and examine the assumptions and starting points for analysis that the authors bring to the text. We will also look across the course readings to see commonalities, complementarities, gaps, and points of contrast. In the weeks involving guest speakers, please write 1-2 questions that you would like to pose to the speaker.

II. Book Review 25%

You will write a short book review or review essay of any ethnographic study on (im)migrant youth that has been published in the last five years. This may include any of the texts we read in class. Your review should be directed toward a specific audience in a professional field and should do more than summarize the book; it should make clear to this audience what the book can contribute to this field and/or where it fits within it, and it should comment on methodology used in the study. This review should be of publishable quality, and you will share it with your peers. Due date: May 20.

IV. Final project 50%

Based on your understanding of the field of research on (im)migrant youth, what would you say are the pressing issues of the day that can be illuminated through ethnographic research? Or, how might you connect your own interests with the larger body of ethnographic research on immigrant youth and families? What questions would you choose to pursue, and how would you pursue them? (We will tailor this project to your specific interests and stage of research and will discuss details in class.) Due date: June 3.

Topics and Calendar

April 1 Introduction and Overview: Ethnography, Education and Immigrant Youth

April 8 How are immigrant children and families being addressed at AERA?

Reading

We will collectively search the AERA program directory using these key words: “immigration,” “immigrants,” and “migration” and sort the abstracts for those focused on children and families. Read the abstracts and come prepared to discuss what this reveals about the above question.

Note: We will plan make a decision in our first class as to whether we will meet during this AERA conference time. Regardless, we will review the AERA program to consider the question posed above. We may also share and vet any conference presentations by members of our class.
April 15  Coming of Age as “Undocumented”  
**Guest Speaker:** Roberto González, Harvard University  
**Reading**  

April 22  Immigrant Child Language Brokers  
**Reading**  
Choose one: García Sánchez, Katz or Orellana

April 29  Mixed Status Family Experiences  
**Guest Speaker:** Sarah Gallo, the Ohio State University  
**Readings**  
Gallo, S. “The effects of gendered immigration enforcement on middle childhood and schooling.”

Gallo, S. “Humor in father-daughter immigration narratives of resistance.”

Gallo, S. and Link, H. “Diles la verdad: Deportation policies, politicized funds of knowledge, and schooling in middle childhood.”

See also: [http://hepg.org/blog/documentation-status-and-schooling-confronting-the](http://hepg.org/blog/documentation-status-and-schooling-confronting-the)

Recommended:  
Mangual Figueroa, A. “Citizenship and Education in the Homework Completion Routine.”

May 6  Muslim Youth and the “War on Terror”  
**Choose one:**  


May 13  Family Activism in Immigrant Families  
**Guest Speaker:** Amalia Pallares, University of Illinois, Chicago  
**Reading:**

**May 20**

Topic and Readings TBD

Book reviews due.

**May 27**

New Immigrant Destinations

Guest Speaker: Leah Schaalzbauer, Amherst College

**Readings**

Schmalzbauer, Leah. (2014). *The Last Best Place: Gender, Family and Migration in the New West.*

**June 3**

Immigrant Families in Fiction, Memoire, and Journalistic Ethnography

**Readings**

Choose a novel about immigrant families/youth. See the attached (partial) list of possibilities.

*Consider: What can we learn about immigrant experiences, ethnography, and how to write ethnographic portraits by reading other genres of writing, especially fiction, memoires, and journalistic ethnography? How might these texts point to aspects of immigrant experiences that have been un/under-explored by ethnographers? What can we learn about ways of representing those experiences, including writing style?*
Novels about immigration, immigrant youth and families
(Partial list)

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah.*
Bencastro, Mario. *Odyssey to the North.*
Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street.*
Cisneros, Sandra. *Caramelo.*
Grande, Reyna. *The Distance Between Us.*
Kwok, Jean. *Girl in Translation.*
Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies.*
Mengestu, Dinaw. *How to Read the Air.*
Mengestu, Dinaw. *The Beautiful Things that Heaven Bears.*
Otsjika, Julie. *The Buddha in the Attic.*
Ponce, Mary Helen. *Hoyt Street.*
Roth, Henry. *Call It Sleep.*
Santiago, Esmeralda. *América’s Dream.*
Santiago, Esmeralda. *Cuando era Puertoriqueña.*
Tobar, Hector. *Barbarian.*

Journalistic ethnography and memoirs

Fadiman, Anne. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down.*
Nazario, Sandra. *Enrique’s Journey.*