



**Abstracts Submitted for the
6th International Conference on Hmong Studies**

1. The Ideal Minority: The Hmong and Politics of Loyalty and Citizenship in America.

Ever since they fled Laos into exile in 1975, the Hmong in the diaspora, particularly those in America, have continued to wage a war of liberation against the Lao PDR government. Their political objectives for Laos after the “liberation” were diverse. Some wanted democratic change in the home country while others dreamed of establishing a separate sovereign Hmong state in northern Laos. This paper not only seeks to analyze the diversity of goals and objectives for Laos within the Hmong diasporic communities during and after the Cold War. It also seeks to highlight Hmong Americans’ engagement in Lao politics in the post-Vang Pao era. It argues that the diversity of goals and objectives in the communities had to do with the identities of the groups who engaged Lao homeland politics from exile. More than separatism and democratic reform, Hmong Americans increasingly seek reconciliation and bilateral cooperation and diplomacy with the Lao PDR government in the post-Vang Pao era.

Nengher N. Vang
University of Wisconsin, Whitewater
History Department

2. An exploratory study of the relationship between fatalism, locus of control, and Hmong individuals with alcohol-related offenses

This clinical research project was an exploratory study that examined if there was a relationship between fatalism and locus of control (LOC) among 15 Hmong males with alcohol-related offenses in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Archival data obtained from Pangea Care, a licensed chemical-dependency treatment facility, consisted of results from a demographic questionnaire, the Fatalism Scale, and the Drinking-Related Locus of Control Scale (DRIE). A quantitative analysis indicated that relationships between fatalism and LOC were not statistically significant. However, a post-hoc analysis indicated that more acculturated

individuals endorsed higher levels of fatalism and had a more internal LOC. Specifically, acculturated individuals believed that things in life were predetermined, yet also believed they had the ability to change it. There were some notable limitations of the study such as a small sample size, gender imbalance, and cultural factors that may have impacted the outcome of the data. It is recommended that future studies focus on identifying whether or not perspectives of fatalism and LOC differ between genders, the role that cognitive dissonance plays in sobriety, and the impact that cultural factors may have on drinking behaviors in the Hmong community.

Mainhia Khang, LMFT
Doctorate Candidate in Clinical Psychology

3. Veterans from the Secret War in Laos: War, Remembrance, Ritual, Rank and Racism

Many former soldiers from the Royal Lao Army (RLA) and the Secret Guerilla Units (SGUs)—who fought against the Pathet Lao and Vietnamese Communists in Laos before the country’s government was taken over by the communist Lao People’s Revolutionary Party in 1975—came to the United States of America as political refugees between 1976 and the mid-2000s. These former soldiers, especially those who are ethnically Hmong and Lao, consider themselves “veterans of the Secret War in Laos”. In the 1980s and 1990s many veterans became politically involved against the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) government. Some organizations, such as the United Lao National Liberation Front (ULNLF) (*Neo Hom Pot Poi Xat* in Lao) provided higher military and political ranks, often based on the amounts of money donated to the ULNLF. More recently, many veterans have joined private organizations set up primarily to lobby for increased recognition and benefits for veterans from the US government. Veterans from Laos have also joined private organizations which claim to be devoted to US national security and disaster relief, such as the United States National Defense Corps (USNDC) and other similar groups. The USNDC recognizes the previous military ranks of veterans from Laos, and also gives military ranks out to non-veterans based on educational attainment and other career factors. Rank can increase based on service, and now a number of Hmong have attained the rank of general, even though the late General Vang Pao was the only Hmong military general in Laos before 1975.

In this presentation, we explore the intersection between Hmong veterans, and issues associated with remembrance, military ritual, and rank. We argue that the identities of many veterans from Laos as political refugees in the United States are closely linked to their identities as Secret War veterans. We also consider how many veterans and have attempted to achieve military ranks through associating with private organizations in the United, including those opposed to the Lao PDR

government, veterans groups, and organizations officially devoted to US national security and disaster relief. We show that for many veterans from Laos, the boundaries between these different types of organizations have often become blurred, and we ultimately argue that veteran activities in the United States are frequently linked to responding to racism, and showing that their involvement in the Secret War—in support of the United States—forced them to become political refugees in America.

Ian G. Baird
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and

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4. Hmong in China: Reviewing and Reclaiming Hmong History

Panel Title: Hmong in China: Reviewing and Reclaiming Hmong History

Panel Moderator: to be arranged

Panel Abstract: Within the last decade, increasing attention in Hmong studies has been given to the globalization of Hmong identity, particularly the possibility of Hmong cultural origin in China. Recently, Hmong American teachers, tourists and scholars have become interested in “returning to China” as an opportunity for rediscovering cultural heritage. On trips to China, they learn from tour guides and government publications that minority groups in that country peacefully have been assimilated for many years into a multiethnic national identity. Thus, Hmong people are now welcomed back to China as if they have always belonged there. However, we propose that a closer look at the history of Hmong people in China reveals that very rarely have Hmong voices been heard or have Hmong values been respected in their ongoing struggle to maintain their cultural integrity. Instead, as our panel will show, Chinese accounts of Hmong history – as reflected in legal, literary, political and popular sources from the 17th through the 21st century - have been distorted by a dominant narrative of Han cultural superiority and the denial of Hmong cultural integrity. As part of that narrative, Hmong people also have been conflated with Miao, effectively erasing the distinctive

history of Hmong people as a unique cultural group. Consequently, we argue that the history of Hmong people in China needs to be reviewed and reclaimed in terms of their own actions, voices and driving concerns. Contributing to current community debates regarding what it means to be Hmong in the world today, we will encourage our audience to engage in a critical reading of what “returning to China” means.

Can the Hmong Be Civilized?: Chinese Views of Hmong in Chinese History

Daniel Meissner

Hmong Americans today, perhaps more than ever, are reflecting on who they are and how their collective identities have been shaped by historical forces over centuries of global migration. Yet, little attention has been paid to dominant Chinese narratives of Hmong as “barbarians” who need to be “civilized” by their Chinese rulers. By providing legal and political evidence of their struggles for self-determination and self-definition, I intend to engage the audience in reconsidering whether or not Hmong ever have fully belonged in China. According to China’s national narrative of ethnic assimilation, Hmong people have become “civilized” through Chinese campaigns to rule and reform them – campaigns which have been carried out from at least the 17th century (when Chinese courts determined that many Hmong were “savages” who could not be rehabilitated) until the mid-20th century (when the government decided how to categorize hundreds of minority groups into an official 56). Indeed, Qing dynasty (1644-1912) legal decisions characterize Hmong people as so morally and culturally deficient that they had to be “exiled beyond the habitable world.” Since 1949, the Chinese government has carried out a campaign of minority group assimilation, including the conflation of Hmong with Miao, effectively erasing the distinctive history of Hmong people as a unique cultural group. As a professor of Asian history, I finally will emphasize that Hmong people have the right to tell their own story of where they have come from and where they are now.

Where Do Hmong People Belong?: Contemporary Views of Hmong in China and the US.

Vincent K. Her and Mary Louise Buley-Meissner

As educators who have been teaching in Hmong American studies for the past fifteen years, we recognize and respect the efforts of multidisciplinary scholars to investigate Hmong identity and cultural origin. Recently, we have noticed that Hmong American educators and scholars have become interested in “returning to China” literally and symbolically as a possible homeland for Hmong people. On the one hand, we see this as a development arising from the globalization of

Hmong studies. On the other hand, we are concerned that little attention has been given so far to the complexity of Hmong history in China, particularly the denigration of Hmong as inferior to the Han - a history that will be reviewed in detail by the first speaker on our panel. In our talk, we analyze the current situation of Hmong people in China, contrasting the harsh reality of poverty, unemployment and limited education with the national narrative of ethnic assimilation in which tourism plays a major role. In this situation, Hmong culture is being degraded, while Hmong people (“born to sing and dance” according to tourist guidebooks) are performing identities which conform to Chinese stereotypes. Furthermore, Hmong history is being lost because those who remember it have little chance to pass it on; poverty in the countryside is pushing young people out to big cities, and they rarely come back. Drawing on our work with Hmong American students – particularly their serious interest in knowing their history and taking pride in their heritage – we finally emphasize how important it is for Hmong people to reclaim the right and the voice to tell their own story of where they have come from; where they are now; and what they believe their future holds.

Panelists: (1) Daniel Meissner (daniel.meissner@mu.edu), Associate Professor, History Department, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI; (2) Vincent K. Her (vher@uwlax.edu), Associate Professor, Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Wisconsin- La Crosse, La Crosse, WI; (3) Mary Louise Buley-Meissner (meissner@uwm.edu), Professor, English Department, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI

5. “Hmong Women Mobilizing for Gender Equity/Justice Globally”

Building sisterhood globally is an essential step to creating gender equity. For hundreds of years, patriarchal practices have isolated Hmong women and girls, consequently creating gender inequality and gender-based discrimination which is a primary impediment of progress for all Hmong. Nevertheless, Hmong women all over the world have worked tirelessly (often siloed and alone) to address these issues. Today, we have started an international movement to eradicate these harmful practices and shift social norms.

In 2013 and 2015, Building Our Future convened Hmong women from China, Laos, Thailand, United States and Vietnam. At these gatherings we concluded that certain fundamental Hmong cultural practices negatively impact Hmong women and girls, no matter which country they lived in. Each panelist will share their pioneering efforts to empower women to speak up against gender injustices and focus on the progress of our collective community. The **HWNT** will present their research on

the significance of utilizing spiritual ceremonies to welcome women back into their family home through the healing ritual of calling the soul/spirit of a widow, divorced and abandoned women. **Sapa O'chau**'s social enterprise tackles illiteracy, creates educational and job opportunities for young tour guides and street vendors, most of whom are women and girls. **VivNcaug** will discuss their work with women to access education and economic opportunities. **Freedom, Inc.** will highlight how Hmong American women have played a critical role in mobilizing social justice activists in the US to partner with Hmong sisters in Asia to galvanize our efforts.

Moderator:

KaYing Yang, Lead Organizer & Co-Founder

Building Our Future: A Global Community Campaign, USA (BOF)

Panelists:

1. Rasamee Thawsirichuchai, Lead Researcher
Hmong Women's Network of Thailand (HWNT)
2. Shu Thi Tan, Founder & Director
Sapa O'chau, Vietnam
3. Nou Lor, Director
VivNcaug / Sisterhood for Development, Laos
4. Kabzuag Vaj, Founder & Co-Director
Freedom, Inc., Wisconsin, USA

6. Workshop: A Conversation on Hmong Sexualities

This workshop will be in the form of a conversation, rather than a traditional conference panel. Three scholars who study Hmong communities will facilitate a discussion that tackles some of the most difficult questions about sexuality within the last 40 years. In these decades, heterosexual and/or heteronormative sexualities have dominated discussions about Hmong sexual life, including gender exploitation, morality, family and reproduction. We have seen these norms change, not only in the U.S. but also in Asia. Hmong Americans have been especially engaged in emerging conversations around erotics, interracial relationships, LGBTQ identities, homoeroticism, and transnational marriages. Hmong Americans have also participated in mainstream debates about sexuality, such as marriage equality, racial politics, private/public sexualities, and women's sexual rights. The West, forms of education, religion, mobility and diaspora have all influenced Hmong Americans, especially as we begin to acquire the language and knowledge to understand and thus debate about sexual morality and norms.

We also want to think about what has influenced Hmong in Asia, and consider relations between generations, between continents, between city and country, and other differences that perhaps define the Hmong diasporic community.

We want to use this workshop to collectively consider these pressing issues, in order to confront the continued, yet different, struggles that we face about sexuality. Furthermore, we believe that a conversation in and of itself is an action step towards a bright and dynamic Hmong America. Our workshop will be crucial to research in areas of gender and sexuality and the transformative within Hmong Studies. We also hope that attendees of this workshop will acquire tools to initiate and tackle serious programming and curriculum concerns in education and classrooms, in order to promote tolerance and mutual respect for differences. Both facilitators and attendees will be able to discuss these concerns with each other, and will be able to take away key points that will impact everyone personally and professionally in the future. We believe that progress is beginning to be made regarding conversations about sexual practices and identities within different Hmong communities. This workshop will serve as a site where we can extend and deepen these valuable exchanges on topics that are often hushed or go unacknowledged within our communities. Moreover, a consideration of the politics of sexuality is at its most crucial time.

We intend to pose discussion questions that allow participants to wrestle with difficult issues by suspending judgment of each other and offering diverse perspectives, thereby taking a fresh look at some of the assumptions that are made about Hmong sexualities. Sample questions include:

- What sets of moral standards about sex are Hmong Americans and Hmong in Asia living by? Who is excluded/condemned by these standards?
- What are Hmong sexual cultures? What is permitted and prohibited? What is considered perverse? How has this changed? What should be upheld?
- If homosexuality as an identity was not part of Hmong tradition, can we assume the same about homoerotic practices?
- How do queerness and queer identities complicate assumptions about Hmong sexualities?
- What considerations are there in evaluating interracial relationships and marriage?
- Is there room for genuine erotics in arranged marriage?
- If arranged marriage seems to be a thing of the past, what about all the digital sexual courting activities that are prevalent now? How do these differ?

Pao Lee Vue is an assistant professor of sociology at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, NY. He is author of *Assimilation and the Gendered Color Line: Hmong Case Studies of Hip-Hop and Import Racing*, which is published by LFB Scholarly as part of *The New Americans* book series edited by Ruben Rumbaut and Steven Gold. His current work includes a case study of Hmong youth in Midwestern nightclubs and a study that investigates college students' attitudes on sex, dating and marriage. He is most passionate about teaching and has taught a number of courses, including *Race and Ethnicity*, *Race and Crime*, *Genders and Society*, *Hip-Hop Music and Poetry*, *Introduction to Sociology*, *Research Methods*, *Criminology*, and *Deviant Behavior*.

Louisa Schein teaches Cultural Anthropology as well as Women's and Gender Studies, Asian American Studies and was co-founder of the minor in Critical Sexuality Studies at Rutgers. She has worked with Hmong/Miao in China and the U.S. and is author of *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics* (Duke University Press 2000), co-editor with Tim Oakes of *Translocal China: Linkages, Identities and the Reimagining of Space* (Routledge 2006), and with Purnima Mankekar of *Media, Erotics and Transnational Asia* (Duke University Press 2012). Much of her recent work concerns Asian American masculinity and sexualities. She is co-director of two documentary films on Hmong Americans, *Better Places* (2011) with Peter O'Neill and *Shamans, Herbs and MDs in-progress* with Va-Megn Thoj. Co-founder of the Critical Hmong Studies collective, she has had activist and scholarly collaborations with Va-Megn Thoj, Ly Chong Thong Jalao, and Bee Vang.

Kong Pheng Pha is a Ph.D. student and researcher at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. His expertise is Hmong gender and sexuality, with a special focus on how ideas about queer and LGBTQ identities and sexualities are understood and constructed within Hmong American communities. He has also conducted research in the Twin Cities about Hmong refugee migration and Hmong high school and college mentoring relationships in education. He has presented his research on Hmong college experiences, and Hmong gender, sexuality, and LGBTQ experiences at conferences in Michigan, California, and Minnesota, as well as in college classrooms. Kong is also an activist scholar, whose community work involves work in community collectives such as MidWest Solidarity Movement, a Hmong queer collective of artists and activists.

7. Hmong educated parents' perspectives and support for their children in Higher Education

Empirical research demonstrate that parents understanding of college and their role greatly impacts their ways of providing support for their child(ren) attending college. According to preliminary research, Her's study (2011) found that Hmong parents with little to no formal education were unaware of resources and opportunities offered on their child's college campus, impacting their ability to provide adequate support for their child in college. As a result, community and family members serve as important stakeholders and contribute to the support systems among Hmong students educational experiences. The researcher believes understanding the perspectives and support Hmong educated parents provide as it contributes to the successes and self-efficacy of their children attending college can provide implications for higher education institutions and Hmong communities at large. This is a preliminary qualitative study examining two sets of Hmong parents and one Hmong mother in Midwest United States. The research focuses extensively on their perspectives and support for their child/ren in college with a focus on their academic background. Interviews were conducted and analyzed to identify emergent themes and interview questions were based on the psychosocialcultural (PSC) model.

Maimoua Xiong, B.S.

**Graduate Student at the California State University-Fullerton
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Alberta M. Gloria, Ph.D.

Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology

**Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of Counseling Psychology**

8. Important Factors for Understanding the Moob's Spiritual Healer, "Txiv Neeb"

In view of the exploration into some of the themes that determine trajectories for who are the Moob txiv neeb (male) and nam neeb (female) in the Moob community suggests what their roles are as members, parents, relatives, and religious and spiritual healers. In attempt to restore and preserve a difficult portion of historical knowledge of these particular people, I have participated and observed the rituals performed by some of these men and women, both in Laos and the United States, and recorded their experiences of the different processes each goes through. This becomes evident to explore and understand how they are chosen to be these so called, "shamans" within the scheme of the Moob belief system. Before moving forward, I will be using "txiv neeb" within the essay to identify both male and female counterparts. This is not an attempt to exclude women who practice as well, but rather to allow for simple understanding and less confusion of names and titles I will be using. My project, thus, attempts to tell the

stories of these men and women in hopes of gaining greater understanding of the lives they lead and generate further discourse of the relevance and implications this practice of ua neeb may have on the lives of Hmong people in the twenty-first century.

Andrew K. Xiong
Department of History
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

9. Creating new societies: over the Hmong transnational migration of China-Vietnam border

This paper mainly discusses migrants of the Hmong people who moved from Vietnam to China around and after the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979. The political upheavals between two countries in the late 1970's have serious consequences for the Hmong near the border. The Hmong evacuees from Vietnam had to respond to their situation with passivity. Some sought to get better life through increased migration as refugees. It turned out to be the onset of their relocation in China for 624 persons from Ha Giang Province, Vietnam, to Yuanjiang prefecture, Yunnan, during 1978-1986. Especially in Yunnan, the expansion of displaced population from Vietnam increased around the Sino-Vietnamese War. Local government and Overseas Chinese committee answered establishing of new villages and accommodation facilities (i.e. Overseas-Chinese farm) in Yunnan, after the Hmong refugees were recognized as war immigrants who have "Chinese origin". The Hmong of new nation, as the name of "Miao" ethnic nationality, had given civil rights as Chinese citizens, and they allowed to hold identification card and to earn a livelihood by farming. However their account of village life based upon agricultural activities and they have been standing as a small silent minority, they never lacked the ethnic roots in Northern Vietnam countryside in common with the Hmong who lives in other countries distinctively. Although some attempts of transnational migration among the Hmong over the past four decades entails acculturation in the aspect of culture, they foster a sense of ethnic identity in the face of the stream of national politics.

Yasuhisa TANIGUCHI (Osaka University of Tourism, Japan)

10. It Takes a Village to Raise a Child: How Social Networks Impact Hmong Students' College Accessibility and Choice

This study examines how social capital impacts the academic attainment of 30 Hmong American students. Hmong students commonly hold low amounts of social capital due to smaller social networks, which leads to low college accessibility. The relationship between bridging and bonding social capital and

Hmong students' college experiences is examined to discover that bonding social capital played a role in where students decided to enroll in college. Bonding social capital was also prevalent within the Hmong community in the form of family obligation students felt towards traditional responsibilities and roles that came before their role as a student. Bridging social capital was prevalent in the college preparatory programs students were enrolled in during high school. 85% of students who attended a four-year institution were involved in a college prep program and those weaker, bridging social networks facilitated their college access. The theorized greater benefits of bridging social capital, contending that, while bonding social capital is a means to "getting by," bridging social capital is a means to "getting ahead" was challenged in this research. Therefore, it may be more useful to focus on the nuances of social capital rather than the strict dichotomy of bonding and bridging social capital.

Nue Lor
Graduate Research Project Assistant
Department of Postsecondary Teaching & Learning
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

11. Politics of space: "the spatial practice and social movement of the Hmong in Thailand".

According to the Hmong study, especially in the case of South East Asian context, most of the scholars pay attention to elaborate the Hmong realm in the sense of holistic ideal form, much in classical period before 1985, which seems to represent it as a unique form representing through identity and history. Through the lenses of other analysis, like spatial and discourse analysis, the Hmong social phenomena now and the past can be analyzed in multiple dimensions which doesn't mean under the sense of theory or concept but the social ontology. In this sense my argument is that the condition which makes the social evolving doesn't mean only the identity of the culture and history but the representation of them which are not unity when it becomes spatial practice even in the same formation. Since the representations are related to the subject or the people who interpret or give meaning so it makes the form of identity and history different in spatial practice, of meaning and goal, through time and space or the context, influencing to the social evolving. In this presentation, I will elaborate some representations and spatial practices pertain to the Hmong social phenomena in Thailand in several contexts, condition and meaning both under the eyes of the Hmong themselves and the other actors relating to the contesting space.

Yutthapong Suebsakwong (Zeb Yaj)
University of Wisconsin, Madison

12. Interrupting the conspiracy of silence: Historical Trauma and the Experiences of Hmong American Women.

The Hmong have endured a history of oppression and trauma. The Secret War was particularly significant as it resulted in genocide, dislocation, and oppression of the Hmong. In addition, the Hmong experience and their involvement as U.S. allies remained largely a secret for several decades. Current research suggests that Hmong Americans experience a high prevalence of mental health issues including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Do historical factors such as war, genocide, and secrecy contribute to the current mental health conditions of the Hmong? This qualitative study applied the conceptual frameworks of the intergenerational transmission of historical trauma (TCMI framework), the conspiracy of silence, and the cultural context model to explore the Hmong experience. Specifically, this study posed the following research questions:

1. What are the experiences of Hmong women in relation to intergenerational historical trauma?
2. What are Hmong women's experiences of the conspiracy of silence in relation to Hmong historical trauma?
3. What is the impact of a psychoeducational intervention on historical trauma for Hmong women?

Nine Hmong American women were recruited and completed initial interviews, a psychoeducational intervention, and post-intervention interviews. Results indicated that all participants described experiences relevant to the construct of historical trauma and the conspiracy of silence. In addition, results suggest that following the psychoeducational intervention, participants experienced new awareness, empowerment, and interruption of the conspiracy of silence. Consideration of Hmong historical trauma may offer insight into the conceptualization and treatment of current Hmong mental health issues. Results will be further discussed.

Ia Xiong, Ph.D. Candidate
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

13. In Search of Phim Nyus Vais and Other Forest Spirits in Laos

The Hmong in Laos are crucial when it comes to natural resource management and biodiversity conservation. They are the 3rd most populous ethnic group in Laos and tend to live near areas with important conservation values where they engage in hunting and the collection of various kinds of non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Although they are heavily dependent on the natural resources, there also exist traditional spiritual beliefs that govern how they should interact with the forest and those resources that could be viewed as traditional natural resource conservation practices. However, the last few decades have seen these beliefs being impacted by various external factors. In this study, I look at how government laws and regulations, the introduction of the market economy, and technological advancements have affected these beliefs and how this change has in turn, affected how the Hmong interact with the available resources. Data

gathered through ethnographic research, including the active pursuit of forest spirits in Laos suggest that while the Hmong are still aware of these traditional beliefs, the beliefs themselves have been greatly weakened by the aforementioned external factors and in many cases, are no longer a concern to the majority of Hmong hunters. Thus, while these traditional beliefs remain an integral component of Hmong spirituality, it may no longer be depended upon to have the same influence as it once did. As such, conservationists must look for other opportunities to work with the Hmong in Laos to encourage sustainable resource use.

Xeempov Vwj
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Department of Geography
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University of Wisconsin-Madison

14. Educational Achievement of Hmong College Students

Research on the Hmong American educational experience is an emerging area of study. It is a topic of great importance for the Hmong community and for colleges and universities in the Midwest and other areas with sizeable Hmong populations. Much of this research has focused on high schools and following earlier educational research, on the association between family background, parent's education, and family orientation toward education. Less emphasis has been given to the college experience and post-secondary educational achievement of Hmong students. Yet this is a crucial area for study as the Hmong community moves into the middle decades of the 21st Century. As such, the study attempts to answer: How well prepared are Hmong students for college? How successful are Hmong students at the college level? How are their academics compared to that of other college students? Is there a significant academic performance difference between Hmong genders? We present information for one hundred ninety (n=194) Hmong students attending the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay from 2002-2010. More specifically, we provide an analysis of their demographics, high school academic performance and post-secondary academic performance. Demographics include gender, cohort, high school attended, geographical region and clan/ship represented. The high school academic measures, our dependent variables, include high school GPA; high school credit units in English, math, science, and social studies; ACT composite scores; and ACT scores in English, math, reading and science. The post-secondary measures, our independent variables, include number of semesters enrolled; number of credits completed; final cumulative GPA; degree completion. We also provide an analysis of the university Hmong student who transfer and graduate from other educational institutions.

Pao Lor
Education
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Ray Hutchison
Department of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

15. HMong Christianity Today: The Blessings and Challenges

HMong Christianity today presents an array of confusing picture of what exactly is Christianity to the HMong community of both non-Christian and Christian alike around the world. This presentation/paper presents an overview of the historical development of HMong Christianity. It identifies some of the critical issues within HMong Christianity today such as syncretism, legalism, moralism, and contextualization. Along with these issues, this paper introduces ecclesiastical and theological development within HMong Christianity and the challenges that come along with it. It answers the question of how the four distinct historical approaches to Christianity have impacted HMong Christianity today. Through these lenses, the presentation/paper looks at the historic root cause of this confusion and finally offers what are the contributions of HMong Christianity today.

Ref. Prof. Kou Seying (Kxf. Nyaj Kub Thoj)
Lutheran Foundation Professor of Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry
Associate Dean for Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry
Concordia Seminary

16. Changes in Hmong Dress in Northwest Guizhou, China

For thousands of years, Hmong in the northwestern Guizhou alpine mountains lived a traditional way of life: a self-sustaining lifestyle of hunting and farming. Different sub-groups of Hmong had different clothing, even if they were in the same branch, due to geographical location, environment, social environment and other factors.

Twenty years ago, people can determine different Hmong from their clothes. However, in recent years, especially in the twenty-first century, due to the process of modernization in China, there have been great changes in Hmong life in remote areas. Most of the young Hmong migrate to the city for work, they brought fashionable and popular modern clothing styles to villages and the traditional dress culture has inevitably been strongly impacted.

Now when you walk into some Hmong villages, you have difficult to know whether they are Hmong from their clothing. Most Hmong no longer dress in traditional Hmong costumes (except major festivals) in their daily life, many young people hardly or ever wear traditional costumes. The new form of apparel processing embroidery and sewing batch processing are becoming universal. Older Hmong no longer require young people to learn traditional dress culture.

Clothing skill level is no longer an important criterion for Hmong young men and women in finding marriage mates.

Northwest Guizhou Hmong costumes showing new features in modern society, such as more and more convenient styles, more and more time-saving. Many traditional clothing crafts that lasted for hundreds or even thousands of years are dying away. Hmong clothing culture is losing traditional costumes and artistic charm.

Yan Gao
Guizhou University of Engineering Science

17. The Hmong, Latino, and Somali Hospice Stories Project

Background: A 2103 national survey indicated that 18.5% of hospice patients were from minority populations, a disparity that also exists in Minnesota. The Hospice Stories Project seeks to create culturally and linguistically-appropriate stories to increase Hmong, Latino, and Somali community knowledge about and willingness to consider hospice at the end-of-life as well as increase hospice professionals' abilities to respond to ethnic communities' end-of-life needs.

Methods: The project uses community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) and entertainment education (EE) approaches. CBPAR is a partnership between community members, clinicians and researchers that elucidates community issues. EE promotes change through emotional stories that entertain and educate.

Results:

1. Hmong, Latino, and Somali community leaders identified important community-specific themes about end-of-life experiences.
2. We created a digital video short that represents communities' common and disparate themes at end-of-life, in Hmong, Somali, Spanish, and English.
3. We created 3 radio stories of fictional stories, based on interviews with 3 Hmong, 3 Latino, and 3 Somali families, which dramatize cultural issues around end-of-life care, in Hmong, Somali, Spanish, and English.
4. The digital short and the radio stories will be aired on television and radio stations and will be shown at ethnic community events and hospice professionals' conferences.

Conclusion:

We will evaluate community members and professionals' responses to the stories. We expect the stories will increase Hmong, Latino and Somali's understanding about and openness to hospice services when consistent with their desires for end-of-life care and increase hospice professionals' abilities to respond to ethnic communities' end-of-life needs.

Kathie Culhane-Pera and The Hospice Stories Project Partnership
Affiliation: SoLaHmo/ West Side Community Health Services.

18. Claiming Place: On the Agency of Hmong Women

This panel is made up of authors from the newly released book from the University of Minnesota Press, *Claiming Place: On the Agency of Hmong Women*. The overall book discusses the myriad agentic roles Hmong women have played in society that illustrates how centering women in studies of history, family, society, media, art, and sexuality expands the body of knowledge about a Hmong lived experience while contributing to broader conversations on gender, diaspora, and agency.

Chia Youyee Vang, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Faith Nibbs, Forced Migration Upward Mobility Project
Ma Vang, University of California-Merced
Geraldine Craig, Kansas State University
Kong Pha, University of Minnesota
Louisa Schein, Rutgers University
Bruce Thao, Bush Foundation Fellow and Consultant
Ka Vang, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

20. Educational Disparity by Ethnic and Regional Perspective -Focus on Hmong Women in Lao PDR

The purpose of this presentation is to examine historical change of education access in Lao PDR since EFA(Education for All) and investigate the remaining disparities by ethnic and regional perspective. As a research methodology, data was collected by national census, education database and education data from local authorities. Besides, field research including interview to the stakeholders are conducted by local level.

Existing data and perspectives from government and institutional representatives show that educational access for minority women, especially for Hmong women, has improved in Laos. For example, comparing 1995 and 2005 census, literacy rate of Hmong, a biggest non Lao-Thai group was increased from 26.5% to 45.0 % in ten years. Moreover, access to educational opportunities for Hmong women has become increasingly available due to internal/external aid.

Although the quantitative expansion seems successful, there remain significant disparities within the country. For example, the national average of survival rate of primary school (2014) is 77.5%; however, the data of Huaphanh province and which shows the second highest Hmong population remains at 73.3%. On the other hand, Xieng Khouang province where there is the highest population of Hmong shows the rate at 87.5%. Other data such as dropout and repetition rates also shows significant disparities by provinces. It means attention needs to be paid not only to the ethnicity but regional perspective.

There are significant education disparities within the country and the factors behind the disparities are seems to be different from the local level. Therefore, specific strategies should be planned and implemented by their local needs and contexts.

Miki Inui (University of Hyogo)

**21. The Construction of the Folk Belief System in the Hmong
Village of Huawu**

In the Hmong Village of Huawu, folk belief is popular. the folk belief system there includes a number of elements: firstly, nature worship is an essential part of their belief system, which includes sacred Mountains, sacred trees and geomancy; secondly, ancestor worship, which includes the belief in ghosts and the practice of sacrificing to one's ancestors; thirdly, there is widespread belief in such rituals as "opening the gate" and practicing divination. This article uses the concepts of space and time as leading factors, and analyzes how the diversified folk beliefs of Hmong people have been constructed into an integrated system during the process of social change.

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