ALYSSA COFFEY (acoffey@usc.edu)

(Re)visioning Health: Care in the Queer Community

Drawing upon the power of community organizing, this project revisions the relationship of Queer people to health and healing. This interdisciplinary critique of public health understandings suggests alternative narratives of the self, the body, and even pain that centers Queer voices. Alyssa's work is strongly influenced by her own experiences of community while working with the Queer and Ally Student Assembly. She hopes that the strength and care her community has given her in this time can be returned in some form through this and continued efforts in community-centered scholarship. Thesis Adviser: Dr. Jack Halberstam

RUBI GARCIA (rubigarc@usc.edu)

Teresa Mendoza, “La Chingona”: Female Representation in Narco Cultural Production  Rubi Garcia is an American Studies & Ethnicity major with a minor in Spanish. Her thesis examines the gender dynamics present in La Reina del Sur. Through a cultural studies analysis of a novel, television series, and song, her project seeks to investigate how cultural adaptations based on the exploits of the intrepid Teresa Mendoza is a manifesto of the modern-day and popular “chingona” that has become central to how we see and understand female participation in drug economies. Thesis Advisor: Dr. Josh Kun

ELIZABETH GUZMAN (guzmanel@usc.edu)

Blowout!: The War on Youth & Resistance in Public Schools  My thesis analyzes the absences and injustices built into the condition of public education, especially for working class students of color. I unpack what some scholars and activists have referred to as the “school to prison pipeline.” Schools such as Roosevelt High School have a rich history of student protest including the 1968 walkouts. I argue that these strong histories of youth activism continue to impact the kinds of histories and narratives about communities of color that are studied today. In particular, I study Ethnic Studies curriculum and student empowerment through radical models of pedagogy and social change. Thesis Adviser: Dr. Macarena Gómez-Barris

IRENE MARTINEZ (irenemar@usc.edu)

The Voice of Community: Resiliency of Latina Immigrant Women  Intimate partner violence (IPV) affects more than twelve million women and men each year, leading to severe health and social consequences, or even death. Often studied as a public health or social issue, intimate partner violence has been made a punishable crime. This approach, as I show, criminalizes victims where restraining orders that cause family separation and the incarceration of perpetrators who commit violence becomes commonplace. My research turns away from a model of criminalization to instead focus on the resilience found within Latina immigrant support networks. Through an action/reflection process I focus on the unique cultural strengths and resiliency that Latina immigrant women possess and use in their recovery. Thesis Adviser: Dr. George Sanchez

MARIA JOSE PLASCENCIA (mjplascencia@gmail.com)

Tijuana’s Caliente: The Transborder Business Empire  Growing up in Tijuana, I was very passionate about understanding the city’s history as a trans-border region in relationship to San Diego. My thesis project studies the Agua Caliente Resort and Casino and the Caliente Racetrack as a case study for understanding broader social and cultural dynamics in Tijuana. By analyzing the site from the 1920s to the early 2000s, I argue that Caliente (and Tijuana) can be understood as operating within the broader region of Southern California. I address how Tijuana was later Mexicanized both through a national economic model and through the rise of the trans-regional Xolos Soccer team. Thesis Advisers: Dr. Josh Kun

CHRISTOPHER YIK (cyik@usc.com)

Khmer Identity in Social Activism  As an underserved population, the Khmer Community has faced virtually all forms of institutional oppression. A community based organization known as Khmer Girls in Action based in Long Beach has emerged to mobilize young immigrant youth to address their marginality and traumatic histories. This research attends to how ethnic identity and racialization impacts Khmer youth and their practices of civic engagement. My research also addresses the possibility of social activism. I use a mixed-method that incorporates survey data, interviews, and ethnographic analysis. Thesis Advisers: Dr. Viet Thanh Nguyen

Thursday, April 28, 2016 ~ 2:00-4:00PM ~ KAP 445
Reception Immediately Following Hosted by the ASE Club