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Fall 2013, English 706
Tuesdays, 1-3:30
HC White 7105
Office hours: Thursdays, 1-2

Special Topics in Composition Theory:

Writing and the Global Movement of People

The movement of people across national borders is widespread. By some estimates, over 180 million people worldwide are currently living outside the country of their birth. This course takes this phenomenon, known as transnationalism, as a lens through which to theorize literacy's consequences. We will examine how literacy sometimes promotes and sometimes blocks the social and physical mobility of transnational migrants.

Often defined as a set of skills and resources, literacy has figured prominently in debates about immigrants' national integration. Some have called for migrants' swift assimilation through literacy, others have pointed to the value of migrants' diverse literacy legacies, and still others have examined how their literacies change in new national contexts.

But if we think of literacy more materially, as skills and resources made possible by the technology of *writing*, it becomes clear that literacy plays a role in more than migrants' incorporation within nations. It also shapes their movement among them. Writing can facilitate transnational communication and network migration via the postal system and Internet. And writing is a key tool in migration policy, as nation states use immigration documents, such as visas and passports, to allow some migrants in and to keep others out. Writing, in other words, is deeply imbricated in the infrastructures that govern transnational mobility. The central question members of this course will ask and answer is how.

Specifically, we will address the following concepts (in the following order):

How does the global movement of people shape their literacies?

- What is the relationship between literacy and immigrant assimilation?
- How do migrants' literacy practices change and persist across time and national borders?
- How is literacy taught and learned in transnational contexts?
- And how might other semiotic practices matter more than literacy?

How does writing shape the global movement of people?

- How do immigration documents figure within the social history of literacy?
- How do "papers" act on migrants' physical and social mobility?
- What are the implications of changing communication technologies, such as the post and the Internet, for transnational lives and literacies, in both sending and host country?

Required Books:

Cintron, Ralph. *Angels' Town: Chero Ways, Gang Life, and the Rhetoric of the Everyday*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1997.

Duffy, John. *Writing From These Roots: Literacy in a Hmong-American Community*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.

Kalmar, Tomás Mario. *Illegal Alphabets and Adult Biliteracy: Latino Migrants Crossing the Linguistic Border*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2001.

Valdés, Guadalupe. *Learning and Not Learning English: Latino Students in American Schools*. Teachers College Press, 2001.

Madianou, Mirca and Miller, Daniel. *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia*. Routledge, 2012.

Course Packet

Available at Bob's Copy Shop and through a shared drop box link.

Requirements:*Participation*

Please come to class each week prepared and enthusiastic. This seminar is a community in which we can test out ideas in a forgiving and creative environment. It is a space for us to take intellectual risks and to learn from our colleagues. I look forward to learning along with you this semester.

Reading

This is a rapid reading class. The most reading you will do in a week is 200 pages. The least is 83. The average is around 122. Some reading is easier going. Some is slower. Please read with an inquiring, open mind.

8 response papers

These short response papers (2 pages) will briefly summarize and analyze our readings. They will serve as a starting point for our discussions and as prewriting for your final project. I will offer brief feedback in the form of a question or comment on these, but will not grade them.

Final Project Proposal with Annotated Bibliography

Your final project proposal will be developed in consultation with me over the course of the semester. The purpose of the proposal and bibliography is to (1) ensure the project is underway well before the final weeks of the semester; (2) allow time for early feedback on the project before you begin writing; (3) practice proposal writing—a crucial genre throughout graduate and professional careers.

Final Project

For the final project, I encourage you to find meaningful intersections with the course material and your own emerging research. The final project itself may take several forms:

- ☐ The development of a research question and a small empirical study
- ☐ A study of methodologies used to investigate migration and literacy
- ☐ A review of interdisciplinary resources that address migration and literacy.
- ☐ An extended scholarly personal narrative that reflects on how the course literature
- ☐ illuminates your experiences of migration
- ☐ A literature review of migration and literacy, pointing out significant gaps ☐

Presentation of Final Project ☐

We will briefly present our projects in the final weeks of the semester, giving a 10 minute talk.

Course calendar:

How does the global movement of people shape their literacies?

Sep 3: *Literacy and “assimilation” in mid 19th and early 20th century U.S. and Canada*

Antin, Mary. *The Promised Land*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1912. (excerpts: 111-142, 202-240, 301-320, 360-364).

Graff, Harvey. “The Moral Bases of Literacy: Society Economy and Social Order” (21-48) and “Illiterates and Literates in Urban Society: The Mid Nineteenth Century” (51-116). *The Literacy Myth: Cultural Integration and Social Structure in the Nineteenth Century*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1991.

Prendergast, Catherine. “Give me Your Literate: Literacy and the American Dream” (95-119). *Literacy and Racial Justice: The Politics of Learning After Brown v. Board of Education*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2003.

Sep 10: *Assimilation and Literacy, some contemporary theories*

Zhou, Min and Carl L. Bankston III. *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998. (Language and Adaptation, 108-129).

Sarroub, Loukia. *All American Yemeni Girls: Being Muslim in a Public School*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. (Chapter Four: Islam and Conflicting Visions of Literacy, 59-83).

Horner, Lu, Royster, Trimbur. “Language Difference in Writing: Towards a Translingual Approach.” *College English*, 2011.

Pedraza, S. (2005). “Assimilation or Transnationalism: Conceptual Models of the Immigrant Experience in America.” *Cuba in Transition, ASCE conference proceedings*.

Optional: Mary C. Waters, Van C. Tran, Philip Kasinitz and John H. Mollenkopf. “Segmented Assimilation Revisited: Types of Acculturation and Socioeconomic Mobility in Young Adulthood.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33. 7(2010): 1168-1193.

September 17: *literacy legacies*

Duffy, John. *Writing From These Roots: Literacy in a Hmong-American Community*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007. (Introduction, Chapters 2, 3, 5)

Lorimer Leonard, R. 2013. “Traveling Literacies: Multilingual Writing on the Move.” *Research in the Teaching of English*.

Sept 24: *Teaching and Learning in migrant contexts*

Valdés, Guadalupe. *Learning and Not Learning English: Latino Students in American Schools*. Teachers College Press, 2001. (1-28, 62-106, 127-159).

Moll, L. and Gonzalez, N. (1994). "Lessons from research with language-minority children." *Journal of Reading Behavior* 26.4, 439-56).

Alvarez, S. (2012). Language brokering in Practice: Linguistic power, biliteracy events, and family life. *Readings in Language Studies Volume 3*, ed Chamness and Watzke. (151-173). And website: <http://brokeringliteracies.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/>

Optional: Purcell-Gates, V. (2013). Literacy worlds of children of migrant farmworker communities: Participating in a migrant head start program. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 48(1), 68-97.

Oct 1: Why literacy?

Cintron, R. *Angels' Town: Chero Ways, Gang Life, and the Rhetoric of the Everyday*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1997. (Chapters 2, 3, 4, 6)

How does writing shape the global movement of people?

Oct 8: Documents as a literacy

Smith, Dorothy, and Catherine Schryer. "On Documentary Society." *Handbook of Research on Writing: History, Society, School, Individual, Text*. Ed. Charles Bazerman. New York: Erlbaum, 2008. 113-27.

Robertson, C. (2012). "Suspicious People and Untrustworthy Documents" and "Reading Bodies, Reading Documents, and Passport Control". (160-214). *The Passport in America: The History of a Document*. Oxford.

Goody, Jack, 1986. "The State, the Bureau, and the File" and "The Letter of the Law." *The Logic of writing and the organization of society*. Cambridge University Press. (87-170).

OR

Clanchy, T. (2013). "Trusting Writing," *From Memory to Written Record*, 1066-1307, 295-328.

October 15: Documents as mediating social and physical mobility

THIS WEEK: Individual conferences on final projects

Suárez-Orozco et al. (2011). "Growing up in the shadows: The developmental Implications of unauthorized Status." *Harvard Educational Review* 81.3, 438-472.

Chu, J. (2010) "Snakeheads and Papertrails: The Making of Exits" and "Bad Subjects: Human smuggling, Legality, and the Problem of Entrance." (101-164) *Cosmologies of credit: Transnational mobility and the politics of destination in China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gregorio. *Decolonizing Literacy: Mexican Lives in an Era of Global Capitalism*. Multilingual Matters, 2010. (Chapter Four: "Transnationals", 100-139)

Oct 22: *Why documents matter for literacy*

THIS WEEK: Individual conferences on final projects continued

Yoshikawa, H. (2011). "How Parents Undocumented Status Matters for Children's Early Learning" (120-136), *Immigrants Raising Citizens: Undocumented Parents and their Young Children*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Kalmar, Tomás Mario. *Illegal Alphabets and Adult Biliteracy: Latino Migrants Crossing the Linguistic Border*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2001.

Oct 29: *Personal letters*

Final project proposals due this week by Thursday, Oct. 31

Brandt, Deborah and Katie Clinton. "Limits of the Local: Expanding Perspectives on Literacy as a Social Practice." *Journal of Literacy Research* 34.3 (2002): 337-56.

Gerber, David. *Authors of Their Lives: the Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2006. (Chapter Four: "Using Postal Systems: Transnational Networks on the Edge of Modernity" 140-161)

Lyons, Martin. (2013). "Excuse my Bad Writing" (34-52) and "Spain: Emergency Literacy and the Nostalgia of Exile." (170-200). *The Writing Culture of Ordinary People in Europe, c. 1860-1920*. Cambridge University Press.

Nov 5: *Mediascapes and Traveling literacies*

Lam, Wan Shun Eva and Rosario-Ramos, Enid. "Multilingual Literacies in Transnational Digitally-Mediated Contexts: An Exploratory Study of Immigrant Teens in the U.S." *Language and Education* 23.2 (2009): 171-190.

Burrell, J. and Anderson, K. (2008). "'I have great desires to look beyond my world': Trajectories of information and communication technology use among Ghanaians living abroad. *New Media & Society*, 10(2), 203-223.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. (Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy, pgs 27-47).

OR

Jenkins, H. (2008). "Introduction: Worship at the Alter of Convergence." *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. NYU Press.

Nov 12: *Absent Bodies and Mediated Relationships*

Madianou, Mirca and Miller, Daniel. *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and*

Polymedia. Routledge, 2012.

Optional: Aneesh, A. (2006). "Body shopping" and "Virtual Migration" (37-99) *Virtual Migration: The Programming of Globalization*. Duke University Press.

Nov 19: Writing

BRING: materials to write (laptops, notes, notebooks, coffee, whatever you need).

Brief discussion of: Lam, W. and Warriner, D (2012). "Transnationalism and Literacy: Investigating the Mobility of People, Languages, Texts, and Practices in Contexts of Migration." *Reading Research Quarterly* 47.2, 191-215. **What would we add? What have they left out?**

Nov 26: Peer review

Dec 3: Presentations

Dec 10: Presentations