

END OF FUNDING PERIOD REPORT

LAUC Statewide Grants, Research & Professional Development Committee

Primary Applicant(s): Thuy Vo Dang

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TITLE OF PROJECT:

Time Period of Grant: 2015-2016 fiscal year

Amount of Award Received: \$600.00

Original Abstract as Submitted:

I am applying for the LAUC Presentation Grant in order to present at the Association for Asian American Studies (aaastudies.org) annual conference from April 28-30, 2016 in Miami, Florida. I have organized a roundtable called Refugees and the Art of Re/Creation: Pleasure and Leisure as Sites of Social and Political Critiques. Bringing together five Southeast Asian Archive Ambassadors, I have proposed a timely discussion about how and why Southeast Asian refugees have been studied in the past and what lessons can be learned for the current refugee situation in Europe. The ubiquitous image of a refugee is one of destitution, suffering and victimhood. Refugees are imagined by the international community as those in dire need of humanitarian rescue and liberation. Critical Refugee Studies theorist Yen Le Espiritu has shown the danger of such an overly-wrought construction of refugee identity. She posits that "Refugee camp studies further bolster this crisis model, as researchers repeatedly portray refugees as abject figures who suffer not only the trauma of forced departure but also the boredom, uncertainty, despair, and helplessness induced by camp life" (Espiritu, "Negotiating Memories of War: Arts in the Vietnamese American Communities" 2010).

In Spring 2016, the UC Humanities Research Institute's faculty-in-residence will be focused on Critical Refugee Studies. The lead researchers, Yen Le Espiritu and Lan Duong, will conduct research in the Southeast Asian Archive and partner with the Orange County & Southeast Asian Archive Center on programming for campus and the community. Thus, I organized this roundtable with these two professors to engage their interests in Critical Refugee Studies. We will be exploring the sites of pleasure and leisure in refugee lives, whether those moments exist within the liminal spaces of camps or in post-resettlement experiences. We highlight virtual and material spaces such as the Internet, home gardens and community-based projects and media cultural forms as found in film, music, theater, and visual arts in order to explore how refugees, as individuals or collectively, express their stories. In the UCI Libraries Southeast Asian Archive, there are over 400 unique pieces of refugee artwork created in camps in the 1980s and 1990s. They visually document the experiences and lend insight into the inner lives of a population the world had only imagined as victims and objects of international concern. Yet the artwork testifies to the insuppressible desire to create, whether out of necessity or for the sheer pleasure of making art. They force a reexamination of the role of pleasure and leisure in refugee spaces. Similarly, a new play called "Vietgone" by second-generation Vietnamese American playwright Qui Nguyen opens up a new way to think about the refugee camp experience by highlighting the everyday desires and moments of pleasure

experienced by his parents while in Fort Chaffee in 1975. These brief examples bring to the fore the necessity and importance of sites of pleasure and leisure in refugee lives.

I am committed to maintaining my affiliation with AAAS through participating in discussions at the nexus of scholarship, collection development, and community outreach. My engagement with AAAS is essential to my intersecting roles as an Archivist who collects materials relevant to scholars and community heritage, a teacher, and an arts and education activist. In order to continue promoting the use of our collection to subject area experts, it is important for me to represent the Southeast Asian Archive at this established conference which brings together scholars from interdisciplinary fields with a focus on Asian American communities. Our collections are often utilized in research and teaching by Asian American Studies scholars across the country. Therefore by highlighting materials from our archival collections on refugees during the roundtable, I will be able to promote the new OC & SEAA Center's resources to the wider scholarly community at AAAS. I am confident that this will lead to increased use of our library's collections by Asian Americanists.

I. ACCOMPLISHMENTS and EVALUATION

- Describe what was achieved during the time period of the grant.
I chaired and presented on the panel I organized, "Refugees and the Art of Re/Creation: Pleasure and Leisure as Sites of Social and Political Critiques." Additionally I was able to purchase several unique fictional books to add to the Southeast Asian Archive collection.
- What aspects were completed as proposed? If your study could not be completed as proposed, explain how your plans were altered.
Attendance at the Association for Asian American Studies Conference to outreach for the Southeast Asian Archive collections, network with scholars who focus on Southeast Asian diaspora studies, community histories, and community engagement projects.
- Did the project accomplish what it intended? Did it make a difference?
 - Include any relevant quantitative data, if applicable (e.g. How many individuals have benefited from this project? In what way? This may include various output measures such as circulation, reference transactions, program attendance, survey responses, etc. as appropriate.)
There were 20 people in the audience for our roundtable.
 - Include any anecdotes, if applicable.
A handful of audience members had not heard of the UCI Libraries Southeast Asian Archive and expressed interest in making a research trip to view our collection in the 2016-17 academic year.
- What would you do differently next time, if anything?
Nothing
- What advice do you have for others applying for LAUC research grants?
Just do it!

II. IS YOUR PROJECT COMPLETED? Yes_x_ No__

If No, what is needed to complete the project? Is more time needed? Or more funds?

III. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Please explain how the funds received were spent. Attach your original budget and indicate how well your estimates matched with actual expenditures. Receipts are not necessary.

IV. SHARING YOUR PRODUCT/RESULTS

What are your plans for disseminating the results of your work? If it will be a web page or product, or published article or book, when will it be available to the public? Include citations/URLs if known.

PROPOSED BUDGET	
AAAS Conference Registration	\$155.00
Air Travel from Orange County, CA to Miami, FL	\$650.00
Ground transportation (to/from airport)	\$100.00
Lodging for 3 nights in Hilton Miami Downtown (\$200/night)	\$600.00
Meals for 4 days (\$71/day per diem rate)	\$284.00
TOTAL	\$1,789.00
	Librarian Professional Development Funds-\$1,189.00
TOTAL REQUESTED FROM LAUC	\$600.00

V. NOTE

Information included in this report may be reprinted or posted on the web for dissemination to UCOP, other UC Libraries, and future potential LAUC grant applicants.