

An Overview of Recent Developments in Hmong-American and Lao-American Studies Research

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Hmong-Americans in 2005 American Community Survey

- Estimated Hmong Population in U.S. – 188,900
- Top 10 States in Hmong Population (2000 Census Figure in Parentheses)
 1. California – 65,345 (65,095)
 2. Minnesota – 46,352 (41,800)
 3. Wisconsin – 38,814 (33,791)
 4. Michigan – 7,769 (5,383)
 5. Colorado – 4,285 (3,000)
 6. North Carolina – 4,172 (7,093)
 7. Georgia – 3,324 (1,468)
 8. Missouri – 1,553 (24)
 9. Florida - 1,423 (118)
 10. Washington – 1,380 (1,294)

Figures for “Hmong Alone or in any Combination”

Hmong-Americans in 2005 American Community Survey

- Median Age – 18.3 Years (Compared to 36.4 among all Americans)
- Period of Arrival (Foreign-Born) – 56.2% Before 1990, 31.4% between 1990-1999, 12.5% after 2000
- Median Family Income - \$38,335 (Compared to \$55,832 U.S.)
- Employment in Manufacturing – 32.7% (Compared to 11.9% of all Americans in the labor force over 16)
- Higher Education – Bachelor's Degree 7.5% (Compared to 17.2% of all Americans over 25)
- Poverty Rate – 32.7% (Compared to 10.2% among all U.S. Families)
- Homeownership Rate – 50.9% (Compared to 67% among all U.S. Households)
- Divorce Rate – 3.3% (Compared to 10.2% among all Americans over age 15)
- English Fluency – 47.7% speak English “Less than Very Well”

Lao-Americans in 2005 American Community Survey

- Estimated Lao Population in U.S. – 209,627
- Top 10 States in Lao Population (2000 Census Figure in Parentheses)
 1. California – 63,318 (55,456)
 2. Texas – 12,643 (10,114)
 3. Minnesota – 11,636 (9,940)
 4. Washington 10,638 (7,974)
 5. Iowa – 6,129 (4,079)
 6. North Carolina - 5,854 (5,313)
 7. Georgia – 5,546 (4,531)
 8. Tennessee – 4,781 (4,214)
 9. Michigan – 4,735 (3,158)
 10. Florida – 4,035 (3,522)

Figures for “Lao Alone or in any Combination”

Lao-Americans in 2005 American Community Survey

- Median Age – 29.1 Years (Compared to 36.4 among all Americans)
- Period of Arrival (Foreign-Born) – 85.0% Before 1990, 11.3% between 1990-1999, 3.7% after 2000
- Median Family Income – \$52,248 (Compared to \$55,832 U.S.)
- Employment in Manufacturing – 39.6% (Compared to 11.9% of all Americans in the labor force over 16)
- Higher Education – 9.2% Bachelor's Degree (Compared to 17.2% of all Americans over 25)
- Poverty Rate – 13.9% (Compared to 10.2% among all U.S. Families)
- Homeownership Rate – 61.9% (Compared to 67% among all U.S. Households)
- Divorce Rate – 6.3% (Compared to 10.2% among all Americans over age 15)
- English Fluency – 45.6% speak English “Less than Very Well”

Trends in Hmong-American Studies

- The vast majority of works in Hmong-American Studies have been published since the mid-1990s
- Increasing numbers of scholarly works are being produced by persons of Hmong-origin, particularly professors and graduate students at American universities. Only about 10% of the publications in 3 earlier bibliographies published by U of Minnesota had Hmong-origin authors, while about 25% of Hmong Studies publications published since 1996 have had Hmong authors.
- The large increase in Hmong-American studies related publications (particularly theses/dissertations/journal articles) has been driven by a sizable number of Hmong-American graduate students researching and writing about their own communities.

An Overview of work in Hmong-American Studies since 2000

- **Total Number of Publications = 213 (Books, Book chapters, theses and dissertations, journal articles)**
- **Physical and Mental Health – 76**
- **General Social and Economic Adaptation – 55**
- **Changing Gender Roles – 11**
- **Educational Adaptation and Youth Development – 62**
- **Religious Adaptation – 4**
- **Hmong-American Cultural Arts – 5**

Sources: WorldCat, Web of Science, Academic Search Premier, ProQuest Dissertations

Selected Works in Hmong-American Studies since 2000

- Jeremy Hein's (2006). *Ethnic Origins: The Adaptation of Cambodian and Hmong Refugees in Four American Cities*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation (Race Relations and Social Adaptation Study).
- Stacey J. Lee (2005). *Up Against Whiteness: Race, School, and Immigrant Youth*. New York: Teachers College Press. (Race Relations/Hmong-American experiences in U.S. School System)
- *Healing by Heart: Clinical and Ethical Case Stories of Hmong Families and Western Providers* (2003), edited by Kathleen A. Culhane-Pera, et al. Nashville: Vanderbilt University. (Articles explore a range of health issues experienced by Hmong-Americans)
- Dia Cha's *Hmong American Concepts of Health, Healing and Conventional Medicine* (2003). New York: Routledge. (Comprehensive overview of Hmong beliefs pertaining to health and medical issues)

Selected Works in Hmong-American Studies since 2000

- Lee, G.Y. (2006). "Dreaming Across the Oceans: Globalization and Cultural Reinvention in the Hmong Diaspora." Hmong Studies Journal, Vol 7, 2006. (Study of Hmong videos and their importance in terms of transnational Hmong ethnic identity)
- Vang, C.T. (2004). "Hmong American K-12 Students and the Academic Skills Needed for a College Education: A Review of the Existing Literature and Suggestions for Future Research." Hmong Studies Journal 5:1-31. (Literature review of works pertaining to Hmong-American educational experiences and adaptation)
- Yang, Kou. (2003). "Hmong Americans: A Review of Felt Needs, Problems, and Community Development" Hmong Studies Journal 4:1-23. (Overview of important social issues in Hmong-American communities)
- Yang, Kou. (2001). "The Hmong in America: Twenty Five Years after the U.S. Secret War in Laos." Journal of Asian American Studies. (Reflections on Hmong achievements in the U.S. since the mid-1970s).

Research Needs in Hmong-American Studies

- ✓ More Research on educational outcomes and acculturation (in terms of language use, test scores, graduation rates of the first generation of Hmong born and raised in the United States). This 2nd generation will be compared to the other immigrant children and youth born and raised in the United States including Mexican, Vietnamese, and Latino groups as well as other racial minorities.
- ✓ Investigation of gender differentials in educational attainment between young Hmong-American women and men. No comprehensive contemporary analysis of this issue has yet been published though anecdotes suggest enrollments and retention of Hmong-American women may exceed that of men in many educational institutions.
- ✓ Works that examine the growing *social, political and cultural complexity and diversity* of the Hmong community in the United States. Works that compare similarities and differences between Hmong communities in different regions (i.e. California vs. Colorado). In addition, works that look at race relations across Hmong communities in greater detail (Hein 2006 a major work providing insights across Upper Midwest communities)

An overview of work in Lao-American Studies since 2000

- **Total Number of Publications = 38 (Books, Book chapters, theses and dissertations, journal articles)**
- **Physical and Mental Health – 12 Works**
- **General Social and Economic Adaptation – 10 Works**
- **Changing Gender Roles – 7 Works**
- **Educational Adaptation and Youth Development – 6 Works**
- **Religious Adaptation – 3 Works**
- **Lao-American Cultural Arts – 1**

Sources: WorldCat, Web of Science, Academic Search Premier, ProQuest Dissertations

Selected Works in Lao-American Studies since 2000

- The Socioeconomic Attainments of Second-Generation Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans. By: Sakamoto, Arthur; Woo, Hyeyoung. Sociological Inquiry, Feb2007, Vol. 77 Issue 1, p44-75, 32p (First Socioeconomic study to include Lao-Americans with 2000 data)
- Being young, female and Laotian: Ethnicity as social capital at the intersection of gender, generation, 'race' and age. By: Shah, Bindi. Ethnic & Racial Studies, Jan2007, Vol. 30 Issue 1, p28-50, 23p (New Study of Gender roles among Lao-American girls)
- Kagawa-Singer M, Tanjasiri SP, Lee SW, et al.
Breast and cervical cancer control among Pacific Islander and southeast Asian women: Participatory action research strategies for baseline data collection in California (study includes Lao-Americans)
JOURNAL OF CANCER EDUCATION 21 (1): S53-S60 Suppl. S SPR 2006 (one of a few recent health/medicine-related studies involving Lao-Americans)

Selected Works in Lao-American Studies since 2000

- Le TN, Stockdale GD
Individualism, collectivism, and delinquency in Asian, American adolescents
JOURNAL OF CLINICAL CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY 34 (4): 681-691 DEC 2005 (Study includes Lao-Americans) (One of several recent studies of social adjustment among Lao-American youth).
- Factors affecting Laotian women's participation in breast cancer screening by Saechao, Kelly Mouang, M.P.H. Thesis, California State University, Fresno, 2005 (Another of the relatively few health/medicine related studies)
- Traces of places: A vicarious journey into memories of the homeland in a Lao-American community by Turpin, Leslie, PhD CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF INTEGRAL STUDIES, 2004, 464 pages (A qualitative dissertation study of how Lao parents/elders pass along memories of Laos to children and youth)
- Reflections on Immigrant Organizing, and the 'Universals' By: Hoyt, Joshua. Social Policy, Winter2002/2003, Vol. 33 Issue 2, p37, 5p (A Lao-American Association in Illinois) (A study related to the role of a Lao-American Organization)

Selected Works in Lao-American Studies since 2000

- AU Townsend, JS Fu, DL TI Paw's story: A Laotian refugee's lonely entry into American literacy SO JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT & ADULT LITERACY BP 104 EP 114 PG 11 PY 2001 PD OCT VL 45 IS 2 (Study of a Lao-American refugee's efforts to acquire literacy)
- AU Yoshioka, MR DiNoia, J Ullah, K TI Attitudes toward marital violence - An examination of four Asian communities (including Lao) SO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN BP 900 EP 926 PG 27 PY 2001 PD AUG VL 7 IS 8 (Domestic violence study)
- 'How can I make it here?' The adaptation to rural American life by Lao refugee women by White, Jeanne Carol Vosecky, EdD UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA, 2000, 207 pages I.D: 9994132
- AU Bankston, CL Zhou, M TI De facto congregationalism and socioeconomic mobility in Laotian and Vietnamese immigrant communities: A study of religious institutions and economic change SO REVIEW OF RELIGIOUS RESEARCH BP 453 EP 470 PG 18 JI Rev. Relig. Res. PY 2000 PD JUN VL 41 IS 4 (Study of the functions of Lao-American churches and temples in Louisiana)

Research Needs in Lao-American Studies

- In just about every realm of research (Health Sciences/Education, Social Sciences etc.) far less work being done than in Hmong Studies
- Glaring research needs pertaining to:
 - ✓ the range of health issues among Lao-Americans
 - ✓ Race relations and discrimination and if they are important issues in Lao communities across the U.S.
 - ✓ Socioeconomic and other differences between Lao communities in different parts of the U.S.
 - ✓ The role of Lao-American religious institutions in the maintenance of Lao-American ethnic identity (building on Zhou and Bankston's important work from 1999/2000)
 - ✓ A great need for community research by Lao-American scholars (including graduate students)

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