

Research and Preliminary Findings

Transnational Marriage between Hmong-Americans and Hmong-Lao

By

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Abstract

This presentation is an initial report on a larger study of Hmong marriages that focuses on two main constructs—transnational and cross-age marriage. The phenomenon of marriage between the elderly Hmong-Americans and young Hmong-Lao is a form of transnational marriage while at the same time marriage within the Hmong community at large—but with Hmong people living in different countries. Unlike the studies of other researchers who studied transnational marriage or cross cultural marriage among people who came from different countries and cultures, I study the phenomenon of transnational marriage within one cultural group- that is, Hmong. What is the social meaning behind the actions taken on the part of elderly Hmong-American men or women who already have families in America but return to find and marry young Hmong-Lao women or men? In a preliminary discussion on this question, drawing from initial interviews, I offer ideas that may further help us to understand such marriages within the context of globalization and gender issues.

Key Words

Hmong culture and society, transnational marriage, cross-age marriage, globalization, gender

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