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Geo-Narrative: Analyzing Qualitative Data With GIS in Mixed-Method Research

Speaker: Professor Mei-Po Kwan, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

Chair: Assoc Prof Elaine Ho, Department of Geography, NUS | Senior Research Fellow, ARI

Date/Time: Friday 26 October, 3.30pm   **Place:** Central Library Theatrette 1, #04-04, NUS

Abstract

Geographic information systems (GIS) have been largely understood as a tool for the storage and analysis of quantitative data since the early days of their development. This understanding of GIS has foreclosed many opportunities to use GIS in mixed-method research involving both quantitative and qualitative data. Attempts in recent years to redress this particular understanding of GIS have opened up new possibilities for using GIS to understand people's lived experiences in an interpretive manner rather than for conducting spatial analysis that largely relies on quantitative geographic information. In line with this development, I describe in this presentation an approach to GIS-based narrative analysis (called Geo-Narrative) based on extending current GIS's capabilities for the analysis and interpretation of narrative materials such as oral histories, life histories, and biographies. A study on the lives of the Muslim women in Columbus, Ohio after 11 September 2001 is used to illustrate the approach. Another example based on a study of female sex workers in Mexico-U.S. border cities will also be discussed. The examples show that Geo-Narrative can help us understand how emotions such as fear shape people's access to and use of urban opportunities (e.g., healthcare facilities), suggesting that it is applicable to a wide variety of research contexts, including accessibility, mobility and health.

About the Speaker

Mei-Po Kwan is a Professor of Geography and GIScience and Director of the Space-Time Analysis and Research (STAR) Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She had served as an editor of Annals of the American Association of Geographers for 12 years and is editor of the book series entitled SAGE Advances in Geographic Information Science and Technology. She was recognized as a fellow by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation in 2016. She has received many prestigious honors and awards, including the Distinguished Scholarship Honors and the Stanley Brunn Award for Creativity in Geography from the American Association of Geographers.

Her research interests include environmental health, sustainable cities, human mobility, and GIScience. Supported by major NIH and NSF grants, her recent projects used advanced geospatial technologies to examine the health risks of female sex workers, high-risk drug use, exposure to air pollution, and environmental influences on physical activity. More information about her is available at http://meipokwan.org.

Admission is free. However, we would greatly appreciate if you can RSVP by clicking on the "Register" button as spaces are limited hence advance registration is advised.

ALL ARE WELCOME

CONVENORS: 🌐 A/P Tracey Skelton (geost@nus.edu.sg) 🌐 Dr Sin Harng Luh (geosinhl@nus.edu.sg) 🌐 Dr Chris Gouramanis (geogc@nus.edu.sg)
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