GCSC Seminar Series

November 1, 2016
4:00-5:00 PM

Fernando Bosco
San Diego State University, Geography

"Journeys in a Food Desert: Place, Mobility, and the Everyday Food Practices of Young People"

210 ASB
(Aline Skaggs Building)

ALL ARE WELCOME

Refreshments & meet the speaker at 3:45
Abstract:

This presentation draws from a larger research project that seeks to generate a better understanding of how children, young people and their families access food within the constraints and opportunities presented by place, culture, and ethnicity. I examine the everyday food practices of a group of high school students living in an urban, multicultural and lower income community in San Diego, California. I integrate theoretical and empirical insights from research in health, food, and children geographies and offer a relational conceptualization and analysis of the food environment that is sensitive to young people’s everyday mobilities. The focus is on the way young people journey through their local food landscape and navigate contradictions between food norms across places—including home, school, and neighborhood. I first provide an analysis of the food environment in the study area that challenges the neighborhood’s designation as a ‘food desert’. I then analyze the spatiality of young people’s food routines and present results of a year-long participatory study involving GPS-tagged photography, photo-voice interviews, and surveys. The results uncover young people’s personal and emotional encounters with what, how, and where they eat, providing a fine-grained analysis of young people’s daily engagements with their food environments. I show how young people’s food journeys are structured and governed by social relations, physical and material constraints, biopolitics, and emotional geographies. I argue that this research approach permits a more critical and dynamic understanding of the food environment and its relationship to young people’s food practices, with useful insights for health research and policy.

Bio:

Fernando J. Bosco is Professor of Geography, Graduate Advisor for the Doctoral Program in Geography and co-Chair of the Urban Studies Program at San Diego State University. He received his B.A. from Wittenberg University and his M.A. and Ph.D. from The Ohio State University. He works in the areas of urban, political and social geography, with an overarching interest in issues of social change and social justice in the United States and Latin America. His research interests include the geographic dimensions of social movements and collective action, social and political geographies of children and families, geographies of food in urban contexts, emotional geographies, geographic thought and theory, and qualitative research methods. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on these topics and emphasizes the importance of community-based geographic research and critically engaged scholarship. He is currently a co-principal investigator on a National Science Foundation project analyzing the connections between food, ethnicity and place in San Diego. His publications appear in journals such as the Annals of the American Association of Geographers, Social and Cultural Geography, Children’s Geographies, Global Networks, and Emotion, Space and Society.