

## **Stranger than Fiction? Researching an Intercultural Encounter or Conflict**

This assignment is an opportunity for you to educate yourself and your readers on an intercultural issue of particular interest to you. The “prompt” for this assignment is purposely unspecific, precisely to give you the freedom and the challenge of delineating a project of your own. You will research the relevant literature on your chosen topic, and then participate in several workshops designed to help you narrow, redirect or refine your project. You will contribute to the conversation on the issue you choose to explore by locating its relevant points of conflict, by carefully considering the different arguments surrounding it, and articulating your own, situated position. You may research a particular type of situation (such as labor immigration, students studying abroad, interracial relationships, international adoption, human trafficking, colonial encounters) or a specific site or conflict (e.g. the Tijuana/San Diego border, the Palestine/Israeli conflict, the English-only debate, the Basque separatist movement). You may want to tackle a more theoretical or philosophical debate (such as the ethics of interventional philanthropy), or you may prefer to conduct empirical research in the Duke or Durham community (e.g. ethnic subcultures on campus, intergenerational issues in an immigrant community). If you plan to study or develop a service project abroad, you may use this opportunity to get acquainted with/prepare for situations you may encounter at your destination.

The fundamental goals of this project are that you:

- 1) Learn the basics of navigating the library catalog and databases,
- 2) practice formulating a research problem or question,
- 3) begin to distinguish between types of sources and weigh the merits of each in answering your research question,
- 4) engage with and situate yourself within a particular scholarly context, AND
- 5) practice organizing, synthesizing and analyzing the data you have collected to craft your text.

The first step is to think of a topic that is truly interesting to you. You will write 3 drafts of this project, and will receive various forms of feedback on your writing.

First draft DUE Tuesday, March 31