

Yale University

Workshop in Urban Ethnography

The Ethnographic Interpretation of Urban Life and Culture

Monday, October 14, 11:30am-1:20pm

210 Prospect Street, Room 203



Eiko Ikegami

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Playful Ties that Bind: Virtual Neighborhood, Civility and Self for People with Disability in Second Life

One of the greatest challenges in United States public health is the growing number of people with disabilities, now numbering over 50 million. While there is a broad awareness about the usefulness of online mutual help groups, it is less well-known that individuals with disabilities have started to self-organize in grassroots initiatives in online virtual worlds, such as that of Second Life (SL). These immersive three-dimensional virtual worlds provide distinctive modes of cyber communication for people with disabilities through the shared co-presence of avatars, which are embodied simulated representations of selves. Unlike Facebook, however, avatar-based social interactions create a feeling of intimacy in sharing space, time and conversations concurrently. Ikegami will report a lively view from digital neighborhoods based on her four years of digital ethnography.

Lunch Served - All Welcome

For upcoming speakers and bios, visit <http://www.yale.edu/sociology/UEP>.

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