

Linguistic Anthropology Speaker Series

Pueblo (In)visibilities: Language, Secrecy, and Publicity in the Southwest U.S.

Dr. Erin K. Debenport



Erin K. Debenport is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at UCLA and the author of *Fixing the Books: Secrecy, Literacy, and Perfectibility in Indigenous New Mexico*. **Tuesday, Feb 21, 2016**



3:45-5:15pm @ INTS 1111

Using linguistic and ethnographic data from two Pueblo communities in New Mexico and Texas, I examine how written and spoken language is used in the formation of subjectivities, groups, and articulations of sovereignty. Beginning by tracing one community's experiment with indigenous language literacy which emphasized the tight control of language materials, I show how a new understanding of the public/private distinction is possible based on concealment practices rather than the unlimited circulation of written works. Using the second example, I show how indigenous language can be used to render a border community visible through collective language activism and individual, embodied uses of Native language. This work brings linguistic anthropological attention to the ways that secrecy and publicity create, maintain, and challenge identity and community, uniting Indigenous studies and borderlands scholarship.

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