

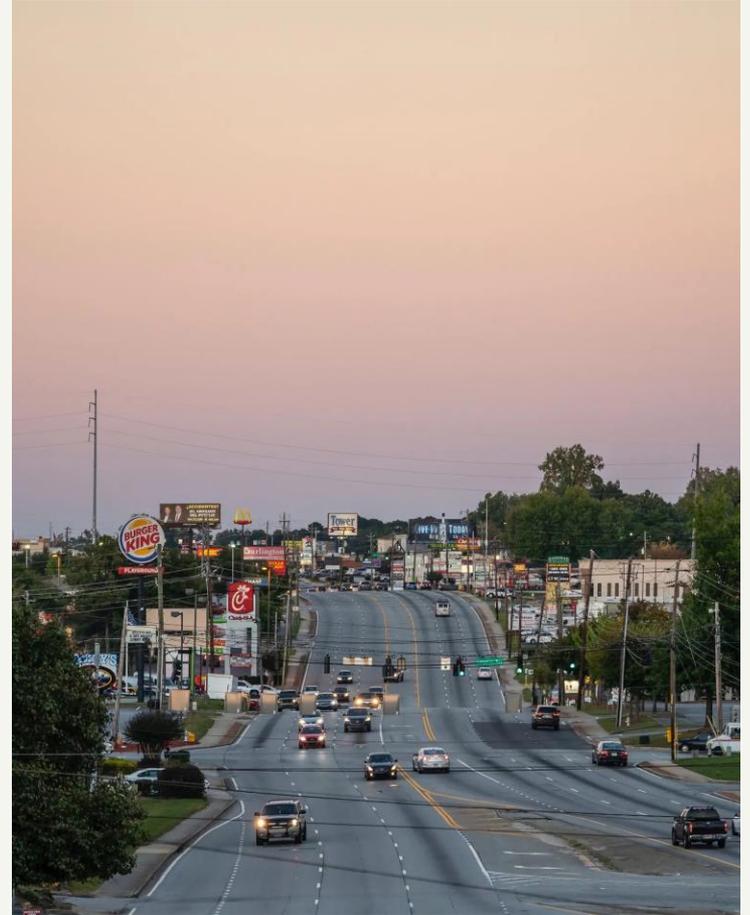


# Smoking Spaces: An Ethnographic Study of Tobacco Use on Buford Highway

📍 Atlanta, Georgia

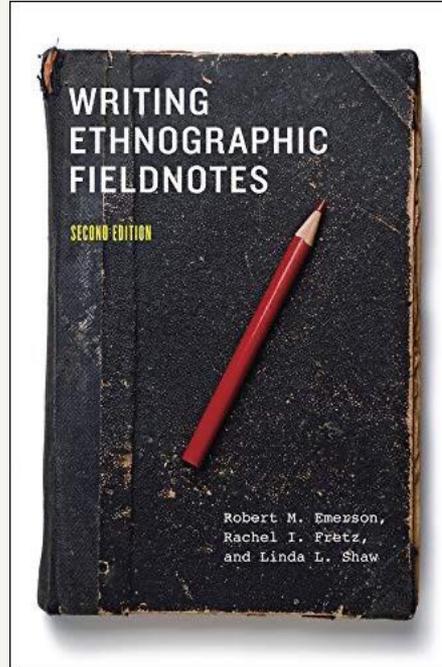
CPACS Prevention Team  
Community Action for Teens  
Georgia Team Empowerment

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# What is ethnography?

Fieldwork



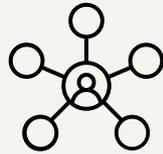
# The Buford Highway Study Area



# Introduction

## Purpose of Study:

CPACS aims to target the problem of enforcement of tobacco policies and laws in a culturally appropriate manner through anthropological survey methods.



Following ASPIRE's priority areas of communication and education, CPACS will create a youth task force that will receive training and perform an ethnography about tobacco use and enforcement with business owners and customers along Buford Highway in Doraville. Through interviews and business mapping, we aim to understand the local context surrounding tobacco use in AAPI populations.

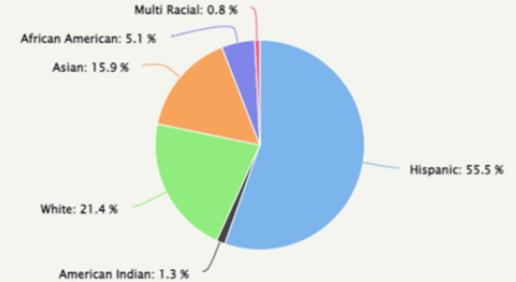
# Community Background and Context

## Demographics of Study Area:

- The City of Doraville is around 15.9 % Asian. Major ethnic groups include Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

## Tobacco Outlet Density and Social Determinants of Health:

- Researchers found in a nationwide study that Tobacco Outlet Density (TOD) was higher in urban areas with a lower median household income and in Latino and African American neighborhoods.
- Tobacco outlets are more concentrated in areas where people have a higher risk of negative health outcomes.



# Research Flow



## Research Sites

### 1. Intown Plaza:

- Beijing Kabobs
- Supermercado Latino
- Variedades Belen

### 2. Northwoods Plaza:

- Cafe Thuy Nga

### 3. Shallowford Road

- CPACS  
office and parking Lot
- BP Gas Station

## Research Questions:

1. Where are the main areas where people smoke? Has the community changed after the smoke free Doraville/Smoke Free Gwinnett Campaigns?
2. Who is smoking on Buford Highway? Where are they smoking and why?
3. How does smoking and tobacco use impact the local neighborhood?

## Research Methods

1. Observations
2. Interviews
3. Reflections and Conclusions

# Map of Research Area

The research area was within a one-mile radius of the CPACS office near Shallowford Road and Buford Highway. We wanted the research sites to be within walking distance so that we could observe the difference in anti-smoking enforcement between various community spaces.





## **Methods: Fieldwork, Fieldnotes, and interviews**

Students from Community Action for Teens visited three research locations within the vicinity of the CPACS office. Each student had a notebook and worksheet to record their observations about the local environment.

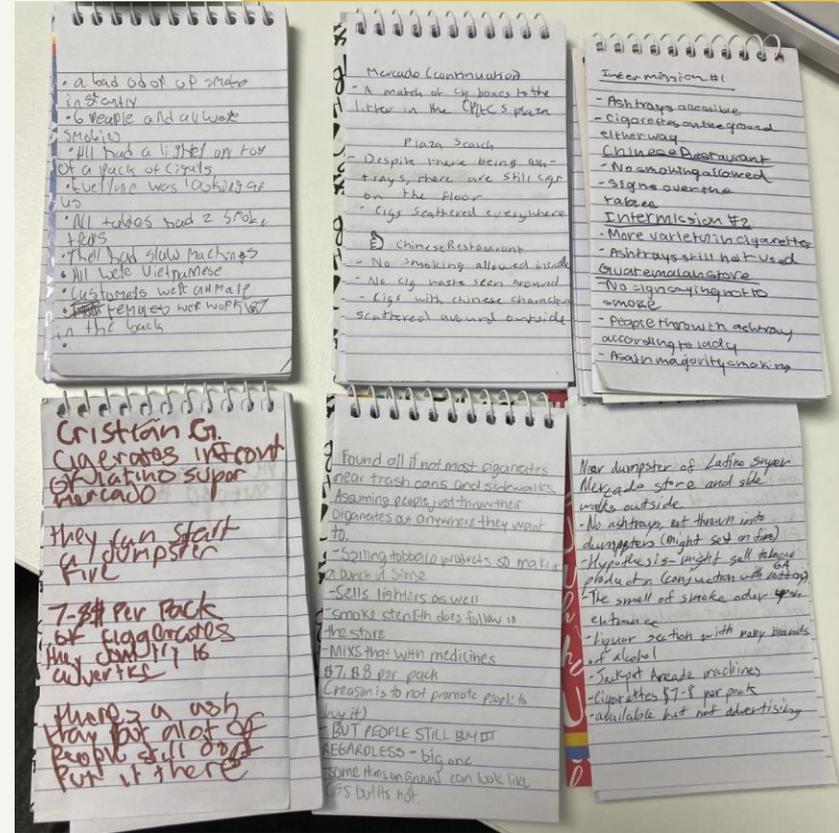
# ●●● Observations:

## CPACS

**Intown Plaza:** We found a considerable amount of cigarette butts on the ground in the parking lot. One of the students noted that it was "not sanitary and the community is not dedicated to getting rid of the trash." There were no ash trays on this side of Intown Plaza.

**Supermercado Latino:** Supermercado Latino is a small grocery store in the back of Intown Plaza.

While there was some flashy advertising for alcohol in Spanish, there was none for tobacco products. The store owner talked to us and commented that they do not advertise cigarettes and keep prices high as to discourage people from buying them, but they are still often sold.



# Observations & Interviews

## Beijing Kabobs:

- The restaurant has a no smoking sign that was provided by "fantuan" a Chinese food delivery service.
- Customers do not smoke indoors, but often smoke in front of the restaurant.
- When we asked her who she sees smoking, she replied "Many Chinese people smoke, fewer Americans smoke!"

## Variadades Belen:

- "Most people don't smoke and that most locals were careful about tobacco litter."
- She also said the majority of people she sees smoking are Chinese and it is not common to see Hispanic people smoking.
- Smoking is not allowed inside of her business, however there is a smoking area within 20ft of the entrance of the store.



# Observations & Interviews

## Café Thuy Nga:

- Café Thuy Nga is a Vietnamese Café that permits smoking
- There is a sign outside that reads "SMOKING IS ALLOWED. No one under the age of 18 is permitted."
- The clientele is mostly elderly Vietnamese men

## BP:

- Our research team interviewed the clerk, who said mostly older people are buying cigarettes.
- There is an ashtray in front of the door of the gas station, but it was relatively empty, because people prefer to throw cigarette butts on the ground.
- The cigarettes here were cheaper, had more varieties, and were more prominently displayed than Supermercado Latino.





Chinese *Taishan* and *Furongwang* brand cigarettes, cigarillos, and Korean Cigarettes found near Buford Highway

# ● ● ● Conclusions

## **Lack of smoke-free enforcement in certain spaces and Overlap of Smoking Spaces**

- Despite local smoke free ordinances, there are some spaces where smoking and waste from tobacco products are still an issue.
- Immigrant communities and small business such as those on Buford Highway are disproportionately impacted by tobacco use and second-hand smoke.
- There is uneven distribution of enforcement from establishment to establishment and since smoke and trash are mobile, there is spill over from smoking spaces to non-smoking spaces.

## **Lack of proper sanitation and waste disposal**

- Trash from tobacco products are particularly disruptive because there is high pedestrian traffic in this part of Atlanta, as many community members do not have cars and must walk to work and school.
- Cigarette waste was often located close to dumpsters and was a hazard for fires.
- Better signage and providing more ash trays and trash cans in public spaces could alleviate this issue

## **Multicultural Factors and Tobacco Use**

- There were several multicultural tobacco products such as cigarillos and Chinese cigarettes (imported from abroad) that were found in the community.
- There is also a convergence of various cultural practices and different cultural norms surrounding smoking on Buford Highway.
- Café Thuy Nga, for example, shows that indoor smoking is normalized among some people of the older generation in the Vietnamese community.
- Smoking is also common in the Chinese community at Ma Jiang Parties and people import cigarettes from abroad.



# Thank you!

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