# Ann Ngoc Tran, Ph.D.

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
Email: trann@umn.edu | Website: www.annngoctran.com

## Education

**University of Minnesota-Twin Cities** August 2026– Present
President's Postdoctoral Fellow
American Studies

**University of California, Los Angeles** July 2025–August 2026
UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow
Asian American Studies & Asian Languages and Cultures
Advisor: Thu-Huong Nguyen-Vo

**University of Southern California**
Ph.D. in American Studies and Ethnicity August 2025
M.A. in American Studies and Ethnicity Spring 2023
Fields for Qualifying Exams: 20th Century U.S. History (Black Social Movements emphasis), Asian American History, Transpacific Studies, Critical Refugee Studies

**Dissertation**: "The Ark is Already Gone: A History of Boat Refugee Non-Arrival"
Dissertation Committee: Viet Thanh Nguyen (co-chair), Adrian De Leon (co-chair), Francille R. Wilson, Fiori Berhane

**Texas Christian University**
B.A. in English, *Phi Beta Kappa* and *magna cum laude* May 2020
B.A. in History, *magna cum laude* May 2020
Minor in Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies

## Areas of Interest

critical refugee studies, diaspora and migration studies, transnational American studies, Global Indigeneity, maritime Southeast Asia, Asian American history, Black Studies, war and memory

## Publications

In-Progress

2026 "Toward a Decolonial History of the Fall of Saigon: Transimperial Settler Colonialism, Vietnamese Ethnonationalism, and the Central Highlands" (Forthcoming in the *Journal of Asian American Studies*)

2026 "Vietnamese Refugee Fishing: Labor, Displacement, and Livelihood Strategies on the Gulf Coast" (Book chapter in the edited volume *Vietnamese Refugees and the Remaking of the Gulf Coast*, forthcoming fall/winter 2027)

2026 "Refugee Boats and the Material Contingencies of Maritime Migration" in *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* Convergences Feature on "Moving Objects: Modes of Conveyance and the Making of Global Asias" (Accepted)

2026 Ann Ngoc Tran and Wesley L. Attewell (corresponding), "Logistical Subjects: Refugee Cargo and Archives of Encounter in Hong Kong, 1978-1979" in *Modern Asian Studies* (Revise & Resubmit)

2026 "A Pay-Your-Way Cruise to Freedom": The *Hai Hong* and Boat Refugees in the Big Ships Era, 1977-1979" (Under Review with the *Journal of American Ethnic History*)

2026 "The Political Economy of Burden," in *positions: asia critique* (manuscript ready for submission)

Peer-Reviewed

2025 "Boat People," in Yen Le Espiritu, ed., *The Sage Encyclopedia of Refugee Studies* (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2025), https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071919422.

2025 "Political Groceries: Supermarkets and Refugee Consumers in Little Saigon," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, 32, 1 (2025): 62-88, https://doi.org/10.1163/18765610-32010005

2023 "Imperial Gift: Soap, Humanitarianism, and Black Markets in the Vietnam War." *Radical History Review* 2023 (147): 55–76. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Book Reviews

2024 "*Refugee Lifeworlds: The Afterlife of the Cold War in Cambodia*" (Book Review). *Amerasia Journal.* https://doi-org.libproxy2.usc.edu/10.1080/00447471.2023.2274269

**Awards**

2025 Ralph Henry Gabriel Prize, American Studies Association
Awarded annually to the best doctoral dissertation in American Studies, ethnic studies, or women's studies

2024 Honorable Mention, Frank Gibney Graduate Essay Award
*Journal of American-East Asian Relations*

2022 USC Library Research Award (1st Place), University of Southern California
Awarded for the best graduate research paper using USC Special Collections
"USC in 1970: Politics, Race, and the Antiwar Movement"

2021–2024 Frank S. Kawana Leadership Scholarship Award, USC Asian Pacific Alumni Association

2021 Raymond J. Cunningham Paper Prize, American Historical Association
Awarded for the best published article written by an undergraduate student
"A Bloody Solidarity: Nguyen Thai Binh and the Vietnamese Antiwar Movement in the Long Sixties," *The Boller Review*, Vol 5 (2020)

## External Grants & Fellowships

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| 2026 | Lepage Center Grant for History in the Public Interest, Villanova University (collaboration with Dr. Arabella Delgado) |
| 2026 | CSEAS Southeast Asian Lives and Histories Grant, UC Berkeley |
| 2026 | UMN President's Postdoctoral Fellowship, Department of American Studies (accepted) |
| 2025 | Charles Warren Center Postdoctoral Fellowship in Global American Studies, Harvard University (declined) |
| 2025 | Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Carolina Asia Center, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (declined) |
| 2024 | SHAFR-Gale Summer Fellowship in Digital History |
| 2024–2025 | AAUW American Dissertation Fellowship ($25,000) |
| 2024 | Center for History and Culture of Southeast Texas and the Upper Coast Fellowship, Lamar University |
| 2024 | The Dianne Woest Fellowship in the Arts and Humanities, The Historic New Orleans Collection |
| 2023 | Samuel Flagg Bemis Dissertation Research Grant, SHAFR |
| 2022 | Immigration History Research Center and Archives Grant-in-Aid Award, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities |
| 2022–2023 | Global South Research Grant, New Orleans Center for the Gulf South, Tulane University |
| 2022 | Short-Term Research Fellowship, Frances S. Summersell Center for the Study of the South, The University of Alabama |
| 2022 | The Portal to Texas History Fellowship, University of North Texas |
| 2022 | Russell F. Weigley Travel Grant, Society for Military History |
| 2021 | AHA Travel Award, American Historical Association |
| 2021 | SEASSI Language Scholarship, UW-Madison |
| 2016–2020 | Midland College Scholarship - $20,000 |

## Internal University Grants & Fellowships

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| 2024 | APAA Distinguished Scholarship, University of Southern California |
| 2024–2025 | USC-Mellon Humanities in the Digital World Fellowship ($40,000) |
| 2024 | Teresa Wilson Endowed Fellowship, USC Dornsife |
| 2024 | EASC Graduate Fellowship, East Asian Studies Center, University of Southern California |
| 2023 | Frank S. Kawana Leadership Scholarship, University of Southern California |
| 2023 | Transpacific Studies Summer Research Grant, University of Southern California |
| 2023 | ASE Summer Research Grant, University of Southern California |
| 2023 | Diane Sonosky Montgomery and Jerol Sonosky Graduate Fellowship for Environmental Sustainability Research, USC Wrigley Institute for Environment and Sustainability |
| 2022 | ASE Graduate Student Conference Award, University of Southern California |
| 2022 | ASE Graduate Student Summer Research Grant, University of Southern California |
| 2022 | USC Graduate School Summer Research and Writing Grant |
| 2022 | GSG Professional Development Fund Award, University of Southern California |

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| 2022 | ASE Graduate Student Conference Award, University of Southern California |
| 2021 | Transpacific Studies Research Grant, University of Southern California |
| 2021 | ASE Summer Research Grant, University of Southern California |
| 2021 | Transpacific Studies Summer Research Grant, University of Southern California |
| 2020–2025 | Dornsife Graduate Fellowship, University of Southern California |
| 2020 | Diversity Research Award, Texas Christian University |
| 2019 | Kathryne McDorman Honors Scholar, Texas Christian University |
| 2019 | Paul Wassenich Founder's Medal, Texas Christian University |
| 2017–2020 | Ronald E. McNair Fellow, Texas Christian University |
| 2016–2020 | Chancellor's Scholarship (full tuition), Texas Christian University |

## External Publications

"From South Vietnam to the Bible Belt: a tale of southern inheritances." *diaCRITICS*. November 4, 2025. Link.

"Vietnamese Migrations and Narratives of Unsettlement." *University of Minnesota Libraries.* September 15, 2023. Link.

"Local Fishing Villages and the Troubled Future of Fishing in Việt Nam." *USC Dornsife.* July 10, 2023. Link.

"8 Essential Vietnamese Restaurants in Houston's Bellaire Neighborhood." *Vietcetera.* January 5, 2022. Link.

## Invited Talks and Lectures

"Custodial Grief and the Graves of Vietnamese Boat People in Malaysia," Lecture for Asian American Studies at UCLA, May 26, 2026.

"Pulau Bidong, Boat Refugees, and the Political Economy of Burden," Talk for Asian Languages & Cultures Luncheon at UCLA, May 13, 2026.

"Black Social Movements and the Vietnam Wars," Lecture for AMST 252: Black Social Movements, November 17, 2025.

"Non-Arrived Histories of Refugee Migration," Lecture for Intro to Asian American Studies, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, October 31, 2024.

"Unsettled Histories of the Vietnamese Diaspora," Lecture for the *Contested Histories* Workshop, World History and Literature Initiative (WHaLI) at the International Institute at the University of Michigan, June 17–18, 2024.

"The Birth of Asian America," Lecture for AMST 206 (Sanchez): The Politics and Cultures of the 1960s, April 4, 2022.

"Race and Environmental Justice in New Orleans and the Gulf South," Lecture for AMST 252 (Wilson): Black Social Movements, November 17, 2021.

## Digital Humanities

"Community Archiving in the Digital World," Roundtable Panelist for the Digital Humanities Consortium at Cal Poly Pomona, November 7, 2025.

Session Co-Leader, "Using 3D Data to Document and Exhibit Cultural Heritage" Presentation, ITCH: Immersive Technologies and Cultural Heritage Symposium, USC Mellon Humanities in a Digital World and the Ahmanson Lab, September 21, 2024.

Digital Humanities Workshop Training, USC Mellon Humanities in the Digital World.
Completed 20 hours of classroom training for individual projects using digital tools, including ArcGIS, QGIS, Palladio, Flourish, Tableau, and Scalar, July 2024.

## Select Conferences and Symposia

American Studies Association, Chicago, IL, October 22, 2026
Panel Organizer and Presenter: "Refugee Prisoners of War: The Carceral Genealogies of Phu Quoc Island"

Association for Asian Studies, Vancouver, BC, March 12, 2026
Paper Presentation: "Silencing Indigenous Homeland(s): Montagnard Peoples, the Central Highlands, and Ethnic Kinh Nationalism"

Global Asias Conference, Irvine, CA, February 21, 2026
Paper Presentation: "Unseaworthy: A Material History of Refugee Boats"

Vietnamese Heritage Museum Symposium, "From Exodus to Legacy: 50 Years of the Vietnamese American Journey," Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, CA, November 21, 2025.
Invited Presentation: "Vietnamese Migrations Since 1975"

Pacific Coast Branch, American Historical Association, San Jose, CA, July 31, 2025
Paper Presentation: "Forget Her Not: Missing, Forgotten, and Disappeared Archives of Vietnamese Boat Refugee Women"

Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations, Arlington, VA, June 28, 2025
Digital History Presentation: "'Boat People: Shifting Meanings and Political Transformations, 1975-1992"

Organization of American Historians, Chicago, IL, April 3, 2025
Paper Presented: "Historicizing the Postwar Migrations of 'Vietnamese Boat/People,' 1975-1978"

Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, "Stories of Refugeeness Symposium," March 20, 2025
Paper Presented: "Accumulated Catastrophe and Southern Vietnamese Migrations"

American Historical Association, New York City, NY, January 5, 2025
Paper Presented: "The Case of the Hai Hong: 'Boat People' and the Economy of Migrant Shipping"

American Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, November 14, 2024
Paper Presented: "Pre-Diaspora: Risk and Imagination in Postwar Việt Nam"

Association for Asian American Studies, Seattle, WA, April 27, 2024
Paper Presented: "Uncharted Waves: Alternate Routes, Refusals, and Returns on the Boat"

CSEAS Vietnam-Centric Approaches, Berkeley, CA, April 19–20, 2024
Paper Presented: "Imagined Diaspora: Anticipating Departure in Postwar Việt Nam"

American Studies Association, Montreal, Canada, November 5, 2023
Roundtable Participant: "The Political Lives of Infrastructure"

Western Historical Association, San Antonio, TX, October 15, 2022
Paper Presented: "Placemaking, Cultural Memory, and Refugee Politics in Westminster's Vietnamese Supermarkets"

Society for Military History Conference, Fort Worth, TX, May 1, 2022
Roundtable Participant: "The Elusive Home Front and Its Place in Military History"

Vietnam War Studies Symposium, "1972: The War Between North and South Vietnam," April 2022
Paper Presented: "Imperial Gift: Soap, Squalor, and the Archives of Medical Humanitarianism"

Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association Conference, October 15, 2021
Paper Presented: "Battle on Two Fronts: The Vietnamese Left in the Anti-War Movement"

Association for Asian American Studies, Virtual Conference, April 8, 2021
Paper presented: "Archives in Transit: Boat Refugees and the Refuse of Viet Nam"

Society for Military History Young Scholars Conference, Arlington, VA, May 3, 2020 (cancelled)
Paper accepted: "From Student to Hijacker: The Conversion of Vietnamese Students in America During the Vietnam War"

## Teaching

### Teaching Assistant

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| Spring 2023 | AMST 150: The American War in Viet Nam with Viet Thanh Nguyen |
| Fall 2022 | AMST 101: Race and Class in Los Angeles with George J. Sánchez |
| Spring 2022 | AMST 206: The Politics and Culture of the 1960s with George J. Sánchez |
| Fall 2021 | AMST 252: Black Social Movements with Francille Rusan Wilson |

## Service

Vietnamese Heritage Museum, Assistant Director of Artifact Collection, July 2025—Present

Graduate Representative, Vietnam Studies Group, Association for Asian Studies, January 2024–Present

Co-organizer and Participant, Transpacific Research Cluster, Department of American Studies & Ethnicity at USC, August 2021–Present

Organizer, *Archipelagic/s Symposium*, University of Southern California, April 5, 2023
Invited scholars: Candice Fujikane, Keith Camacho, Jodi Kim, Evyn Le Espiritu Gandhi

## Professional Academic Training

*Journal of Southern History* Manuscript Workshop, July 8, 2022

VOCES Oral History Center Summer Institute, June 6-10, 2022

SEASSI Summer Intensive Language Program, June-August 2021
Language Completed: Advanced Vietnamese I & II

## Professional Associations

American Studies Association
American Historical Association
Association for Asian Studies (Vietnam Studies Group)
Association for Asian American Studies
Organization of American Historians