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## **Representing the Sterling Flower Shoppe: A Visual Ethnography of a Small Family Business**

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Poster Presentation P60

**REPRESENTING THE STERLING FLOWER SHOPPE: A VISUAL  
ETHNOGRAPHY OF A SMALL FAMILY BUSINESS**

Sarah Osborn and Rebecca Gearhart\*  
Anthropology Department, Illinois Wesleyan University

Using the collaborative ethnographic research methods of anthropology and the visual media of photography, this poster presentation serves as a point of entry to understanding the concerns of and issues faced by the employees of the Sterling Flower Shoppe in Peoria, Illinois. By reflecting on their lives through interviews with the ethnographer and examining their own photographs and those that were taken during the ethnographer's participant-observation of their daily lives, the subjects conclude that they share a common cultural identity in having shared family values in a small business environment. This research draws attention to the balance that exists between work and family in a small business setting, where employees have both literal and figurative "family" relationships with their co-workers. Subjects commonly share an understanding that the balance they maintain in their lives stems from the values they all share, values which are frequently found in family businesses and which are examined in this presentation.