Issues and Methods in Asian-American Studies

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the central critical debates in Asian American studies as well as to major cultural and literary texts. Accordingly, the readings span a temporal range of Asian-American cultural production as well as the debates generated by the institutionalization of Asian-American studies to the present moment. The course includes writings by Chinese, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, and Filipino Americans, but the point is not simply to emphasize the cultural and national multiplicity of Asian-American writing. Rather, the readings are organized according to major questions that recur in Asian-American writing across different national boundaries: the narration of cultural conflict; colonial stereotypes and cultural identity; racial difference; redefining feminism; transnational and postcolonial identities. Our goal will not be to arrive at some definition of what it means to be Asian-American but rather to interrogate and scrutinize this category. What features, for instance, mark a text as Asian-American? What are the spatial parameters of this category and what difference do such parameters make? What are the complexities of being interpellated as Asian-American or in choosing such a marker of self definition in the US?

Texts:

Elaine Kim Asian American Literature Temple Univ Press
Lisa Lowe Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics
Onoto Watanna The Heart of Hyacinth. Univ of Washington Press
David Henry Hwang M.Butterfly Plume
Jade Snow Wong Fifth Chinese Daughter
Carlos Bulosan America is in the Heart Univ of Washington
Lois-Ann Yamanaka Blu’s Hanging Avon
Maxine Hong Kingston The Woman Warrior. Random House
Frank Chin Donald Duk Coffee House Press
Bharati Mukherji Jasmine Grove Press
Karen Tei Yamashita Through the Arc of the Rainforest
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Dictee. Univ of California Press
Susan Choi The Foreign Student Harper
Packet for this class available at Custom Copies

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution
Weekly position papers on the readings (around 2 pages): 15%
(These should be critical and evaluative rather than summations of the readings. Raise questions
here but be specific. Skip papers on the week you do a presentation and an additional week if you wish. Please do not turn in these papers late).
Oral presentation on critical material: 10%
(hand in 3-4 typed pages)
Final paper (20 pages): 65%
(Should include a letter of submission to an appropriate journal and an abstract for submission to an appropriate conference)
It should be understood that attendance in every class is a must.

Aug 26 Introduction

**Issues in Asian-American Studies**

Yen Le Espiritu “Ethnicity and Panethnicity” and “Coming Together: The Asian American Movement” in Packet
Gary Okihiro “Margin as Mainstream” in Packet
Frank Chin and Jeffrey Chan “Preface” to Aiieeee

Sept 2: Lisa Lowe “Heterogeneity”
Frank Chin and Jeffrey Chan “Racist Love” in Packet
King-Kok Cheung “The Woman Warrior versus the Chinaman Pacific..” in Packet
Suchen Chang “Hostility and Conflict” in Packet

**Orientalism**

Edward Said from Orientalism in Packet
Sui Sin Far “In The Land of the Free” From Bold Words in Packet
Onoto Watanna The Land of the Hyacinths/Miss Nume of Japan
Viet Thanh Nguyen from Race and Resistance in Packet
Presentation: Edward Said Orientalism
Nguyen Race and Resistance

Sept. 9: Elaine Kim “Images of Asians in Anglo-American Literature”
Robert G. Lee from Orientals in Packet
John Luther Long “Madame Butterfly”
David Henry Hwang M. Butterfly
Judith Butler “Imitation and Gender Insubordination” from Diana Fuss Inside/Out in Packet
Presentation: Homi Bhabha “The Other Question”
“Of Mimicry and Man”
“Signs Taken for Wonders”  
Ashcroft et al. The Empire Writes Back, pp.
The critical reception of Puccini’s Madame Butterfly with emphasis on changes

Model Minorities and Writing Back

Sept. 16: Peterson “Success Story . . .” in Packet
   “Success Story of One Minority Group in the U.S.” in Packet
Jade Snow Wong Fifth Chinese Daughter
Elaine Kim, “Sacrifice for Success” Chapter 3
Jinqui Ling “Hegemony: The Case of Jade Snow Wong” in Packet
Hisaye Yamamoto “The Legend of Miss Sasagawara” and “Life Among the Oil Fields”
both from Seventeen Syllables in Packet
   Presentation: An examination of the model minority stereotype or its refutation in film or popular media.

Race, Space, and Citizenship

Sept 23: Omi and Winant from Racial Formation in the United States in Packet
   Lisa Lowe “Immigration, Citizenship and Racialization”
   Poems from Angel Island in Packet
People v Hall in Packet
The Chinese Exclusion Act in Packet
From Haney Lopez White By Law in Packet
Elaine Kim, “Carlos Bulosan” pp. 43-57
Lefebvre The Production of Space (to be handed out)
Carlos Bulosan America is in the Heart
   Presentation:
   Lefebvre The Production of Space
Omi and Winant Racial Formation in the United States
Howard Winant This World is a Ghetto
Annette Kolodny The Lay of the Land (portions)
Anne McClintock Imperial Leather (portions)

Sept. 30: Michel Foucault “Of Other Spaces” in Packet
   Fae Myenne Ng Bone
   Photographs of Tseng Kwong Chi
   Lisa Lowe “Imagining Los Angeles in the Production of Multiculturalism”
   Sa I Gu
   Presentation: The meaning of Chinatown in The Year of the Dragon (dir Michael Cimino)

Oct. 7: From Ronald Takaki Strangers From a Different Shore in Packet
Milton Murayama All I Asking For Is My Body
Lois-Ann Yamanaka Blu’s Hanging
Candace Fujikane “Sweeping Racism Under the Rug of Censorship…” in Packet
Kandice Chuh from Imagining Otherwise in Packet
Presentation: Rob Wilson Reimagining the American Pacific
Haunani-Kay Trask From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawa’ii (online)

**Gender Issues**

Oct. 14: Elaine Kim, “Maxine Hong Kingston” pp. 197-213
Maxine Hong Kingston The Woman Warrior
Leslie Bow from Betrayal and Other Acts of Subversion in Packet
Chandra Mohanty “Under Western Eyes” in Packet
Presentation: Leslie Bow Betrayal and Other Acts of Subversion
Patricia Chu Assimilating Asians

Oct 21: From Anne McClintock Imperial Leather in Packet
From George Mosse Nationalism and Sexuality in Packet
Frank Chin, Donald Duk
Presentation: Mosse Nationalism and Sexuality
Ed. Parker Nationalisms and Sexualities
Jachinson Chan Chinese American Masculinities:
From Fu Manchu to
Bruce Lee
David L. Eng Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America

Oct 28: Bharati Mukherji, Jasmine
Patricia Chu “Reinventing Bildung: Bharati Mukherji and the Jasmine Controversy”
Partha Chatterjee “The Nation and Its Women”
Vijay Prashad From The Karma of Brown Folk in Packet
Presentation: Prashad The Karma of Brow Folk

**Globalization, Transnationalism, Postcoloniality**

Nov 4: Arjun Appadurai “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy”
Jouvert Intro on Asian American and Postcolonial Studies in Packet
Aihwa Ong “Flexible Citizenship among Chinese Cosmopolitans” in Packet
Alejo Carpentier “The Baroque and the Marvelous Real” (To be handed out)
Karen Tei Yamashita, Through the Arc of the Rainforest
Presentation: Rachel Lee The Asias of Asian American Literature
Aihwa Ong Flexible Citizenship
Arjun Appadurai Modernity at Large
Nov. 11: Holiday. See Mississippi Masala on your own. Discussion in class.  
Binita Mehra “Emigrants Twice Displaced. . .” from Screening Asian Americans in Packet

Nov 18: Stuart Hall “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” in Packet  
Arif Dirlik “Asians on the Rim: Transnational Capital and Local Community in the Making of Contemporary Asian America” in Packet  
Lisa Lowe chapter 6 from Immigrant Acts  
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Dictee  
Agha Shahid Ali “In Search of Evanescence”  
Presentation: David Palumbo-Liu Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier. (Relevant chapters)

Nov. 25: Holiday

Dec 2: Sau-Ling Cynthia Wong “Denationaliztion Reconsidered”  
Rajini Srikanth “Unsettling Asian American literature” from Beyond the Borders in Packet  
Susan Choi The Foreign Student  
Presentation: Relevant chapters from Singh and Schmidt Eds Postcolonial Theory and the United States and C. Richard King Postcolonial America
Reserve Book List

Sucheng Chan *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*. Twayne, 1991
Frank Chin *Chickencoop Chinaman and the Year of the Dragon*. Washington, 1981
Rey Chow *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. 1993
Yen Le Espiritu *Asian-American Panethnicity*. Temple, 1992
Ed. Jessica Hagedorn *Charlie Chan is Dead: An Anthology of Contemporary Asian American Fiction*. Penguin, 1993
Elaine Kim *Asian American Literature: An Introduction to the Writings and Their Social Context*. Temple UP, 1982
Robert G. Lee *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*. Temple, 1999
John Luther Long *Madame Butterfly and Other Stories*
Michael Omi and Howard Winant *Racial Formation in the United States*
Gary Okihiro *Margins and Mainstreams*. Washington, 1994
David Palumbo-Liu *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier*. 1999
Vijay Prashad *The Karma of Brown Folk*. Minnesota, 2000
William Wei *The Asian American Movement*. Temple, 1993

Sau-ling Cynthia Wong *Reading Asian American Literature: From Necessity to Extravagance*. Princeton, 1993

Under AML 3285; Section 6784
Arjun Appadurai *Modernity at Large*
Jachinson Chan *Chinese American Masculinities: From Fu Manchu to Bruce Lee*. 2000
Keya Ganguly *States of Exception*
Yen Le Espiritu *Filipino American Lives*
E. San Juan Jr. *From Exile to Diaspora: Versions of the Filipino Experience in the US*. 1998
Haney Lopez *White By Law* 1996
George Mosse *Nationalism and Sexuality* 1985
Aihwa Ong *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Duke 1999
Ed. Eleanor Ty *Asian North American Subjectivities: Beyond the Hyphen*. Indiana 2004
Rob Wilson *Reimagining the American Pacific*. 2000