CULTURES AND CONTEXTS:
ASIAN/PACIFIC/AMERICAN CULTURES

Professor: Dean Itsuji Saranillio
Email: ds3859@nyu.edu
Phone: (212) 998-7596
Office: 20 Cooper Sq., Room 454
Professor Office Hours: Tuesday 12-2pm

Fall 2017
RI: Ilsoo Cho (ilsoocho@fas.harvard.edu)
RI: Michael Salgarolo (mlsalgarolo@nyu.edu)
RI: Dylan Yeats (dylan.yeats@nyu.edu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course examines historical and contemporary moments in Asian/Pacific/American studies through an analysis of culture and power. We will together examine how cultural productions—film, television dramas, visual art, world’s fairs, poetry, national monuments and memorials, among others—produce ideas, stories and silences in different historical moments about different Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders that have contemporary resonance today. For instance, how is it that the bikini, which most people associate with
suggestive beach wear, has its origins in the U.S. nuclear testing of the first hydrogen bomb on the Bikini Atoll that irradiated not only the Pacific but also the planet? How do histories of U.S. wars in Asia coupled with anti-Asian immigrant legislation shape media representations of Asian Americans as “perpetual foreigners” even centuries after Asian migration to the United States? Using different methods of cultural inquiry we will together examine the changing and complex ways that race, gender, sexuality, and indigeneity together produce intricate arrangements of power in U.S. society.

REQUared Course Neaterials:

Book available at NYU Bookstore:

H. Mark Lai, Genny Lim and Judy Yung, Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island 1910-1940

Book also available online through NYU library

*Articles are available through NYU Classes

Grading: Participation/Attendance, Papers, and Exams

Course Grade: Class evaluation will be based on recitation participation and attendance (20%), four papers (30%), mid-term exam (25%) and final exam (25%). In case of borderline grades, we will examine the student’s attendance and participation record in finalizing the grade.

Participation/Attendance: Come to class on time and stay for the duration. Repeated unexcused absences and/or tardiness will lower your grade. (20%)

Papers: To help you think through and engage the topics/concepts covered in the course you are responsible for submitting four (4) papers. These papers give you space to develop your own argument and offer textual evidence related to topics covered in the course. The first paper should be two to three (2-3) pages double-spaced and is due at the beginning of your recitation in week 3. The first paper is worth 3%. The second paper should be three to four pages (3-4) and will be due in week 8 also at the beginning of your recitation and is worth 7%.

After the midterm the remaining two (2) papers should be four to five pages (4-5). These papers are worth 10% each. The third paper is due in week 11 and the fourth paper is due in week 14.
Paper prompts for all four papers will be posted on NYU Classes under Assignments. Students are encouraged to visit the professor and/or Recitation Instructors during office hours to discuss these papers. (30%)

Exams: To gauge student comprehension of key concepts and ideas presented in lecture and readings, there will be two exams throughout the semester, one mid-term and one final exam. Exams will consist of key terms and an essay question that test your knowledge of the concepts and ideas of the course material. (25%)

Extra-credit: If you attend an event related to A/P/A studies and write a full two-page response, you can receive up to .5% towards your final grade. You can do up to a maximum of three events for a total of 1.5%. If the response is not written well, you will not receive the total points. Turn in your responses to your Recitation Instructor during recitation. Turn this in at minimum three weeks after the event has passed.

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1: Course expectations and Origins**

T  9/5  Introductions, review syllabus, course expectations, and discussion of the political cartoon *School Begins.*

**Section 1: Indigeneity and Forced Inclusion into the United States**

TH 9/7  *Moʻolelo (History): Pacific Constructions of the “Past”*

Reading: 1) Pualani Kanakaʻole Kanahele, “Foreword” in *Haʻena: Through the Eyes of the Ancestors*, p. xiii


**Week 2: Settler Colonialism**

T  9/12  *Water is Life: Primitive Accumulation and the introduction of Capitalism*

Readings: D. Kapuaʻala Sproat, “Water” in *The Value of Hawai‘i*

TR 9/14  *Performance as Archive: the Pele and Hiʻiaka Hula Epic*


T 9/19  *The White City: 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition*
Reading: 1) Grover Cleveland, “President’s Message Relating to the Hawaiian Islands” House Ex. Doc. No. 47, Fifty-third Congress, second session, December 18, 1893
2) Public Law 103-150 “Apology Bill”
3) Haunani-Kay Trask, “Apologies”

TH 9/21  *Indigenous Resurgence*
Reading: Noelani Goodyear-Kaʻōpua, “The Emergence of Hawaiian Charter Schools” in *The Seeds We Planted*
Film: *Mele Murals*

*First Paper (2-3 pages) due in recitation*

Week 4: “Unfit for Self-Government” II: Historical Amnesia and the Philippine-American War

T 9/26  *1904 St. Louis World’s Fair*

TH 9/28  *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899-1999*
Reading: Luis Francia, “The Rind of Things” in *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899-1999*

SECTION 2: DIASPORA AND FORCED EXCLUSION

Week 5: First Wave of Asian Immigration

T 10/3  *Asian Labor in International Context*
Reading: Ronald Takaki, “Overblown with Hope: The First Wave of Asian Immigration” in *Strangers from a Different Shore*, pp. 19-75

TH 10/5  *Coolies and Slavery*
Reading: Moon Ho Jung, Chapter One “Outlawing Coolies” in *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation*, pp. 11-38.
Week 6: Ineligible to Citizenship: Anti-Immigrant Legislation and Sentiment

T 10/10  Guest Lecture: Kumu Pualani Case
Reading: Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, “Protectors of the Future, Not Protestors of the Past”
See video clips posted under “Resources” to be watched before Tuesday class

TH 10/12  Anti-Immigrant Legislation
Guest Lecture: Dr. Dylan Yeats

Week 7: Midterm Prep

T 10/17  Midterm Review

TH 10/19  MIDTERM

Week 8: World War II and Japanese American Internment

T 10/24  Chinese Exclusion Act
Reading: Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim, and Judy Yung in Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940, pp. 84-141.

TH 10/26  Superman at the Internment Camps
Reading: Gordon H. Chang, “Superman is about to visit the relocation centers’ & the Limits of Wartime Liberalism” in Amerasia Journal, pp. 37-59.
“Executive Order 9066”

* Second Paper (3-4 pages) due in recitation

SECTION 3: INDIGENITY AND DIASPORA

Week 9: Cultural Politics at the Intersection of Diaspora and Indigeneity

T 10/31  The Massie Case

**TH 11/2** Hawai‘i Statehood: *Asian Americans “Ineligible to Citizenship” and Pacific Islanders as “Unfit for Self-Government”*


**Week 10: U.S. Militarism: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders**

**T 11/7** *Asian Americans and War*

Reading: Vivek Bald, Miabi Chatterji, Sujani Reddy & Manu Vimalassery, “Introduction” in *The Sun Never Sets: South Asian Migrants in an Age of U.S. Power*

**TH 11/9** *Militourism*


**Week 11: Post-1965 Immigration**

**T 11/14** *Post-1965 Immigration*


**TH 11/16** *Post-1965 Immigration*


* Third Paper (4-5 pages) due in recitation

**Week 12: Classes Cancelled**

**T 11/21** Cancelled

**TH 11/23** Thanks Taking

**Week 13: “Everybody Was Kung Fu Fighting”: Liberation Movements of the 1960s and 70s**
T 11/28  Bruce Lee and Anti-imperialism: Ethnic Studies and the Third World Liberation Front  
Reading: Glenn Omatsu, “The Four Prisons and the Movements of Liberation: Asian American Activism from the 1960s to the 1990s”

TH 11/30  Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States  

Week 14: Asian American Popular Culture

T 12/5  Grace Lee Boggs and Dialectical Humanism  
Reading: Grace Lee Boggs, Living for Change: An Autobiography (selected chapter).

TH 12/7  The Politics and Promises of Gangnam Style  
Reading: 1) “Is ‘Gangnam Style’ a Hit Because of Our Asian Stereotypes?”  

2) “The PSY scandal: singing about killing people v. constantly doing it”  
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/dec/08/psy-lyrics-anti-us-anger

Guest Speaker: Professor Sharon Heijin Lee

* Fourth Paper (4-5 pages) due in recitation

Week 15: Last Week of Classes

T 12/13  No Class – Legislative Day

TH 12/14  Final Exam Study Session

**FINAL EXAM:**

Tuesday, December 19  
8:00-9:50pm