CULTURES AND CONTEXTS: ASIAN/PACIFIC/AMERICAN CULTURES

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Course Room: SILV 101A
Lecture: Tu/Th 2 – 3:15pm

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.

**Course Expectations:**
In addition to coming to each lecture having done the week’s readings, students are expected to be on time, stay the duration and not pack up before class is over. *Laptops, iPads, cell phones and iPods are not allowed during either lecture or recitation.* Please make sure to silence or turn off all phones—if your phone rings during class, I get to answer it.

**Required Course Materials:**

- *From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry: The Killing of Vincent Chin and the Trial that Galvanized the Asian American Movement*, Paula Yoo (2021)

Reader and novel are available at the NYU Bookstore. All other materials including book chapters, articles, additional links, announcements and other added materials are available through our NYU Brightspace site.

**Grading: Participation/Attendance, Papers, and Exams**

*Course Grade:* Class evaluation will be based on participation and attendance in lecture and recitation (20%), three papers (30%), midterm exam (25%) and final exam (25%).

*Participation/Attendance:* Attendance at all meetings of the lecture and recitation is expected. We understand that the pandemic has brought about extraordinary circumstances, however, and in-person attendance may not always be possible. Please communicate with your professors and Recitation Instructors *as soon as you know* you’ll be missing class due to illness, quarantine or a related matter – timely communication is key. We will work with you to make up the class absences through other forms of participation and learning. Outside of such circumstances, however, we expect you to come to class on time and stay for the duration. (20%)

*Papers:* To help you think through and engage the topics/concepts covered in the course you are responsible for submitting three (3) 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 3 - 4 pages double-spaced and is due at the beginning of your recitation
in week 4. Paper #2 and 3 are 4 – 5 pages double-spaced and due Week 10 and 14 respectively. Each paper is worth 10% of your overall grade.

**Paper Prompt #1:**
In the political cartoon, “School Begins,” drawn in January of 1899 by Louis Dalrymple in the nationally popular magazine *Puck*, the cartoon offers a rich and deliberate visual arrangement of differently racialized, gendered, and infantalized groups whose distorted images are issued as evidence to constitute a white supremacist vision of the United States.

Make an argument about the different representations of Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) in the political cartoon in contrast to how Kānaka Maoli are represented in other materials from our class (choose from the readings, films, poems, or visual art). Some questions you might consider: How is Kanaka Maoli culture understood differently by Kānaka Maoli themselves, writers or artists, as compared to representations in the cartoon? What impact do these representations have on the lives of Hawaiian people? How do Kanaka Maoli writers and artists intervene in such popular representations? Use at minimum one reading from our class. (3-4 pages) Due Week 4 in Recitation

**Paper 2 “Contemporary Issues and Possibilities for Solidarity”**: Choose one issue depicted in Jess X. Snow’s mural in Chinatown. How does the artist use art to convey contemporary issues? How does the artist use art to imagine possibilities for solidarity? Tie these points about the mural to something we have discussed in class thus far. How does a knowledge of previous events help you to contextualize contemporary issues? Use at minimum two readings from our course. (4 - 5 pages) Due Week 10 Recitation

**Paper 3 “APA Cultural Productions”**: Choose a cultural production -- film, television series, documentary, song, poem, etc. -- that has relevance to the issues we have discussed in class. How does the cultural production depict APA communities? How does the cultural production help us to think about APA issues? What does the cultural production include? Alternatively, what does it leave out? Be sure to analyze its connections to the themes of the course. Use at minimum two readings from our course that you did not use for Paper 2. (4 - 5 pages) Due Week 14 in Recitation

Students are encouraged to visit the professor and/or Recitation Instructors during office hours to discuss their papers.

**On-line Office Hours:**
Professor Lee: Wednesdays 12 – 2pm (beginning September 15) or by appointment
https://nyu.zoom.us/j/2857647292
Passcode: 285 764 7292

Professor Saranillio: Tuesdays 9-10:45am or by appointment
https://nyu.zoom.us/j/3115044572
Passcode: 311 504 4572
Exams: To gauge student comprehension of key concepts and ideas presented in lecture and readings, there will be two exams throughout the semester, one midterm (25%) and one final exam (25%). Exams will consist of key terms and essay questions that test your knowledge of the concepts and ideas of the course material. Blue books will be provided.

Extra-credit:
If you attend an online 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 maximum three weeks after the event has passed.

Plagiarism:
Plagiarism is submitting a piece of work or a portion of a work (for example, an essay, research paper or quotation) which in part or in whole is not entirely the student’s own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source. You are responsible for knowing the University’s policy on plagiarism, which can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html. The University’s policy will be strictly enforced to the fullest extent in cases of plagiarism.

Accommodations:
Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. The Moses Center website is: www.nyu.edu/csd. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

NYU Immigrant Defense Initiative (IDI)
The NYU Immigrant Defense Initiative (IDI) offers free and confidential legal services to NYU students and employees, and their immediate family members, on their immigration cases. IDI can assist with DACA, TPS, asylum, legal permanent residency, citizenship, employment authorization, representation in immigration court, humanitarian visas, and consultations for those who have had contact with the criminal system (i.e. arrest or conviction) or have violated their visa. IDI also provides foreign travel monitoring for those affected by the Travel Ban, or who are at risk of being denied entry to the US, Know-Your-Rights trainings, and advocacy within NYU departments (financial aid, housing, student groups). Contact IDI at immigrant.defense@law.nyu.edu or 212-998-6435 (no walk-ins). More information at: https://www.law.nyu.edu/immigrantrightsclinic/IDI

Wellness Exchange:
Wellness Exchange is the main mental health resource NYU: https://www.nyu.edu/students/health-and-wellness/wellness-exchange.html
  • Call the 24-hour hotline at (212) 443-9999,
Wellness Exchange app anytime to talk
make a virtual appointment,
"stop by" during our virtual drop-in hours to speak with a certified counselor about any day-to-day challenges or health concerns, including medical issues, stress, depression, sexual assault, anxiety, alcohol or drug dependence, and eating disorders.

A note about email:
Please be thoughtful in your professional communication. It is important to develop appropriate emailing styles for different contexts. Your professors and your peers expect emails to be written free of texting shorthand, with an appropriate salutation. Feel free to contact me outside of normal hours, but understand that I may not respond immediately, in some cases up to 48 hours later. Note, too, that I cannot discuss grades, or answer substantive questions about course material, over email.

Changes to Syllabus:
The course syllabus is subject to change. Students will be notified at least one week prior to any changes and all new assignments, links to relevant posts and/or pieces will be posted to Brightspace.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1: (9.2) What is Asian Pacific American Cultures and Contexts?
• Introductions, syllabus speed dating, course expectations, and discussion of the political cartoon School Begins

Week 2 (9.7, 9.9) Settler Colonialism

Tu 9.7 Moʻolelo (History): Pacific Constructions of the “Past”
• Pualani Kanakaʻole Kanahele, “Foreword” in Haʻena: Through the Eyes of the Ancestors, p. xiii

Th 9.9 Water is Life: Primitive Accumulation and the Introduction of Capitalism
• D. Kapuaʻala Spoate, “Water” in The Value of Hawaiʻi

Tu 9.14   Performance as Archive: the Pele and Hi’iaka Hula Epic

Th 9.16   The White City: 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition
  ● Grover Cleveland, “President’s Message Relating to the Hawaiian Islands” House Ex. Doc. No 47, Fifty-third Congress, second session, December 18, 1893
  ● Public Law 103 – 150 “Apology Bill”
  ● Haunani-Kay Trask, “Apologies”

Week 4: (9.21, 9.23) “Unfit for Self-Government” II: Historical Amnesia and the Philippine-American War
  Paper #1 (3 - 4 pages) Due in Recitation

Tu 9.21   1904 St. Louis World’s Fair

Wed 9.22   Guest Speaker: Luis Francia, NYU
  2 – 3:15pm
  https://nyu.zoom.us/j/91510546517
  ● Ian Urbino, “Empire Strikes Back”
  ● Luis Francia, “Brown Man’s Burden”

Th 9.23   If you were unable to attend the guest speaker’s presentation on Wednesday please use this time to watch on your own time.

Week 5: (9.28, 9.30) Anti-Asian Violence and ‘The Chinese Question’

Tu 9.28   Guest Speaker: Liz Ouyang, NYU

Th 9.30  Guest Speaker: Dylan Yeats


**Week 6: (10.5, 10.7) Ineligible to Citizenship: Anti-Immigrant Legislation and Sentiment**

Tu 10.5  Anti-Immigrant Legislation

● Erika Lee, selections from *The Making of Asian America*

Th 10.7  Midterm Review

**Week 7: (10.12, 10.14) Midterm**

Tu 10.12  No Class: Legislative Day

Th 10.14  Midterm

**Week 8: (10.19, 10.21) Internment Camps**

Tu 10.19  Japanese American Internment

Film: *Pilgrimage* (2007, dir. Tadashi Nakamura)


● “Executive Order 9066” http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5154

● Life Magazine’s 1941 Article, “How to tell Japs from the Chinese” http://digitalexhibits.wsulibs.wsu.edu/files/original/cf2dcf0cbabc74b6359e319276d5091a.jpg

Th 10.21  Guest Speaker: Jess X. Snow
Week 9: (10.26,10.28) Post ‘65 Immigration and the Refugee Experience

Tu 10.26  Post ‘65 Immigration and the Refugee Experience

Th 10.28  Guest Speaker: Nou Moua
  ●  “Go Where You Need to Go,” Hmongumentary Podcast, https://www.hmongumentary.com/sharon-her
  ●  “Did I make the right choice?”, Hmongumentary Podcast, https://www.hmongumentary.com/yayo-vang
  ●  Eric Tang, Collateral Damage: Southeast Asian Poverty in the United States in Asian American Studies Now

Week 10: (11.2, 11.4) The Model Minority Myth
  Paper #2 (4 - 5 pages) Due in Recitation

Tu 11.2  Origins of the Model Minority Myth

Th 11.4  Crazy Rich Asians and the Global Model Minority Myth

Week 11: (11.9, 11.11) Third World Liberation and the Asian American Movement

Tu 11.9  Guest Lecture: Wilson Sherwin, NYU

Th 11.11  What Time is Now?: TWLF and the Asian American Movement
  ●  Code Switch podcast, “The Long, Bloody Strike for Ethnic Studies”
Week 12: (11.16, 11.18) Asian American Solidarities

Tu 11.16  Guest Speaker: Minju Bae, Rutgers University
• Anelise Chen, “The Real Story Behind Five Dumplings for a Dollar Deal,” https://opencitymag.aaww.org/five-dumplings-for-a-dollar/
• Katie Quan, “Memories of the 1982 ILGWU Strike in New York City Chinatown,” Amerasia Journal

Th 11.18  Guest Speaker: Rachel Kuo, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
• Rachel Kuo, “Visible Solidarities: #Asians4BlackLives and Affective Radical Counterpublics” in Studies of Transition States and Societies
• “One Korean American’s Reckoning” on Code Switch Podcast, NPR https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuxfEsjrW84

Week 13: (11.23, 11.25) Thankstaking – No Classes

Week 14: (11.30, 12.2) Genealogies of Anti-Asian Violence
Paper #3 (4 – 5 pages) Due in Recitation

Th 11.30  Please screen at home: Who Killed Vincent Chin?
• From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry: The Killing of Vincent Chin and the Trial that Galvanized the Asian American Movement, Paula Yoo (2021)

Th 12.2  Please screen at home: “Moving Forward with the Legacy of Vincent Chin”
• “Professor Iyko Day on Violence Against the Asian Community” https://connectingpoint.nepm.org/prof-iyko-day-on-violence-against-the-asian-community/

Week 15: (12.7, 12.9) Asian Americans and the Media + Final Exam Prep

Tu 12.7  Final Exam Review

Th 12.9  Guest Speakers: Filming Asian America Class Presentation

Final Exam Date: Tuesday December 21st from 2 – 3:50pm