

LTEN181/ETHN124  
Winter 2007  
Class Time: TuTH 2:00-3:20pm  
Class Room Location: CSG004

Instructor: Yoneyama  
Office Hours: Th 5-7pm & by appt.  
Office: Literature Bldg. 427; x4-7324

*LTEN181 & ETHN124*

**The “Yellow Peril” and the Asian/American Cultural Responses**

Course Description

Since the Chinese Exclusion Act of the turn of the late nineteenth century, the Asian presence in the U.S. has been understood as posing major social and cultural threats. Moreover, the American relationship to Asia has been dominated by war and militarism, whether in the form of armed conflicts, ideological battles, or economic rivalry. Casting Asians as inscrutable "enemies" – past, imminent, reformed, potential, or ungrateful – has thus been central to dominant representations and understandings of Asians and Asian Americans. The "Yellow Peril" as a gendered, sexualized, classed, racialized and globalized epistemological and affective structure of knowledge has been mediated to us through various forms of representation. It is inscribed in official histories, disseminated through Hollywood films and other popular media, and objectified as academic knowledge. Yet, this "Peril," imagined and real, is constantly contested at various local sites, at the in-between places of Asian/American cultural activities. There we can find various alternative representations and counter-memories. The course will examine the still persistent “Yellow Peril” complex as well as the Asian/American response manifested in diverse cultural forms.

Requirements and Evaluation

The course is designed to be a combination of lecture and seminar. Your participation in class discussion is crucial. The course grade will be based upon the following:

- (1) class participation in discussion and one in-class group presentation in which you present the assigned material for the week and lead the class discussion (15%; guidelines for presentation will be distributed in class);
- (3) maximum of three pop quizzes on the reading assignments (15%; quiz must be taken in class on the day it is distributed and cannot be taken at any other time)
- (4) two five to six page take-home papers (30% each; topics will be distributed in class as scheduled).
- (5) take-home final exam (10%)

You must attend all classes and complete all four requirements in order to receive a passing grade (C-) for the course. Later papers will not be accepted.

Readings

All reading assignments are required. There are two types of reading assignments: textbooks and a course reader. The following textbooks can be purchased at Groundwork Books:

- David Hwang, *M. Butterfly*
- Nora Okja Keller, *Fox Girl*
- Chang-Rae Lee, *Native Speaker*
- Wen Ho Lee, *My Country Versus Me*
- John Okada, *No-No Boy*

All other assigned readings, prefaced with asterisk mark, are in the course reader, available at Cal Copy pick-up center in Holiday Court (phone: 858-452-9949).

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

## **I. Introduction: Constructing Asians as Model Minority and Perpetual Menace**

1/9 Tu first class

1/11 Th \*Gary Okihiro, Chapter 5 “Perils of the Body and Mind” and Chapter 6 “Margin as Mainstream” in *Margins and Mainstream: Asians in American History and Culture*

\*Roger Daniels, “The Yellow Peril” in *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (optional)

1/16 Tu Wen Ho Lee, *My Country Versus Me* (pp.vii-144)

film in class: *tba*

1/18 Th Wen Ho Lee, *My Country Versus Me* (pp. 146-332)

**Presentation (1) on Wen Ho Lee**

## **II. Asian/America’s Gender, Sexuality and Hetero-Normativity**

1/23 Tu \*Nayan Shah, Chapter 3 “Perversity, Contamination and the Dangers of Queer Domesticity” and Chapter 9 “Reforming Chinatown” in *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco’s Chinatown*

**Presentation (2) on Shah**

1/25 Th \*Robert G. Lee, “Introduction: Yellow Face”

\*Gina Marchetti, “The Scream of Butterfly” in *Romance and the “Yellow Peril”*

film in class: “*Slaying the Dragon*”

1/30 Tu \*Martin Manalansan, IV, “In the Shadows of Stonewall: Examining Gay Transnational Politics and the Diasporic Dilemma” in *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, eds., Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd

\*Gayatri Gopinath, “Funny Boys and Girls: Notes on a Queer South Asian Planet” in Russell Leong, ed., *Asian American Sexualities: Dimensions of the Gay & lesbian Experience*

@start reading David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

**Presentation (3) on Manalansan and Gopinath**

2/1 Th David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

**Presentation (4) on *M. Butterfly***

<first paper topic to be distributed>

## **III. Predicament of Asian “Culture”**

2/6 Tu \*Leti Volpp, “(Mis)Identifying Culture: Asian Women and the ‘Cultural Defense’” *Harvard Women’s Law Journal*

\*\*Vijay Prashad, “Kung Fusion: Organize the ‘Hood Under I-Ching Banners” from *everybody was kung fu fighting*

>>>>>!!!!FIRST PAPER DUE!!!!<<<<<<

## **IV. The Enemy Aliens and Seditious Minorities (1)**

2/8 Th \*chapters from Lawson Fusao Inada, ed., *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience*

film in class: “*Memory and History*”

2/13 Tu \*\*Fair Play Committee Bulletin”

\*Michi Nishiura Weglyn, Chapters 1, 2, 8, & 9 from *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America’s Concentration Camps*

@start reading John Okada, *No-No Boy*

film in class: “*Conscience and Constitution*”

2/15 Th John Okada, *No-No Boy*

**Presentation (5) on Okada's *No-No Boy***

**V. The Enemy Aliens and Seditious Minorities (2)**

2/20 Tu \*Muneer Ahmad, "Homeland Insecurities: Racial Profiling The Day After 9/11," forthcoming in *Social Text*

\*"Impact of the McCarran-Walter Act on Arab Americans Today" *Pacific Citizens*

2/22 Th \*Kang, Bayoumi, Matsuda, Mirikitani and "Chronology" from *Amerasia Journal*, special issue, "After Words: Who Speaks on War, Justice, and Peace?"

**Presentation (6) on Ahmad, Kang, Bayoumi and Matsuda**

**VI. The Enemy Aliens and Seditious Minorities (3)**

2/27 Tu \*Robert G. Lee, Chapter 6 "The Model Minority as Gook" and Chapter 7 "After LA" in *Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture*

film in class: "Who Killed Vincent Chen?"

3/1 Th \*Edward T. Chang, "America's First Multiethnic 'Riots'" in *The State of Asian America: Activism and Resistance in the 1990s*, ed., Erin Aguilar-San Juan

\*Miriam Ching Louie, "After Sewing, Laundry, Cleaning and Cooking, I have No Breath Left to Sing" *Amerasia Journal* 18:1(1992):1-26. (optional)

@start reading Chang-Rae Lee, *Native Speaker*

film in class: "Sa-I-Gu"

3/6 Tu Chang-Rae Lee, *Native Speaker*

**Presentation (7) on *Native Speaker***

**VII. Asian/America in Transnational & Global Perspective**

3/8 Th \*Chalmers Johnson, Chapter 1 "Blowback", Chapter 3 "Stealth Imperialism" and Chapter 4 "South Korea: Legacy of Cold War" in *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (Chapter 3 is optional)

@start reading Nora Okja Keller, *Fox Girl*

film in class: "The Women Outside"

3/13 Tu Nora Okja Keller, *Fox Girl*

**Presentation (8) on *Fox Girl***

<second paper topic & final exam Q to be distributed>

**VIII. Conclusion**

3/15 Th Conclusion

>>>>>!!!!!!SECOND PAPER DUE!!!!!!<<<<<<

3/23 Fr >>>>>!!!!Take-Home Final Exam Due by 10:00 AM to Literature Main Office!!!!<<<<<<