

ETHN 122: Asian American Culture and Identity

Summer Session II 2010

Mondays/Wednesdays 11:00am-1:50pm in WLH 2115

Instructor: Ma Vang

Office: SSB 250

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Office Hours: Mon. @ 2-3:30pm @ CCC

Wed. @ 9-10:30am @ CCC

Course Description:

This course examines Asian American cultural expressions in literature, film, art and other popular venues to understand the social experiences that helped forge Asian American culture and identity. The course explores “Asian American culture” as a site of resistance and remembering of the loss, displacement and survival. We will investigate the construction and negotiation of 3 enduring key concepts: Orientalism, the Model Minority Myth and the Refugee Figure. First, we trace the gendered construction of Asian Americans as “Orientals” through cultural representations. Second, we investigate and deconstruct the Model Minority Myth to highlight its effects on and the negotiations with Asian American culture and identity. Finally, we explore the Refugee figure to advance a critique of the ‘immigrant narrative’ and the nation-state. Our task will be to deconstruct the meanings associated with each theme and reconstruct or imbue each with different narratives to formulate new political subjectivities. This course will engage with questions of queerness, diaspora, space, and silence to illuminate the hope and desire of Asian American lives.

Required Texts:

Glen M. Mimura, *Ghostlife of Third Cinema: Asian American Film and Video* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly* (NY: Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 1988).

R. Zamora Linmark, *Rolling the R's* (NY: KAYA, 1995).

E-reserve articles at roger.ucsd.edu

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation	20%
Reading Responses	20%
Paper	20%
Cultural Text	20%
Final	20%

Attendance and Participation: A large part of your learning in this class will come from your peers. Your regular attendance and active participation is crucial to your success in the course and will also enhance the quality of the course. Throughout the course, we will work through themes/concepts, readings, and other materials as a group, therefore, your attendance and participation is key to understanding the complexities of Asian American culture and identity

formation. Participation will involve class discussions and weekly activities/assignments about each week's themes.

Note: Although office hours are not a requirement, it is in your best interest to utilize my office hours if you have questions/thoughts/ideas about the course materials or what the materials evoke for you. Office hours are another way for you to participate in the course.

Point breakdown: You will earn 2pts. per day for attendance and participation in class, but they do not replace missing a class. Missing multiple classes will result in a lowered grade.

Reading Responses (5): Reading responses are an important way for you to engage with the readings before coming to class. You will submit (5) weekly (250-300 words) reading responses on webct prior to the class period. The response paper should not be a summary but rather a way for you to highlight the author's main points and make connections across the readings in relation to the themes/concepts of the course. The response paper must account for 2 of the readings for that week.

Paper: Critical analysis paper about the construction of Asian American through Orientalism & the Model Minority Myth. You will be given a prompt 1-week prior to the deadline. Due: Monday, August 23, 2010.

Cultural Text: Create a cultural text as an expression of your understanding of Asian American culture and identity. This cultural text can be in the form of a poem, short story, prose, art piece, short film/video, or any other popular mediums. The text can be a parallel/in response to one of the films, stories, etc. that we discussed in class. **Due: Monday, August 30, 2010.**

Final: Friday, 9/3/10 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Course Policies:

Late assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of class and will be considered late once lecture/class has begun. Assignments will be deducted 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late.

Lectures: It is important to attend lectures regularly because they further your understanding of readings and themes introduced in the course. Lectures or classroom time will also serve as discussions for you to work through the materials with other students. It is your responsibility to attain lecture/class notes from your peers if you miss class.

Videos and films shown in class are part of the lecture and the course material. Some videos/films you will be able to access at the library but others you will not. It is advantageous to watch these videos/films in class with your classmates.

Readings: The readings are chosen to give you the breadth and depth of knowledge about the works about and by Asian Americans. They are an important foundation for our collective work in this class because we will rely on them for classroom discussions, writing assignments, and exams. The readings provide the guide for our exploration about contemporary Asian American history and we will read across the texts to juxtapose the different points they offer for each week's theme. ALL the readings should be completed before class.

Class Conduct: By the very nature of the course topic, there will likely be a wide range of opinions. A good classroom environment should stimulate you to think for yourself, challenge paradigms, and raise critical questions. However, please keep in mind that we must engage each other in a respectful and considerate debate in the classroom. These ground rules are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community to which we are all expected to adhere (<http://www-vcba.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>). Abusive and harsh language, intimidation, and personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is a serious violation, whether intentional or inadvertent. All work submitted in this course must be your own and original. The use of sources such as ideas, quotations, paraphrases, or anything written by someone else must be properly acknowledged and cited. Plagiarism is when you use someone else's words without attribution; it includes using portions of a previously published work or website in a paper without citing the source, submitting a paper written for another course, submitting a paper written by someone else, and using the ideas of someone else without attribution. If you have questions about the proper citation of sources, please discuss them with your instructors or consult Charles Lipson's *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). Students found guilty of plagiarism will be disciplined to the full extent of university policy and forwarded to the dean of their college. Students found cheating on an exam or quiz will receive a failing grade in the course and be reported to the dean of their college for disciplinary action. Each student is expected to be familiar with UCSD's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at <http://www.senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14>.

Disabilities: If you have a documented disability needing accommodations in this course, please inform me and bring a notification letter outlining your approved accommodations. I will make all reasonable efforts to assist you. If, as a result of a disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you must notify me in writing within one week of receipt of syllabus. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for Students with Disabilities, 858-534-4382.

Reading and Lecture Schedule

Week 1: Asian American Culture & Identity

Monday, August 2 – Introduction

- Lisa Lowe, "Immigration, Citizenship, Racialization: Asian American Critique," 1-36 (**E-Reserve**)
- Film: "My America or honk if you love Buddha"

Wednesday, August 4 – On Representation

- Mimura, Chapter 1: Diaspora & Modernity's Other, 1-24
- Lisa Lowe, "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Asian American Differences," 60-83 (**E-Reserve**)

Week 2: Orientalism

Monday, August 9 – "Yellowface"

- Mimura, Chapter 2: In the Afterglow of Regenerative Violence, 25-54
- Robert Lee, "Introduction: Yellowface," 1-14 (**E-Reserve**)
- Renee Tajima, "Moving the Image: Asian American Independent Filmmaking 1970-1990," 1-9 (**E-Reserve**)
- Film: "The Slanted Screen"

Wednesday, August 11 – "Oriental": Gender & Sexuality

- David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

- David Eng, “Heterosexuality in the Face of Whiteness: Divided Belief in *M. Butterfly*,”: 137-66 (**E-Reserve**)
- Film: “*M. Butterfly*”

Week 3: Model Minority Myth

Monday, August 16 – Asian Americans & Cinema

- Chong, “‘Look, an Asian!’: The Politics Racial Interpellation in the Wake of the Virginia Tech Shootings,”: 27-60
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_asian_american_studies/v011/11.1chong.html
- Mimura, Chapters 3: “Ghostlife of Third Cinema: 55-80
- Film: “Better Luck Tomorrow”

Wednesday, August 18 –

- Mimura, Chapter 4: “Uncanny Memories,” 81-120
- Film: “History and Memory”

Week 4: The Refugee Figure

Monday, August 23 – War Memories

- Mariam Beevi Lam, “Circulating War Memories: The Diary of Dang Thuy Tram,”: 172-179 (**E-Reserve**)
- Monique Truong, “Dear Kelly”
- “New Year Baby”
- **Paper Due**

Wednesday, August 25 – Southeast Asian Americans

- Louisa Schein and Va-Megn Thoj – “Occult Racism: The Masking of Race in the Hmong Hunter Incident A Dialogue Between Anthropologist Louisa Schein and Filmmaker/Activist Va-Megn Thoj,”: 1051-1095 (**E-Reserve**)
- Film: “A Village Called Versailles”

Week 5: Diaspora, Gender & Sexuality

Monday, August 30 –

- Mimura, Chapter 5: Diaspora Sexualities, 121-150
- Linmark, *Rolling the R's*: 1-78

Wednesday, September 1 –

- Linmark, *Rolling the R's*: 79-149
- Film: “Then there were none”

Final: Friday, 9/3/10 at 11:30am-2:30pm

Majoring or Minor in Ethnic Studies at UCSD

Many students take an Ethnic Studies course because the topic is of great interest or because of a need to fulfill a social science, non-contiguous, or other college requirement. Often students have taken three or four classes out of "interest" yet have no information about the major or minor and don't realize how close they are to a major, a minor, or even a double major. An Ethnic Studies major is excellent preparation for a career in law, public policy, government and politics, journalism, education, public health, social work, international relations, and many other careers. If you would like information about the Ethnic Studies major or minor at UCSD, please contact Yolanda Escamilla, Ethnic Studies Department Undergraduate

Advisor, at 858-534-3277 or yescamilla@ucsd.edu.