

ENG 660 Asian American Fiction (Spring 2014)

Professor David Li
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PLC 275; Tel 6-3940
Office Hrs: TW 10:00-11:30pm & by appointments

Description:

This seminar places Asian American literature in the context of a recent geo-political and geo-economic transition between “liberalism” and “neoliberalism.” Closer to our disciplinary interest, the transition could also be approached from two significant developments in recent American literary history, “multiculturalism” and “(post)colonialism.” It is these extra-textual forces that have transformed the nature of the nation-state, notions of national culture, and brought about as well the uneasy emergence of “the Asian American.” Following a brief historical and theoretical prologue, we shall engage in close reading of seven novels and one collection of lectures. Class attention shall focus on the variety of ways in which the Asian American subjects are narrated and represented. You will also have the rare privilege of conversing with four authors of our reading list in person.

Policy Statement:

Because of the short duration of the quarter, I decide not to require a standard research paper. Instead, we shall break the writing into 4 reading response papers. The responses should be approximately 5 double-spaced pp. in length that summarize and address important issue of the novel, be it formally or thematically. All writing must be submitted in hard copies and assignments are due at the beginning of the seminar hour. No late papers will be accepted except in cases of serious medical incapacity or unfortunate accidents. Your semester grade will be a scaled numerical sum of 1. your classroom participation and attendance (20%) and 2. your reading responses (80%).

Accommodations for Disability: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this class, please provide me with a letter from Disability Services, verifying your disability and stating needed accommodations.

The professor reserves the right to adjust the syllabus when necessary.

Required Texts:

Okada, John. *No No Boy*
Yamanaka, L. A. *Blu's Hanging*
Jen, Gish. *Tiger Writing*
Fu, Kim. *For Today I Am a Boy*

Kingston, M. H. *The Woman Warrior*
Cheng, Bill. *Southern Cross the Dog*
Chang-Rae. *On Such a Full Sea*
Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Lowland*

Additional essays and book chapters in PDF are provided in “course documents” on Blackboard

Syllabus

- 3-31 Li, “(In Lieu of an) Introduction: AA Subject between Liberalism and Neoliberalism” (PDF)
- 4-7 Okada, No No Boy
Fickle, “No-No Boy’s Dilemma: Game Theory and Japanese American Interment Literature” (PDF)
- 4-14 Yamanaka, Blu’s Hanging
Chiang, “Autonomy & Representation . . . Blu's Hanging” (PDF)
- 4-21 Jen, Gish. *Tiger Writing*
Eagleton, selections from The Idea of Culture (PDF)
- 4-28 Fu, Kim. *For Today I Am a Boy*
Fraser, “Heterosexism . . . and Capitalism: A Response to J Butler” (PDF)
Heyes, “Feminist Solidarity after Queer Theory: the Case of Transgender” (PDF)
- 5-5 Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*
Li, “Ethnic Agency and the Challenge of Representation” from Li, Imagining (PDF)
- 5-12 Cheng, *Southern Cross the Dog*
Gates, “Writing ‘Race’ and the Difference it Makes”
Jeng, “Perceiving Race, and Lee’s Aloft” (PDF)
- 5-19 Lee, *On Such a Full Sea*
- 5-26 Memorial Day off**
- 6-2 Lahiri, Lowland