
ENGLISH 660

ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE: MIGRATION, MODEL, MEDIUM

Spring 2018 | Wed 9:00a - 12:00p | PLC 448

This course offers an introduction to Asian North American Literature and Culture from the late 19th century to the present. Students will become conversant in the historical and cultural contexts of Asian America (and learn why that term itself is highly contested); the major themes, tropes, and formal features of the canon; and the primary debates and current trajectory of the field of Asian American literary studies. Throughout the term, we will explore a range of ethnic traditions and geographical contexts, and a variety of genres, including the novel, memoir, speculative fiction, and comics. This course requires substantial reading and writing and vigorous participation. The goal of the course is to help you engage with Asian American and Asian diasporic literature, particularly in relation to contemporary politics, while improving your writing, reading, and critical thinking skills in the process.

Professor Tara Fickle

Office

372 PLC (3rd floor)

Office Hours

Wednesdays 12:00pm - 3:00pm

Contact

To ensure receipt and a quicker response, please contact me through Canvas message ("Inbox"), rather than through e-mail.

Required Materials (for sale at UO Duck Store)

- Hsu, *Asian American History, a Very Short Introduction*, ISBN 9780190219765
- Okada, *No-No Boy*, ISBN 9780295994048
- Kingston, *Woman Warrior*, ISBN 9780679721888
- Cha, *Dictee*, ISBN 9780520261297
- Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*, ISBN 9780395927205
- Choi, *Person of Interest*, ISBN 9780143115021
- Yu, *How to Live Safely in a Science Fiction Universe*, ISBN 9780307739452
- Yang, *American Born Chinese*, ISBN 9780312384487
- Tomine, *Shortcomings*, ISBN 9781897299753
- Bui, *The Best We Could Do*, ISBN 9781419718779

Critical essays and additional primary texts will be made available through Canvas in the form of PDFs (See the Homepage, "Syllabus," or "Files" link in the Sidebar).

Method of Assessment

Your grade for this course will be determined by how fully and effectively you meet the following requirements. Some of these assignments are adapted, with thanks, from fellow instructors including Lara Bovilsky, Kirby Brown, Jordache Ellapen, Anne Laskaya, Courtney Thorsson, and Mary Wood.

1. **Participation (10% of your total quarter grade):** presence, energy, effort, contributions to discussion, and occasional in-class activities. You should come to class prepared with questions, comments, and/or passages to share and discuss with the class.

Missing class more than once in the term will result in the reduction of your final grade by 1/3 of a letter grade for each absence beyond the one permitted.

2. **Facilitation of Secondary Materials (15%):** Once or twice during the quarter (depending on the number of students in the course), students will facilitate discussion of one of the secondary readings for a given week and explore how it opens our understandings of the primary materials. Students will sign up for presentations during the first week of the course.

The purpose of this assignment is to cultivate the facility to critically engage and evaluate scholarly writing, to explain/map that scholarship for an audience of your peers, to strongly but generously interrogate/critique arguments for blind spots or opportunities for further study, and to lead discussion of critical material in a classroom environment. Think of this as both an intellectual exercise and a pedagogical practice.

Format. Facilitations should be between **20-25 minutes** in length and should eventually guide our attention to **three or four** problems, questions, or critical issues pertinent to our discussion of both primary and secondary materials. Feel free to use technology, slide shows, or other media as you see fit; I only ask that you **share a copy with me (through the Canvas assignment) in advance of your presentation.**

You should **print out a 1-2 page handout for the class** that accomplishes the following:

1. Clearly but succinctly summarizes the article's/chapter's main arguments/claims;
2. Identifies the theoretical/methodological frameworks in play;
3. Highlights crucial concepts or critical terminology;
4. Locates the theoretical, methodological, or disciplinary interventions being made—i.e. the “stakes” of the argument/approach;
5. Generously but objectively evaluates the relative strengths and weaknesses of the project;
6. Generates 3-4 problems, questions, or critical issues pertinent to our discussion of both primary and secondary materials.

Evaluation. You will be evaluated based upon your understanding and communication of the material, the clarity and intellectual energy of your presentations (i.e. are you wrestling with the major ideas, concepts, arguments, etc.), and your ability to generate rigorous discussion among colleagues and peers. I encourage you to use A/V materials and to consult with me ahead of time, although doing neither will not adversely impact your evaluation.

NOTE: The best facilitations are those that quickly but cogently move through the first five criteria (you might think of these as the model on which to base your annotated bibliography) on the way to entering the primary text(s) itself and beginning discussion around specific passages, moments, or formal/thematic elements.

3. **Close Reading Paper (15%, 4-5 pages, due week 5)**

Select a passage from any of the assigned primary texts (including those from Weeks 6-10). Your close reading should include observation and analysis of both form and content in your chosen passage and should make an interpretive argument. I encourage you to use this as an opportunity to explore a text you are considering working with in your final paper. Consult the close reading handout on Canvas: although the specific texts are drawn from a different ethnic literary tradition, the same conventions for the close reading assignment hold.

4. Paper Proposal and Bibliography (20%, 3-4 pages, due week 7)

Submit a proposal outlining the main question(s), argument, and theories you will engage in your final essay. Include a bibliography with your proposal (it does not need to be annotated). Your paper proposal should include a draft introduction, tentative argument, outline, passages/images/films/other cultural objects you will close read as evidence for your argument, and preliminary bibliography with primary and secondary texts.

5. Final Paper (40%, 12-15 pages, due week 11)

Your final paper will use close reading and secondary sources to make and support an interpretive argument about one or more texts on our syllabus or another text selected in consultation with me (with approval received no later than week 6).

Course Policies

Late Policy

Late papers and other written assignments lose 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late (i.e. B becomes B-). There are no make-up presentations/facilitations except in the case of documented emergency.

Academic Integrity

All work must adhere to standards of academic honesty outlined in the Student Conduct Code. Plagiarism will result in failure of the course and additional sanctions as determined by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

Accessible Education

In compliance with UO policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first two weeks of the quarter. Students are encouraged to register with the Accessible Education Center to verify their eligibility.

Inclement Weather or Class Cancellations

I will e-mail you (via Canvas message) if class is cancelled for any reason.

Laptop Policy

The use of laptops is strongly discouraged except by documented necessity. Cellular phones and other mobile devices should be powered off.

Additional Course Information

UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender-based stalking. If you have experienced or experienced gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, getting academic and housing

accommodations, getting legal protective orders, and accessing other help. If you tell me about harassment or assault, I am not required to report this information to anyone unless you request that I do so. I am required to consult with a confidential UO employee (someone with legal confidentiality, such as a counseling professional or a crisis center advocate) to ensure that you are supported. If you decide to make a report, I and other UO employees will help you to do so. My goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available and that you have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options or visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.

In this class, we are studying literature in its historical and political contexts. This means that we will read about and discuss racial and sexual violence. There are incidents of both in our readings, some of which include explicit language and graphic depictions. If you wish to select another class to take instead of this one, I am happy to meet with you in office hours to help you select a suitable course.

Reading Schedule

Wk	Date	Texts due (* = Optional)
> The Contested Origins of Asian America		
1	April 4	Introductions
		Hsu, <i>Asian American History, a Very Short Introduction</i>
2	April 11	Cultural Nationalism and Disciplinary Crisis
		<i>Introductions (Prefaces) to Aiiieeeee!</i> and <i>The Big Aiiieeeee!</i> (including first 4 pages of Frank Chin's "Come All Ye Asian American Writers") Sui Sin Far Short Stories ("Leaves," "Story of one white woman") David Wong Louie, "In a world small enough" Hisaye Yamamoto, "Seventeen Syllables" This course syllabus
		Christopher Lee, "Asian American Literature and the Resistances of Theory" Mark Chiang, "Political Economy of Minority Literature" *Susan Koshy, "The Fiction of Asian American Literature"*
> The Asian American Canon		
3	April 18	Japanese America + National(ist) Imaginaries
		John Okada, <i>No-No Boy</i>
		Chuh, "Transnationalism and its Pasts" Kim, "Once more, with feeling: Cold War masculinity and the sentiment of patriotism in John Okada's <i>No-No Boy</i> " *Ling, "Writing the Novel, Narrating Discontents: Race and Cultural Politics in John Okada's <i>No-No Boy</i> "
4	April 25	Chinese America + Assimilative Losses
		Kingston, <i>Woman Warrior</i>
		Cheung, "The Woman Warrior versus the Chinaman Pacific" Ninh, Debt-Bound Daughter Chapter *Cheng, "A Fable of Exquisite Corpses: Maxine Hong Kingston, Assimilation, and the Hypochondriacal Response" *Philip Brian Harper, "Postmodern Narrative"
5	May 2	Korean America + Postwar Postcoloniality
Close Reading Due by Saturday May 5 11:59p		
		Cha, <i>Dictee</i>
		Lowe on Dictee Ha, "Not You/like you" *Jodi Kim, "The Forgotten War"
6	May 9	South Asian America + Strategic Essentialism
		Lahiri, <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i> (entire book)

		Reddy, Jhumpa Lahiri* Min Song on Lahiri Spivak, "Can the subaltern speak?"
> The "New" Asian American Canon		
Reminder: Susan Choi talk May 14 @ 4:00pm (Knight Browsing), discussion in Prof. Mai-Lin Cheng's course May 15 @ 2:00pm (Location TBA). Students should plan to attend at least one of these events		
7	May 16	The New Model Minority? Susan Choi, <i>Person of Interest</i>
Paper Proposals and Bibliography due by Saturday 5/19 11:59p		
		Lye, "The Literary Case of Wen Ho Lee" Bascara, introduction to Model Minority Imperialism (*Chapter One optional)
8	May 23	Speculative fiction + Techno-Orientalism Yu, <i>How to live safely in a science fictional universe</i> Ted Chiang, "Liking what you see: A Documentary" Morley and Robins, "Techno-orientalism" Foster, "Faceblindness, visual pleasure, and racial recognition: ethnicity and technicity in Ted Chiang's 'Liking what you see: a documentary'" *Roh et al., Introduction to <i>Techno-Orientalism</i>
9	May 30	Graphic Narrative Yang, <i>American Born Chinese</i> Tomine, <i>Shortcomings</i> Scott McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics</i> , Chapters 1-3 Shortcomings article in <i>Drawing New Color Lines</i> *Song, "Comics and the changing meaning of race"
10	June 6	Graphic Memoir Bui, <i>Best We Could Do</i> Colleen Lye, "Racial Form" Melamed, "The Spirit of Neoliberalism: From Racial Liberalism to Neoliberal Multiculturalism"
Final papers due (Canvas) by Thursday 6/14 11:59p		