

America's Pacific: Asian American History

History 512.231

Fall 2014

Tuesday, 2:30-5:10, Hill Hall 115

Professor Kornel Chang

TA Anna Alves

Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:30-2:30pm, Conklin 313

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Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the history of Asian Americans from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Drawing from a range of interdisciplinary approaches and sources, we will explore the importance of the Asian American experience to U.S. history while also giving due consideration to the global and international forces that shaped it. In doing so, we will probe the varied experiences of people identified as “Asian Americans,” examining what it has meant to be Asian American and how it has changed over time. Students will use the experience of Asian Americans as a lens to investigate broader themes including migration, diaspora, race, labor, citizenship, community formation, war, empire, nation, and transnationalism.

Learning Objectives

- Acquire a basic knowledge of Asian American history from the mid-nineteenth century to the present including the key people, events, and ideas that have shaped this history.
- Develop critical reading skills by learning how to evaluate scholarly arguments and the evidence and reasoning behind them.
- Learn to identify and distinguish between primary and secondary sources.
- Learn historical methods to interpret primary sources.

Required Texts (Available at New Jersey Books and Campus Bookstore)

- Carlos Bulosan, *America is In The Heart* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000)
- G.B. Tran, *Vietnamerica: A Family's Journey* (Villard, 2011)

Books are available for purchase at New Jersey Books and the Campus Bookstore. All other assigned readings are available on Blackboard.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

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| Class Participation | 15% |
| Quizzes (Best 4 out of 5 grades) | 20% |
| Book Review | 15% |
| In Class Mid-Term Exam | 25% |
| Final Response Paper | 25% |

Late assignments will not be accepted (except in the case of excused absences).

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Two unexcused absences lower your final grade by one letter grade. Any student who misses four or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Class absence may be excused in case of illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions. All other absences including those due to a job or an interview will NOT be excused. For further detail on university regulations on class attendance see http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_0608/index.html

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy

All written work submitted by students should be their own. Students need to be careful about distinguishing their own ideas and writings from other sources. Plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing from another source without properly citing it. Plagiarism is grounds for automatically failing the course. Further details can be found here <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity>.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every major assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment.

Electronic Device Policy

The use of portable electronic devices such as cellphones and tablets, are strictly prohibited during class hours. Laptops are also prohibited (you can request an exemption for laptop use but only in the most compelling circumstances will I allow it). Cellphones should be turned off prior to class. Violations will result in a deduction in your participation grade.

Students with Disabilities

Rutgers University is committed to ensuring the participation of all its students in its programs. Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner. For more information, see <http://roberson.rutgers.edu/studentlife/disability.html>.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

9/2 Introduction – Who is an Asian American?

- *My America or Honk if you Love Buddha*
- Marie Lee, "What Everyone Gets Wrong about Jeremy Lin."

Week 2

9/9 Early Chinese Immigration and Race in Early America

- Barbara Fields, “Slavery, Race, and Ideology in the United States of America,” 95-118.
- *Chinese English Phrasebook* (1875)
- Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home*, 16-54.
- *Race: Power of Illusion* (Part II), Excerpts.

Week 3

9/16 **The “Chinese Must Go” and the Beginnings of Exclusion**

- *Samuel Gompers Racializes Chinese American Labor* (1902).
- Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home*, 55-89.
- Paul Kramer, “The Case of the 22 Lewd Chinese Women”
- *The Chinese-American Experience* (PBS, 2003)

Week 4

9/23 **Japanese and South Asian Immigration**

- Carlos Bulosan, *America is In the Heart*, 1-100.
- Karen Leonard, “The Pahkar Singh Murders” *Amerasia Journal* (1984).
- The Asiatic Exclusion League Argues That Asians Cannot Be Assimilated (1911).
- *The Cheat* (1915)

Week 5

9/30 **Exclusion and Citizenship Denied**

- Finish Carlos Bulosan, *American is in the Heart*
- Ian Haney-Lopez, *White By Law*, 56-77
- Excerpts from *Race: Power of An Illusion* (Part III)

Week 6

10/7 **American Colonialism in Hawai’i and the Philippines**

- Paul Kramer, “Race-Making and Colonial Violence in the U.S. Empire,” *Diplomatic History* (2006)
- John W. Foster, “The Annexation of Hawaii” (1897).
- Thomas B. Reed, “The Empire Can Wait” (1897).
- Noenoe K. Silva, “The 1897 Petitions Protesting Annexation” (1897).

Book Review of *Carlos Bulosan, America’s is in the Heart* due at the beginning of class.

Week 7

10/14 **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 8

10/21 **World War II and Japanese Internment**

- John Dower, *War without Mercy*, Chapter 3, “War Crimes and War Hate.”
- “How to Tell Japs from the Chinese” (1941).
- Executive Order 9066 (1942)
- *Korematsu v. United States* (1944)
- *Rabbit in the Moon* (1999)

Week 9

10/28 **Korean War and Migration**

- Bruce Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, 237-298.
- Arissa Oh, “A New Kind of Missionary Work,” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* (2005).
- Film: *First Person Plural*

Week 10

11/4 **Southeast Asian Wars and Refugee Communities**

- G.B. Tran, *Vietnamerica: A Family’s Journey*, 1-100.

Week 11

11/11 **Inventing the Model Minority**

- Finish G.B. Tran, *Vietnamerica*.
- William Petersen, “Success Story, Japanese American Style,” *New York Times Magazine*, 9 January 1966, 20-21, 33, 36, 38,40-41, 43.
- “Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S.,” *U.S. News and World Report*, 26 December 1966, pp. 73-76.
- “Orientals Find Bias Is Down Sharply in U.S.,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1970.
- “Asian-Americans: A ‘Model Minority,’” *Newsweek*, 6 December 1982, pp. 40-51
- David A. Bell, “The Triumph of Asian-Americans: America’s Greatest Success Story,” *New Republic*, 15 and 22 July 1985, pp. 24-31

Week 12

11/18 **Asian American Civil Rights**

- Amy Uyematsu, “The Emergence of Yellow Power in America.”
- Glenn Omatsu, “The ‘Four Prisons’ and the Movements of Liberation.”
- Karen Umamoto, “On Strike!: San Francisco State College Strike, 1968-1969.”
- Film: *A Song for Ourselves* (2009)

Week 13

11/25 **Thanksgiving Break**

Week 14

12/2 **Post-1965 Asian American Immigration**

- Helen Zia, “Lost and Found in L.A.”
- Rhacel Salazar Parrenas, “Asian Immigrant Women and Global Restructuring, 1970s-1990s.” in Hune Shirley, and Gail Nomura, eds. *Asian/Pacific Island Women: A Historical Anthology*.
- Nancy Abelmann and John Lie, *Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots*, 49-84 and 148-180.
- *Who Killed Vincent Chin* (1987).

Week 15

12/9 Contemporary Asian America

- Tram Nguyen, *We Are All Suspects Now: Untold Stories from Immigrant Communities After 9/11*, xiii-xxiii, 1-19.
- Amy Chua, “Why Chinese Mothers are Superior” (2011).
- Wesley Yang, “Paper Tigers” (2011).