Asian American Women’s History
History 3470/AAS 3470/FGSS 3470/AMST 3510
Spring 2010
MW 2:55-4:10
White Hall 110

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Office Hrs: T 2:30-3:30 (454 McGraw) &
W 1:30-2:30 (424 Rockefeller)

This course examines the experiences and representations of Asian American women from the mid-19th century to the present. It explores the lives and contexts of immigrant women and of women born in the U.S. Questions of identity and power are at the heart of this course as we investigate the intertwined nature of race, gender, and nation. We will also pay particular attention to the practice of history, seeking a better understanding of how scholars recover the history of a population rendered invisible by traditional methods and inquiries. Course materials include numerous primary sources in addition to scholarship from a variety of disciplines (history, literature, sociology, anthropology).

Required Texts
(Available at the Cornell Bookstore)


Reserved Readings
Reserved readings are available electronically on the course’s Blackboard site. Access is restricted to registered students in the class. You can access Blackboard at http://www.blackboard.cornell.edu/
Assignments
(1) In-class discussion: Participation is a crucial part of this course (and your grade). Come to class prepared to take part in discussion. Attendance is required. If you miss more than two classes, you will begin to lose credit. Please contact me beforehand, if at all possible, if you cannot attend class. (30%)

(2) Readings for each week are due on Tuesday every week. You should be prepared to discuss each assignment on Tuesday. See above.

(3) Questions for Class Discussion. Each student will be asked to submit at least three (3) discussion questions to a Blackboard discussion board by Sunday at 4:00 p.m. the day before the first class of the week. The questions should be broad and designed to encourage conversation and/or debate. Failure to submit more than 3 sets of questions will result in the forfeiture of the entire 15% credit for this requirement. (15%)

(4) Reading Responses: Each student is required to write three (3) reading response papers on weekly reading assignments. The papers should be no more than 3 pages in length. These papers are your chance to reflect on the main arguments of each reading, to record your reaction, to raise questions that will be useful for discussion, and to link a weekly assignment to the larger themes of the course or to other assignments. Papers are due on the Tuesday of the week during which the readings will be discussed. (5% each = 15%)

(5) Final paper or project. This assignment should examine the experiences of Asian American women. There are many possibilities for this assignment. This final project may be a paper (7-9) pages that allows you to do more in-depth research into a particular group or to compare two groups by focusing on a particular theme (sexuality, marriage, immigration). You might conduct oral history interviews and compare those to the broader themes of the course. You may choose to pull together primary documents, visual artifacts, etc., with commentary, for a presentation or collection or exhibit. Please consult me about your topic before beginning research. Papers are due in class on May 5th. (40%)

For all assignments, students are required to abide by Cornell University’s Code of Academic Integrity. A copy of the code can be found at the following URL: http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html. Violations of the Code of Academic Integrity, especially plagiarism, may result in a failing grade in the course. Students are urged to read and complete the exercises on “Recognizing and Avoiding Plagiarism” at http://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/index.cfm.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Asian American Women at the Center
1/25 Introduction to the Course: Why Asian American Women’s History
1/27 Discussion: Centering Asian American Women

Week 2: Useful Concepts & Big Ideas


2/1 Lecture/Discussion: Immigration & Trans-Pacific Lives
2/3 Lecture/Discussion: Orientalism

Week 3: From the Documents Up
Read: Judy Yung, Unbound Voices, Parts I & II

2/8 Discussion: From the Documents Up
2/10 In-Class Project: Reconstructing Lives

Week 4: Narratives & Histories I
Read: Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Doctor Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards, pp. 1-118

2/15 Lecture/Discussion: Finding Space
2/17 Lecture/Discussion: Identity Formation

Week 5: Narratives & Histories II
Read: Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, Doctor Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards, pp. 119-196

2/22 Lecture/Discussion: Politics
2/24  Lecture/Discussion:  Who Matters?

Week 6: Lives I
Read: Shirley Hune & Gail M. Nomura, *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women*, Parts II & IV
Yung, *Unbound Voices*, Part III

3/1  Lecture/Discussion:  Boundaries & Constraints

3/3  Lecture/Discussion:  Possibilities & Agency

Week 7: Lives II
Read: Yung, *Unbound Voices*, Parts IV & V

3/8  Lecture/Discussion:  Separate Spheres?

3/10  Lecture/Discussion:  The Personal & the Political

Week 8: At War
Read: Yung, *Unbound Feet*, Part VI

3/15  Lecture/Discussion:  War & Progress?

3/17  No Class:  Required Lecture by Thuy Tu on Thursday, March 18th, at 4:30, location to be determined

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Narratives & Histories III
Read: Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America*

3/29  Lecture/Discussion:  War, Migration, Family

3/31  Film:  First Person Plural

Week 10: Lives III
Read: Miriam Ching Yoon Louie, *Sweatshop Warriors*

4/5  Lecture/Discussion:  Globalization, Labor, Migration

4/7  Lecture/Discussion:  Activism & Gender

Week 11: Lives IV
Read: Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care*
4/12 Lecture/Discussion: Colonialism & Transpacific Lives

4/14 No Class: Required Lecture by Lisa Hall, Thurs., April 15th, at 4:30, location to be determined

Week 12: Narratives & Histories IV
Read: Yuri Kochiyama, Passing It On

4/19 Lecture/Discussion: Colonialism & Indigenous Women

4/21 Lecture/Discussion: Activism & Gender, Redux

Week 13: Lives V
Read: Monisha Das Gupta, Unruly Immigrants

4/26 Lecture/Discussion: Class, Gender, and Activism

4/28 Lecture/Discussion: Community?

Week 14: Reconstructing the Past
Read: Hune & Nomura, Asian/Pacific Islander American Women, Introduction, Part I, & Chapter 8


5/3 Discussion: Reframing Asian American Women’s History

5/5 Discussion: Reframing History