Instructor: Professor Viranjini Munasinghe
Office: McGraw 205
Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-3:30 in Rockefeller 425; Friday 2:30-3:30 McGraw 205. You need to sign up for office hours in McGraw—sign up sheet on office door. If these times are not convenient email me to make an appointment
Email: vpm1@cornell.edu

“And these Indians from Trinidad, despite their temples and rituals, so startling to the visitors, belong to the New World”
V.S. Naipaul

Course Overview:
This course will introduce students to the experiences and imagined worlds of South Asians who have traveled to various parts of the world at different historical moments beginning with colonial labor migrations to the present (as indentured laborers to the Caribbean, Pacific and Africa; as merchants and entrepreneurs to East Africa; as semi-skilled industrial labor to Britain; as domestics to the Middle East; and as highly skilled professionals and Taxiwalas to the US). The course is specifically attentive to the different forms of labor, and Third World and First World nationalisms, which significantly shaped South Asian lives in the Diaspora. Through a comparison of the diverse experiences of the South Asian Diaspora, the course addresses some of the following questions: How useful is the concept of Diaspora to understand the experiences of this extremely diverse group? How useful is the category “South Asian” itself? What are the diverse ways in which the Diaspora is connected to “homeland”? How do South Asians “abroad” simultaneously inhabit the cultural and political space of citizen and Diasporic subject? How is “South Asian” culture reconstituted in the Diaspora (we will explore various aspects of popular culture including music, dance and literature)? The course will end with an exploration of political possibilities posed by the South Asian Diaspora.

Course Requirements:
1. Class attendance and participation. For each class students will be expected to come prepared with 2 or more questions/issues related to the readings (approx. 1 page). Your comments will be used as a basis for class discussion and will be collected at the end of each class. 25%
2. One 15 minute presentation on the final paper. 25%
3. One 10-12 page final research paper on a subject directly relating to the South Asian diaspora, which engages broader theoretical issues raised in class and the readings. 50%
“Each Student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work.”

NO COMPUTERS OR OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES PERMITTED DURING CLASS

**Required Texts:**


All books are available at the Campus Book Store and the Asian American Studies Resource Center 420 Rockefeller; articles are available on Blackboard.

**Syllabus**

Jan. 22  **Introduction**

Jan. 27  **Debating D/diaspora – exile/immigrant/ ethnic/ cosmopolitan?**


Jan. 29  1. Georg Simmel (1908) 143-149.

Feb. 3  **Diaspora and Empire**

   Film: Roots in the Sand


Feb. 12  Diaspora and (Third World) nationalisms

2. Munasinghe (2001b) 1-34.

Feb. 17  Break


Feb. 24-26  Diaspora, Settler Colonies and (First World) nationalisms (Britain, Australia and US)


March 10  Classifying Diaspora (South Asians in the US)

Film: None of the Above/or Desi


March 17  Homeland/ Belonging/Patriotism/Long Distance Nationalism


March 19  1. Sharika Thiranagama (2014)
          General Discussion/Research Projects

March 24  Diaspora and Migrant Labor: High-Tech Braceros and Housemaids


March 26  Conference: Class Canceled (work on your final paper)

March 31-April 2  Spring Break

April 7-9  1. Michel Ruth Gamburd (2000)
April 14-16  - **Transnational/Diasporic Youth Cultures** (Attend Vijay Prashad’s talk)


April 21-23 
1. Falu Bakrania (2008)
2. Jessica Falcone (2013)

April 28-30-May 5  Presentations

**MAY 8 FINAL PAPER DUE**—Please note Academic Integrity Statement on Page 1. (Please include a stamped and addressed envelope if you wish your paper to be mailed to you with my comments—If there is no envelope I will assume you will not be collecting your paper and therefore not write comments on the paper

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**Bibliography**


Munasinghe, v (1997) "Culture Creators and Culture Bearers: The interface of Race and Ethnicity in Trinidad". *Transforming Anthropology*. 


Osella Caroline and F Osella “Nuancing the ‘Migrant Experience” Perspectives from Kerala, South India” in Koshy.


Simmel, G. (1908) "The Stranger"

Song, M (2008)."Pahkar Singh’s Argument with Asian America: Color and Structure of Race Formation" in Shankar and Shrikanth.


Twaddle, Michael 1990. “East African Asians through a hundred years.” In South Asians Overseas: Migration and Ethnicity, Edited by Colin Clarke, Ceri Peach, and Steven Vertovec. Cambridge University Press. 149-163.