

AAS 3470

Asian American Women's History

Fall 2013

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:40am-12:55pm
Space Sciences Bldg 105

Course Instructor: Chrissy Lau
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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 1-3pm

Course Description:

This course will explore the historical experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander women from the late 19th century to the beginning of the 21st century. Major themes include immigration and labor, family and generation, gender and sexuality, community formation and resistance. We will cover topics such as prostitutes and warbrides, mother-daughter filial piety, caregiving, cultural tourism, beauty, and grassroots organizing. Students will work with primary documents including immigration questionnaire files, oral histories, and self-authored literary pieces. Using an intersectional lens, this class will practice analyzing categories of race, class, gender, and sexuality to explore the experiences of Asian American women.

Course Goals:

- Introduce the student to the diversity of historical experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander women, often from the voices and viewpoints of women themselves.
- Guide the student to understanding how women's lives are constituted through intersectional systems of power of gender, race, and class within the United States.
- Help the student to explore how Asian American women resist, negotiate, and comply with multiple systems of power.
- Challenge the student to read and listen analytically and to think and write critically about matters of substantial personal, social, cultural, and political importance.

Readings:

Judy Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*

Akemi Kikumura, *Through Harsh Winters: Life of an Immigrant Japanese Woman*

Jade Snow Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*

Ji-Yeon Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown: Korean Military Brides in America*

Catherine Ceniza Choy, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*

Joanne Rondilla and Paul Spickard, *Is Lighter Better? Skin-Tone Discrimination Among Asian Americans*

Monisha Das Gupta, *Unruly Immigrants: Rights, Activism, and Transnational South Asian Politics in United States*

Course Breakdown:

15% Attendance and Participation
10% Leading Discussion
30% Personal Reflections
20% Oral History
25% Final Projects

Attendance and Participation 15%

Each student is required to attend class regularly. You may miss class only if it qualifies as an excused absence, which is a written note from your doctor concerning an illness or from counseling/social services about a grievance. Please clear your absences with me beforehand. Moreover, each student must show up to class on time and if you are tardy, it will count against your attendance. Attendance is the first step to achieving a good letter grade for section. The next step is participation: you are required to do the readings prior to class and actively participate in class activities and discussion. Please take down notes, jot down some questions, and bring your voice to class. Please silence your phones and absolutely no texting in class.

Facilitation and Leading Discussion 10%

In this course, students will sign up to lead one discussion with a partner during the semester. Leading discussion is not the same as a presentation. A presentation is when you give a summary of the readings and speak the entire time. Leading discussion means asking questions, guiding and building the conversation, talking with your peers – an equity of talking across everyone in the room. The goal of leading discussion is to get everyone involved. You will be graded on preparation, which includes developing questions for discussion and/or bringing materials that will contribute to or enhance our understandings of the topics addressed that week. You will also be graded on facilitation, making sure that all discussion leaders facilitate and that you achieve your goal of stimulating activity and conversation. Past facilitation activities included role-playing, games (however, must be followed by discussion), debates, and questions. Please email me your preparatory questions/activities *at least a day* before discussion (wednesday). I strongly encourage you to meet with me at least once before you lead discussion so that I can help you prepare and frame your questions.

Six Book Reviews (1 page) on Goodreads.com 30%

Select six of the seven books in this course to write book reviews and post your reviews on goodreads.com by Thursday at 11am each week. For instructions on how to write a history book review: <http://clas.uiowa.edu/history/teaching-and-writing-center/guides/book-review>

Oral History 20%

In this class, we will create a public oral history archive. Each student will conduct an oral history with an Asian American who is above 40 years old. You must record your interview through video or digital sound. Each interview will be posted to the class online archive for public research.

Final Projects 25%

You may pair up with a partner or choose to do this project alone. Your project must be of historical nature. Your project must have three primary sources (this can include the oral history that you have done) and two secondary texts. You can create a website, begin an archive, a youtube video, a research paper, an educational lesson plan. Be creative.

A Precaution Against Plagiarism

MLA defines plagiarism as “the act of using another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source...to plagiarize is to give the impression you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else.” This means absolutely no referencing of websites or outside sources as well as paraphrasing without full citations. If you are caught plagiarizing or party to plagiarizing, you will receive a FAIL in the course.

Class Schedule

*Schedule and readings are subject to change

Week 1: Introduction

8/29 Introduction to the Course

Week 2: Prostitutes and Good Women

9/3 Intersectionality: Race, Class, Gender, Sexuality

Read: Hune, “Changing Perceptions of APIA Women in US History”
Cheng, “Free, Indentured, Enslaved”

9/5 Ideals of Domesticity

Read: Gardner, *Qualities of a Citizen* Chapter 1 and 3

Week 3: Immigrant Wives

9/10 Chinese American Women

Read: Yung, *Unbound Feet* Intro, Chapter 1 and 2
Film: *Thousand Pieces of Gold*

9/12 Chinese American Women

Read: Yung, *Unbound Feet* Chapter 3 and 4

Week 4: Immigrant Wives

9/17 Japanese American Women

Read: Kikumura, *Through Harsh Winters*

Film: *Picture Bride*

- 9/19 Japanese American Women
Read: Kikumura, *Through Harsh Winters*
Tsu, "Sex, Lies, and Agriculture"

Week 5: Filial Piety and the Second Generation

- 9/24 Generational Conflict
Read: Jade Snow Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*
- 9/29 Debt and Daughterhood
Read: Jade Snow Wong, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*
erin Khue Ninh's Chapter "The Filial Debtor: Jade Snow Wong"

Week 6: Women and War

- 10/01 Class Field Trip: Meet at the Olin and Kroch Library for the Japanese Internment Exhibition
Meet with Curator Daniel McKee
Read: Matsumoto, "Japanese American Women During World War II"
Yung, *Unbound Feet* Chapter 5
- 10/03 Class Field Trip: Meet at Johnson Museum of Art for Shimomura Exhibition
Check Out: Oral History Project at Cal State Fullerton http://coph.fullerton.edu/JAHC_A-G.asp
Check Out: Discover Nikkei <http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/interviews/profiles/?page=1>

Week 7: Women and War

- 10/08 Colonialism and Military Camps
Read: Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown* Intro, Chapter 1 and 2
Film: *The Women Outside*
- 10/10 Food and Intimate Spaces
Read: Yuh, *Beyond the Shadow of Camptown* Chapter 3, 4, and 5

Week 8: Oral Histories

- 10/15 Fall Break: No class
- 10/17 Conducting Oral Histories
Read: Judy Yung, "Giving Voice to Chinese American Women"
Due: Interview proposal

Week 9: Imperialism, Labor and Migration

- 10/22 Filipino Women and Care
Read: Choy, *Empire of Care* Intro, Chapter 1 and 2
Parrenas, "Mothering from a Distance"
- 10/24 Nursing and Nail Salons
Read: Choy, *Empire of Care* Chapter 3, 4 and 6
Miliann Kang, "The Managed Hand: The Commercialization of Bodies and Emotions in Korean Immigrant-Owned Nail Salons."
Linh Chuong, "Labor of Love: Nail Salon Work and Advocacy"
<http://hendrixmurphy.org/treatment/labor-of-love-nail-salon-work-and-advocacy/>
Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 10: Colorism

- 10/29 Colorism
Read: Spickard and Rondilla, *Is Lighter Better?*
- 10/31 Redefining Beauty
Read: Spickard and Rondilla, *Is Lighter Better?*
Leaving Evidence blog, "Moving Toward the Ugly: A Politic Beyond Desirability"

<http://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2011/08/22/moving-toward-the-ugly-a-politic-beyond-desirability/>
Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 11: Sexuality and Sovereignty

- 11/5 Asian American Women's Sexuality
Read: Espiritu, "We Don't Sleep Around Like White Girls Do"
Sueyoshi, "History of Asian American Sexuality"
<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/faculty/henryyu/APACHP/teacher/research/sueyoshi.htm>
Anonymous, "Girl Talk" The Frisky
- 11/7 Body Politics and Native Women
Read: Amy Ku'uileialoha Stillman, "Passed into the Present"
Trask "Lovely Hula Hands"
Dames, "Chamorro Women, Self-Determination, and the Politics of Abortion in Guam"
Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 12: Oral History Presentations

- 11/12 Oral History Presentations
Due: Transcripts

11/14 Oral History Presentations

Week 13: South Asian Women's Organizing

- 11/19 Women's Organizing
Read: Das Gupta, *Unruly Immigrants*
- 11/21 Women's Organizing
Read: Das Gupta, *Unruly Immigrants*
Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 14: Being Queer

- 11/26 Queer, Sexy, and Fabulous
Read: Ordonez, "Asian Lesbians in San Francisco"
Vaid, "Inclusion, Exclusion, Occlusion"
Due: One-page Final Project Proposal/Progress Report
Film: *Saving Face*
- 11/28 Thanksgiving Break :)

Week 15: Revisiting Daughterhood

- 12/3 Model Minority and Suicides
Read: Lisa Park's, "Letter to My Sister"
Chua, "The Chinese Mother" from *Battle Hymn of Tiger Mother*
- 12/5 Read: Hyphen's Ask a Model Minority Suicide
<http://www.hyphenmagazine.com/blog/archive/2010/12/72-hour-hold-part-1>
Not that Kind of Asian Doctor blog, "To Love in This Way"
<http://notthatkindofasiandocor.wordpress.com/2011/01/12/to-love-in-this-way/>

Finals Week

- 12/18 Final Projects Due and Final Presentations (7-9:30pm)