

Instructor: Hyo Kyung Woo (hkwoo@ntu.edu.sg)
Class Schedule: TBA
Office Location: HSS 04-45
Office Hour: TBA

HL8031 Asian-American Literature

This course will introduce students to Asian American literature and multiethnic studies from the late nineteenth-century to modern day. Asian American literature has played the role of an imaginative other that constantly challenges and reconstructs the core identity of “America.” Some of the critical questions that students will consider in this course include: What are the formative experiences and histories that constitute “America”? What is the relationship of Asian Americans to the U.S. nation-state? Who is included in the category “Asian American”? How have conceptions of Asian America shifted over time? In approaching these questions, the course will focus on the topics of formations of race, ethnicity, immigration, citizenship, gender, and (post)colonialisms in Asian America. Looking into various forms of ethnic texts—novels, short stories, films, magazines, digital archives, and field study, students will be engaged in critical discussion involving diverse topics in multiethnic literature and Asian American studies. As we move through the course, our perspective will become increasingly transnational in scope, from a focus on Asian America in a domestic context to Pacific Rim, when dealing with transnational experiences of migrations, war, imperialism, and globalization.

** I reserve the right to alter the syllabus at any point before or during the semester.*

Learning Objectives

- 1) To critically read and analyze representative works of Asian American literature
- 2) To explore various theoretical terms and approaches in ethnic studies
- 3) To develop critical understanding of Asian America both historically and culturally
- 4) To practice reading, writing and presenting skills

Required Book Purchases (Other readings will be available at NTU Learn)

Chang-rae Lee. *Native Speaker*
Jang Jane Trenka. *The Language of Blood*
Viet Thanh Nguyen. *The Sympathizer: A Novel*

Course Outline (Some secondary readings are subject to change)

	Topic and Reading
1	<p>Intro. Mapping the Field: Asian American history and literature Sucheng Chan, <i>Chronology of Asian American History</i> Kandice Chuh, “(dis)owning America” Frank Chin Aiiiiiiii! Intro.</p> <p>Donald Trump Campaign Speech “Mexico Is Becoming New China”: http://edition.cnn.com/videos/politics/2015/08/11/donald-trump-press-conference-erin.cnn</p>
2	<p>Early Representations of Asian Americans: Yellow Peril and the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act Chinese Exclusion Acts (1882): available from https://www.ourdocuments.gov/print_friendly.php?flash=true&page=transcript&oc=47&title=Tr</p> <p>Erika Lee. “The Chinese Exclusion Example: Race, Immigration, and American Gatekeeping, 1882-1924” <i>Journal of American Ethnic History</i> 21.3 (2002): 36-62. Bill Ong Hing. “The Undesirable Asian” in <i>Defining America through Immigration Policy</i> (2004), 28-50</p> <p>Film in class: <i>Ancestors in the Americas: Coolies, Sailors, Settlers</i></p>
3	<p>Immigration and Model Minorities Carlos Bulosan. <i>American Is in the Heart</i> (Part 2)</p> <p>Keith Osajima. “Asian Americans as the Model Minority: An Analysis of the Popular Press Image in the 1960s and 1980s” in <i>A Companion to Asian American Studies</i>, edited by Kent A. Ono (215-226)</p>
4	<p>Internment Camp and the Limits of Citizenship John Okada. <i>No-No Boy</i> <i>Citizen 13669</i> (Graphic Novel, excerpt) <i>Life Magazine</i>. “How to Tell the Japs from the Chinese” December 22, 1941 <i>Time Magazine</i>. “How to tell Your Friends from Japs”</p> <p>Mae Ngai. <i>Impossible Subjects</i> (excerpt)</p>
5	<p>Orientalism, Stereotype, and Asian Woman Maxine Hong Kingston. <i>Women Warrior</i> “No Name Woman” and “White Tigers” (excerpt) Angry Little Asian Girl: www.angrylittlegirls.com</p> <p>Frank Chin and Jeffrey Paul Chan “The Most Popular Book in China” in <i>Maxine Hong Kingston’s Woman Warrior: A Case Book</i> King Kok Cheung. “<i>The Woman Warrior</i> versus <i>The Chinaman Pacific</i>: Must a Chinese American Choose between Feminism and Heroism?” (Wu, 308-23)</p>
6	<p>National Language and Multiculturalism (1) Chang-rae Lee <i>Native Speaker</i> (1)</p>

	Secondary Reading: TBA
7	National Language and Multiculturalism (2) Chang-rae Lee. <i>Native Speaker</i> (2) Cha Hak Kyung. Dickey (excerpt)
8	Asian Ethnic Enclaves: Chinatown Fae Myenne Ng. <i>Bone</i> (excerpt) Younghill Kang. <i>East Goes West</i> (excerpt) Student will present the outcome of their fieldwork where they visit one ethnic enclave in Singapore.
9	Transpacific Memories: War and Refuges Viet Thanh Nguyen. <i>The Sympathizer: A Novel</i> (1) Linda Trinh Vo, "The Vietnamese American Experience: From Dispersion to the Development of Post-Refugee Communities" (Wu and Song 290-306)
10	Transpacific Memories: War and Refuges Viet Thanh Nguyen. <i>The Sympathizer: A Novel</i> (2) Oscar Campomanes. "New Formations of Asian American Studies and the Question of U.S. Imperialism"
11	Transpacific Memories: War and International Adoption Jang Jane Trenka. <i>Language of Blood</i> (autobiography) In-class Film: Diem Borshay <i>In the Matter of Cha Jung Hee</i>
12	Transpacific Circulation: Asian Americans in Popular Culture <i>Big Bang Theory</i> (TV show) K-pop Music Video: Big Bang, Girl's Generation Lee, Robert G. <i>Orientalism: Asian Americans in Popular Culture</i> (1999). Intro.
13	Conclusion Gary Okihiro. "The Death of Ethnic Studies" Lisa Lowe. "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Asian American Differences"

Recommended Readings

Amy Kaplan. "Left Alone with America: The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture"
Cultures of United States Imperialism. Eds. Amy Kaplan and Donald A. Pease. Durham and London: Duke UP, 1993. 3-21.

Kandice Chuh. *Imagine Otherwise: On Asian Americanist Critique*

Kim, Elaine H., and Norman Alarcon, eds. *Writing Self, Writing Nation: Essays on Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's Dickey*. Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 1994

Lisa Lowe. *Immigrant Acts*

Koshy, Susan. "The Fiction of Asian American Literature." *The Yale Journal of Criticism* Fall (1996)

Michael Omi and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States*.

Ong, Aihwa. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Durham: Routledge, 1994.

Shankar, Lavina Dhirra, and Rajini Srikanth, eds. *A Part, Yet Apart: South Asians in Asian America*.

Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1998.

Student Assessment

Students will be assessed by:

- a. Final 2.5-hour written examination (50%)
- b. Two Short Mid-term Paper + Revision (30%)
- c. Participation, Attendance and Short Oral Presentation (10%)
- d. Quiz (10%)