

ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE
ENGL 65. Spring 2015: Mondays 1:15-4pm

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How does “Asian American” operate as a contested category of ethnic and national identity? This course examines literature, film, and critical theory created by contemporary Asian American writers in order to examine the development of Asian America as a literary field. While the course covers a diverse range of Asian immigrant histories, we will pay specific attention to the formation of Asian American subjectivities across social structures of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. Readings will be organized both chronologically and in response to a series of thematic issues, including: Asian American racial formation, gendered narratives of immigration, and queering Asian America.

The objective of this class is to critically examine the literary formation and political implications of Asian America. The novels, short stories, plays and films we will study in this class chart an ongoing movement in Asian American studies from domesticated narratives of immigrant assimilation towards increasingly transnational categories of nationhood and citizenship.

Required Texts

Ayad Akhtar, Disgraced
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Dictee
David Henry Hwang, M. Butterfly
Maxine Hong Kingston, The Woman Warrior
Jhumpa Lahiri, Interpreter of Maladies
Chang-Rae Lee, Native Speaker
Robert Lee, Oriental
Lisa Lowe, Immigrant Acts
John Okada, No-No Boy
Ruth Ozeki, A Tale for The Time Being

Films

Rogers and Hammerstein, dir. Flower Drum Song
Deanne Borshay Liem, dir. First Person Plural

The class also incorporates critical theory on all the novels and plays we will read. These include works by scholars ranging from Lisa Lowe to Anne Anlin Chen; from Robert Lee to David Eng. All readings marked (📖) are available on Moodle.

I also recommend familiarizing yourself with academic journals in Asian American Studies, all available online. These include *Journal of Asian American Studies*, *positions: east asia cultures critique*, and *American Quarterly*, among others.