

CES 111
INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN STUDIES
SPRING 2015
HUM/S/D: 3 CREDITS
Murrow 307
MWF 12:10 – 1:00

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office hours:
T 1:30 – 3:30
and by appointment

Required texts

Bulosan, Carlos. *America Is in the Heart*. 1943. Seattle: U of Washington P, 2014. (Be sure to get the 2014 edition, in the Classics of Asian American Literature series.)

Kuo Wei Tchen, John, and Dylan Yeats. *Yellow Peril!: An Archive of Anti-Asian Fear*. New York: Verso, 2014.

Zia, Helen. *Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000.

We will also read and view various handouts, films, and Web sites, and we will follow current events. You are responsible for keeping up with these as they pertain to assignments.

Course objective and rationale (catalogue description)

Examination of the social, political, economic, and cultural experiences of Asian/Pacific Americans in the historical and contemporary period.

Course description

This is an introductory course that assumes little or no prior knowledge of, or experience with, Asian Pacific American history and culture. If you have such knowledge, or if you are Asian Pacific American, you will have an advantage; but information is only one component of the critical thinking that is involved in our coursework. Our main text, Helen Zia's *Asian American Dreams*, is a highly personalized history. Carlos Bulosan's *America Is in the Heart* is a classic text not only of Filipino immigration and labor, as it is usually described, but also of the colonizing forces that made immigrants of young Filipinos in the 1930s. And the Tchen and Yeats book examines cultural stereotypes that have fueled anti-Asian racism in the past century.

Some reading assignments will be heavy, but this should be a discussion-centered course. Mostly we will discuss issues raised by the authors more than the texts themselves. You will be expected to read and know the texts. Bring to class the book we are using.

“Learning outcomes” and methods

By term's end, you should have developed a good foundational sense of Asian Pacific American history and culture, with an understanding of the social forces that shaped that history and that may define the APA future. Our methods will include the following:

Close reading of texts: any cultural production, including written texts, visual or aural images, historical and/or “natural” phenomena, personal experience and observation, etc

Discussion and analysis of texts and contexts

Contextualization: situating a text in its historical moment, relating it to the present

Note on language

In our books we may read some words or phrases that will be, to some sensibilities, coarse or vulgar or racist. By themselves, no “mere” words are offensive. What makes words vulgar or racist is their usage by particular speakers in particular contexts. When you see such words in our books, consider their context. Who speaks them? Why? And to whom?

Course policies and community standards

Ideally, we will model a “good” community, driven by shared concerns even when we disagree. To do well in this class, please note the following guidelines:

Read the assigned material when it is due. *Bring the assigned reading to class.*

Come to class on time, and leave only when class is over. Late arrivals and early departures count as absences.

Do not read newspapers or magazines in class, and turn off phones and all electronic devices, unless you can show that you are using them for note-taking.

Do not use class time for sleeping or otherwise disengaging, or you will count as absent.

Name-calling and other signs of disrespect will result in your removal from class.

Feel free to disagree, respectfully.

Consider others’ views. Reflect on your own social location, your privileges and power.

Learn a historically informed definition of racism, and challenge all racist discourse.

Reflect your grasp of history and social relations by respecting shy and quiet classmates, and by deferring to the experiences of people of color.

Finally, understand and consider the rage of people who are victims of systematic injustice. James Baldwin wrote that people of color have an obligation to feel rage over this nation’s history of racism. If injustice does not fill you with rage, then perhaps you should ask yourself why.

Requirements

Attendance and participation. An attendance sheet will be distributed from the third week on. Attendance is required. More than three unexcused absences will result in penalties. For each unexcused absence beyond the third, your course grade will be reduced by a half-letter.

Participation is also required, though this takes many forms. This course is not designed to force shy people to become extroverts, but with discussions, presentations, and papers, you will have opportunities to participate.

Attendance and participation count as 15 percent of your course grade.

Text Presentation. At the beginning of the second week I will distribute a sign-up sheet listing reading assignments. For each listed reading, two (or three) of you will lead class discussion. Make a note of your reading, the date, and the other presenter(s). The two (or three) of you should plan your presentations so that you will not repeat each other. If you miss your text presentation, there will be no opportunity to make it up.

Discuss the two or three most important aspects of the reading. What is the author arguing? What is her or his evidence? Do you find it persuasive? Why or why not? What questions does it raise in your mind?

Each presenter should plan to speak for five to ten minutes. Your text presentation counts as 5 percent of your course grade.

Response Papers. You will write four short responses to readings. All of these will be due on Fridays. Each of your first three responses will cover one of our books. It must be one typed page, roughly 250 to 300 words. The fourth response will be two pages long, roughly 500 to 600 words, and will consider all course material, including films. No late responses will be accepted.

Your response should not summarize the text. Identify the authors' main ideas and discuss their evidence. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Each of the first three responses count as 5 percent of your course grade, for a total of 15 percent. The fourth counts as 10 percent. All four count toward 25 percent of your course grade.

Paper. You will write one paper, of roughly 3 to 5 typed pages on an issue in Asian Pacific American history or culture. You may choose the topic, but if it deviates from our readings, then you must discuss it with me in advance. The paper is due Thursday, 2 November. More particular guidelines for the paper will be distributed later in the term. The paper counts as 50 percent of your course grade.

Paper Presentation. You will present your paper before the class. Briefly discuss the paper; do not read it. Identify your argument and several key pieces of evidence. If you wish to supplement your presentation with audio or visual materials, let me know in advance and we can make arrangements. Your presentation counts as 5 percent of your course grade.

Midterm and Final Exam. There will be no midterm or final examinations in this class. I may, however, assign an occasional quiz, which will count toward your participation/attendance grade.

Extra credit. Throughout the semester various events on campus will be related to our work on Asian Pacific American history and culture. These events will be announced in class, and your attendance will count toward extra credit if you write a response to them, roughly 250 words explaining the event, its significance, and the reasons for your views of them. Extra-credit responses will count toward your grade for attendance and participation.

Grades and criteria

Attendance and participation	15 percent
Text Presentation	5 percent
Response papers	25 percent
Paper	50 percent
Paper presentation	5 percent

Academic integrity: "Cheating of any kind will result in your failing the course. See the WSU Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). You should read and familiarize yourself with these definitions and standards."

Students With Disabilities: "Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center."

Safety and Emergency Notification: “Washington State University is committed to enhancing the safety of the students, faculty, staff, and visitors. It is highly recommended that you review the Campus Safety Plan (<http://safetyplan.wsu.edu/>) and visit the Office of Emergency Management web site (<http://oem.wsu.edu/>) for a comprehensive listing of university policies, procedures, statistics, and information related to campus safety, emergency management, and the health and welfare of the campus community.”

Schedule

Please note that all assignments listed below are subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with changes. Texts are identified by their authors’ or editors’ names.

1/12: Course introductions.

1/14: Read Zia, Introduction.

1/16: Read Zia, Chapter 1.

1/19: No class.

1/21: Read Zia, Chapter 2.

1/23: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 1-19.

1/26: Read Zia, Chapter 3.

1/28: Read Zia, Chapter 4.

1/30: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 20-32.

2/2: Read Zia, Chapter 5.

2/4: Read Zia, Chapter 6.

2/6: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 33-48.

2/9: Read Zia, Chapter 7.

2/11: Read Zia, Chapter 8.

2/13: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 48-60.

2/16: No class.

2/18: Read Zia, Chapter 9.

2/20: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 60-67.

2/23: Read Zia, Chapter 10.

2/25: Read Zia, Chapter 11.

2/27: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 69-72, 121-129.

3/2: Read Zia, Chapter 12.

3/4: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 129-143, 148-152, 156-162.

3/6: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 163-177. **FIRST RESPONSE DUE (Zia).**

3/9: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 179-205.

3/11: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 216-236.

3/13: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 262-276.

3/16 – 3/20: No class.

3/23: Read Bulosan, vii-xxiv, 1-93 (Part One).

3/25: Read Bulosan, 94-133 (Chapters XIII-XVII).

3/27: Read Bulosan, 134-167 (Chapters XVIII-XXI).

3/30: Read Bulosan, 168-210 (Chapters XXII-XVIII).

4/1: Read Bulosan, 211-243 (Chapters XXIX-XXXIII).

4/3: Read Bulosan, 244-277 (Chapters XXXIV-XXXIX).

4/6: Read Bulosan, 278-327 (Chapters XL-end).

4/8: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 277-288.

4/10: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 289-307. SECOND RESPONSE DUE (Bulosan).

4/13: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 307-329.

4/15: Read Tchen and Yeats, pp 337-365.

4/17: Film: *Days of Waiting*. THIRD RESPONSE DUE (Tchen and Yeats).

4/20: Films: *Savage Acts* and *Then There Were None*.

4/22: Paper presentations.

4/24: Presentations. PAPER DUE.

4/27: Presentations.

4/29: Presentations.

5/1: Presentations. FOURTH RESPONSE DUE (all course material, including films).