

Asian Pacific American Autobiography

CES/Engl. 315.1 [M]
Asian Pacific American Autobiography
Fall 2011
Time: MWF; 10:10-11:00
Place: Wilson 6

Instructor: Rory Ong
Office #: Wilson 119
Phone #: 335-7089
Office Hrs: W: 3-4:30pm
or by appointment

Required Texts:

The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee: Observations on Not Fitting In. Paisley Rekdal
When Broken Glass Floats: Growing up Under the Khmer Rouge. Chanrithy Him
Perfume Dreams: Refelctions on the Vietnamese Diaspora. Andrew Lam
Burnt Bread and Chutney: Growing Up Between Cultures—A Memoir of an Indian Jewish Girl. Carmit Delman
Passport Photos. Amitava Kumar.

Objectives:

In this course, we will examine the autobiographical writings, memoirs, or life writings (personal essays) written by Asian Pacific Americans. We will specifically be looking at these writings, and the act of writing, for their influence on the “invention” of memory, personal history, and personal life story. We will also view current autobiographical films and documentaries as some of the new forms of lived discourses that are produced. For Asian Pacific Americans the task involves not merely telling one’s story, but telling the personal tale as a rewriting of the American experience, an intervention in traditional American autobiography, and thus an interruption in the “lived site” Asians call America.

Learning Outcomes:

- Gain a basic understanding of varying Asian American contexts.
- Engage with the discourse of Asian American Autobiography and Memoir.
- Critically analyze complex and competing issues of identity, personal narrative, race and ethnicity, gender, and national affiliation.
- Come to grips with the challenges and limits of the typical American immigrant story.

Course Requirements:

Directed Reading Responses

I will be providing writing prompts over the assigned daily readings and/or sometimes asking for you own response. Directed reading responses need to be 1 page in length, typewritten and double-spaced. Your responses to the directed questions will help you begin exploring, formulating, and articulating your own thoughts and ideas about the course material. Directed Readings will count toward 20% of the total grade.

Class Discussion and Facilitation

Each student will be responsible for facilitating 2 class periods of discussion, one prior to midterm and another after midterm. The student will read his/her directed reading response for the day as well as come prepared to have class participants consider one or two questions about the reading, or provide some further analysis of the reading for that day. Class Discussion/Facilitation will count toward 20% of the total grade.

Midterm Paper

Students will turn in a midterm paper (October 7). Writing prompts will be provided. The midterm paper is to be a “semi-formal” response to the materials (written and video) we have read/viewed up to this point. You are required to write 3-4 pages long, typed and double-spaced. The paper must thoughtfully engage one of the assigned autobiographies, or perhaps a theme that travels across several readings. Students must use at least one of the autobiographies and not solely rely on the videos for their analysis. **Some summary is good, but more importantly I also want your critical engagement with the material.** The midterm paper will count as 25% of the total grade.

Final Paper

There are three (3) components to the Final Research Paper. 1) Students must turn in a Proposal for the research paper. This is a one page, typed double-spaced description of the paper topic, autobiographies to be used, and a preliminary bibliography. 2) For the Final Paper students are required to write anywhere from 8-10 pages long, typewritten and double-spaced. Papers must have a bibliography of at least 5 references which include discussion and analysis of at least 2 pieces of literature, one documentary and 2 scholarly articles (or scholarly chapters from books) as part of the research/analysis. 3) Students must present their paper topic and conclusions to the class. The final paper will count toward 35% of the total grade.

Policies:

Grading

Directed Reading Assignments	_____	20%
Class Discussion and Facilitation	_____	20%
Mid-Term Paper	_____	25%
Final Paper	_____	35%

Grading Scale

100-93=A	Suggests that a student’s work is outstanding to excellent;
92-90=A-	The student’s work reflects an <u>engaged comprehension</u> of the content and focus of the material and shows thoughtful insight into the complexities of the course. Students also show an <u>attentive engagement</u> with the course. Always well written and articulated.
89-87=B+	Suggests the student’s work is very good to good; it reflects a very

86-83=B 82-80=B-	strong, engaged, and solid understanding of the material. Occasionally doesn't go the extra step in critical analysis. Mostly well written and articulated.
79-77=C+ 76-73=C 72-70=C-	Suggests the student's work is adequate. The overall work is fair, but <u>does not engage with</u> or fully grasp the course material. The student's work may not go far in comprehension, or reflects a lack of understanding of the issues represented in the material. Unclearly written or articulated. There may be some missing assignments and/or attendance problems.
69-67=D+ 66-63=D 62-60=D-	Suggests the student's work shows some, but little effort, and does not comprehend the material, is disengaged, or reveals a lack of reading, attention, or concern. There are usually missing assignments and attendance problems.

Attendance

In accordance with the Student Handbook, attendance in this class is mandatory. If you know in advance that you will have to miss class for a legitimate reason, contact me to see whether arrangements can be made to make up any work that will be missed. If you have not finished an assignment for a given class period, attend class anyway to avoid missing further assignments and in-class work/discussions. **Only institutional excuses will be accepted. If you have more than three (3) unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered one point for every absence thereafter.**

Extra Credit

There may be opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. I will announce those opportunities as they come up. Unless the instructor advertises an extra credit, students must get approval from the instructor. Extra Credit assignments must relate to the course content of CES 101. Extra Credit should be in the form of a short 1-2 page review of the event, lecture, or film attended--typed and double-spaced. To receive the possible full credit, students must also make a connection in the review with the event, film, or lecture and the content of this course. **Students are allowed only 2 Extra Credit assignments.** Each Extra Credit will count 2.5 pts toward the student's overall final grade (for a total of 5 extra credit points).

Disability Accommodations

The Department of Comparative Ethnic Studies supports members of our community who request disability accommodations. Please notify me during the first two (2) weeks of class for any requirements needed for the course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations MUST be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist. Late notification may result in the request being unavailable.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and fraud, is prohibited at WSU. The proper use of primary or secondary research sources and without proper citation or acknowledgment, or copying and claiming someone else's work as your own, is illegal and is not acceptable in this or any other class at WSU. Whether intentional or unintentional, academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the assignment in question, or a grade of "F" for the entire course. Should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty, I will discuss the situation with you before penalties are enforced.

Classroom Etiquette

Out of respect for your classmates and the instructor, **all cell phones must be turned off. iPods and any other devices for listening to music, podcasts, radio, or text messaging are also prohibited in class. Unless you have a documented disability, no earphones are allowed in class. This is not a lecture course, therefore laptops are not allowed for note taking.** Any use of these items during class will automatically result in a loss of 5 points from the student's final grade.

Campus Safety Plan Emergency Information

In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the WSU-provided websites:

·<http://safetyplan.wsu.edu> Campus Safety Plan

·<http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> Emergency management web site

·<http://alert.wsu.edu> WSU Alert site

Syllabus:

Monday, August 22: Handout and Review Syllabus. Introduction to the Course.

Wednesday, August 24: Video: My America

Friday, August 26: Discussion on Asian American Contexts (handout).

Monday, August 29: Discussion on Autobiography (handout).

Autobiography and The Trouble with Authenticity

Wednesday, August 31: Discuss pp: 3-52, The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee

Friday, September 2: Discuss pp: 53-100, The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee

Monday, September 5: **LABOR DAY. ALL UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY.**

Wednesday, September 7: Discuss pp: 101-156, The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee

Friday, September 9: Discuss pp: 157-209, The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee

Monday, September 12: Video: The Grace Lee Project by Grace Lee

Wednesday, September 14: Video: The Grace Lee Project by Grace Lee

Military Conflicts and the Asian American Memoire

Friday, September 16: Discuss reading on Korean Adoption (handout)

Monday, September 19: Video: First Person Plural by Deanne Borshay Liem

Wednesday, September 21: Video: First Person Plural by Deanne Borshay Liem

Friday, September 23: Discuss Reading on Vietnam War (handout)

Monday, September 26: Discuss pp. 13-105, When Broken Glass Floats

Wednesday, September 28: Discuss pp. 106-153, When Broken Glass Floats

Friday, September 30: Discuss pp. 154-200, When Broken Glass Floats

Monday, October 3: Discuss pp. 201-250, When Broken Glass Floats

Wednesday, October 5: Discuss pp. 250- 330, When Broken Glass Floats

Friday, October 7: Video: Sentenced Home. **Take-Home Midterm due.**

Monday, October 10: Video: Sentenced Home.

Postmodern Dreams, Postcolonial Lives

Wednesday, October 12: Discuss pp. 1-50 Perfume Dreams

Friday, October 14: Discuss pp. 51-91 Perfume Dreams

Monday, October 17: Discuss pp. 93-140 Perfume Dreams

Wednesday, October 19: Video: Xichlo by M. Trihn Nguyen

Friday, October 21: Video: Conquering America by Bharati Mukherjee

Monday, October 24: Discuss pp. ix-34, Passport Photos

Wednesday, October 26:	Discuss pp. 37-56, Passport Photos
Friday, October 28:	Discuss pp. 59-80, Passport Photos
Monday, October 31:	Discuss pp.83-99, Passport Photos. Research Proposal due:
Wednesday, November 2:	Discuss pp.125-147, Passport Photos.
Friday, November 4:	Discuss pp.149-171, Passport Photos
Monday, November 7:	Discuss pp.197-215, Passport Photos
Wednesday, November 9:	Discuss pp.217-233, Passport Photos
Friday, November 11:	VETERANS DAY. ALL UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY.
Monday, November 14:	Discuss Part One: Portions of Pleasure in Burnt Bread and Chutney
Wednesday, November 16:	Discuss Part Two: Houses and Homes in Burnt Bread and Chutney
Friday, November 18:	Discuss Part Three: Kin, Not Kind in Burnt Bread and Chutney
Mon-Fri, November 21-25:	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY BREAK.
Monday, November 28:	Part Four: Peace by Peace in Burnt Bread and Chutney
Wednesday, November 30:	Research Presentations
Friday, December 2:	Research Presentations
Monday, December 5:	Research Presentations
Wednesday, December 7:	Research Presentations
Friday, December 9:	Final Research Paper due.
Monday, December 12-16:	No Final Exam.