E421: Asian American Literature Spring 2021

TR 3:30-4:45 Office Hours: Virtual via MS Teams T 2-3 ; W 3-4

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131 Behavioral Sciences

This course explores a range of Asian American writing. The authors studied demonstrate the diversity and occasional incoherence of the category Asian American. Readings include works by Chinese, Japanese and Filipino immigrants around the turn of the twentieth century; texts by second and third generation Asian Americans; and works by recent immigrants from southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. We will approach these texts as components of a still-emerging tradition of Asian American literature and within historical and social contexts.

Our investigations will involve examining ideas about transnationalism, imperialism and colonialism, citizenship, assimilation, gender and sexuality, and cultural resistance. Readings from major theorists and critics of Asian American literature such as Viet Than Nguyen, Lisa Lowe, Rachel Lee, and Colleen Lye will assist us in developing strategies for reading these texts as aesthetic and political interventions. Authors studied will include a blend of recognized major figures such as Maxine Hong Kingston and Frank Chin, lesser-known early writers like Sui Sin Far and Carlos Bulosan, and recent authors like Amitav Ghosh and Ling Ma.

**Note to students: the documents that we will be reading for this course contain descriptions of sexual activities, violence, drug use and other behaviors that may be offensive or disturbing to you. We will treat these representations as material worthy of serious and complex literary analysis. While we will address the significance of representing transgressive social behavior, we will refrain from speculating about the morality of such behavior and from judging the texts based on our own moral or political convictions.**

Required Texts

Sui Sin Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*

Carlos Bulosan, *America Is in the Heart*

John Okada, *No-No Boy*

Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*

Frank Chin, *Chickencoop Chinaman and the Year of the Dragon*

Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters*

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictée*

Thi Diem Thuy Le, *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*

Lulu Wang, *The Farewell* (film, available on Kanopy via the CSU Library)

Cathy Park Hong, *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning*

Amitav Ghosh, *Gun Island*

Ling Ma, *Severance*

Additional readings available electronically

Assignments:

3 Short papers (30%)

Midterm Exam (15%)

Final Project Proposal (5%)

Final Project (30%)

Discussion facilitation (10%)

Participation (10%)

Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings

1/19: Introduction (virtual class meeting on MS Teams: I will post a link on Canvas and share it with you via Canvas messages and emails).

**Unit I: Foundations of Asian American Literary Studies in the Movement Era**

1/21: Theoretical Introduction (virtual class: links on Canvas and available via email/Canvas message)   
All readings on Canvas.

Frank Chin, Jeffery Paul Chan, Lawson Fusao Inada, and Shawn Wong, Preface and Introduction to *Aiiieeeee!*

Elaine Kim, “Defining Asian American Realities Through Literature”

Yen Le Espiritu, “Coming Together: the Asian American Movement,” from *Asian American Panethnicity*

**Submit Student Introduction (available on Canvas)**

**Face to face instruction begins**

1/26: Frank Chin, *The Year of the Dragon*

1/28: Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (No Name Woman, White Tigers, Shaman)

2/2: Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (Shaman, At the Western Palace, A Song for a Barbarian Reed Pipe)

2/4: King-Kok Cheung, “The Woman Warrior versus The Chinaman Pacific: Must a Chinese American Critic Choose between Feminism and Heroism?” (on Canvas)

Student Facilitated Discussion

**Unit 2: Early Asian American Literature**

2/9: Min Hyoung Song, “Sentimentalism and Sui Sin Far” on Canvas   
Hsuan L. Hsu, Introduction to *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* 9-23  
Edith Maude Eaton / Sui Sin Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* Appendix A 221-238

**First Short Paper Due**

2/11: Edith Maude Eaton / Sui Sin Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 35-161  
Student Facilitated Discussion

2/16: Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart* Introduction to the 2014 Edition, Chapters 1-19

2/18: Carlos Bulosan, *America is in the Heart* Chapters 20-49

Student Facilitated Discussion

2/23: Frank Chin, “In Search of John Okada” (Afterword to *No-No Boy*); John Okada, *No-No Boy* iii-143

2/25: John Okada *No-No Boy* 144-251   
Student Facilitated Discussion

**Unit 3: Reading Transnationally**

3/2: Lisa Lowe, “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian American Differences”

Susan Koshy, “The Fiction of Asian American Literature”

**Second Short Paper Due**

3/4: Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters*

Midterm Review

3/9: Jessica Hagedorn, *Dogeaters*Student Facilitated Discussion

3/11: Midterm Exam

3/16: Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictée* 1-89

3/18: Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictée* 90-179

Student Facilitated Discussion

3/23: Lê Thi Diem Thúy, *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, 1-77

3/25: Lê Thi Diem Thúy, *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, 78-end

Student Facilitated Discussion

3/30: Lulu Wang *The Farewell* (available via CSU Library subscription to Kanopy)

Student Facilitated Discussion

**Unit 4: Contemporary Developments: Form, Politics, and Speculation**

4/1: Viet Than Nguyen, “Introduction: A Crisis of Representation,” from *Race & Resistance*

Colleen Lye, “Racial Form” (both on Canvas)

**Third Short Paper Due**

4/6: Cathy Park Hong, Minor Feelings

4/8: Cathy Park Hong, Minor Feelings

Student Facilitated Discussion

**Final Project Proposal Due**

**April 12-16 Spring Break (beginning on 4/20 the course will meet online in accordance with CSU policy)**

4/20: Amitav Ghosh, excerpt from *The Great Derangement* and *Gun Island*, 3-132

4/22: Amitav Ghosh, *Gun Island*, 133-312

4/27: Ling Ma, *Severance*, 3-147

4/29: Ling Ma, *Severance*, 148-291

5/4: *Severance* cluster at Post45 (<http://post45.org/sections/contemporaries/severance/>)

5/6: Conclusion

**Final Project Due**

**Important information for students on COVID-19:**

**All students are required to follow public health guidelines in any university space, and are encouraged to continue these practices when off-campus(es). Students also are required to report any COVID-19 symptoms to the university immediately, as well as if they have potentially been exposed or have tested positive at a non-CSU testing location. If you suspect you have symptoms, please fill out the COVID Reporter** (<https://covid.colostate.edu/reporter/>). If you have COVID symptoms or know or believe you have been exposed, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you complete the online COVID Reporter. Do not ask your instructor to report for you; if you report to your instructor that you will not attend class due to symptoms or a potential exposure, you are required to also submit those concerns through the COVID Reporter. If you do not have access to the internet to fill out the online COVID-19 Reporter, please call (970)491-4600.

If you report symptoms or a positive test, your report is submitted to CSU’s Public Health Office. You will receive immediate, initial instructions on what to do and then you will also be contacted by phone by a public health official. Based on your specific circumstances, the public health official may:

* choose to recommend that you be tested and help arrange for a test
* conduct contact tracing
* initiate any necessary public health requirements or recommendations and notify you if you need to take any steps

If you report a potential exposure, the public health official will help you determine if you are at risk of contracting COVID.

For the latest information about the University’s COVID resources and information, please visit the CSU COVID-19 site (<https://covidrecovery.colostate.edu/>).

**Academic Policies**

*Grading Philosophy*: This course asks you to write in a range of different styles and for different purposes. In all cases I will be grading your work on its clarity, organization, analytic insight, and originality. I take everything from the sophistication of your ideas to your use of correct grammar into account when assigning a grade.

*Due Dates:* All assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate Canvas portal by midnight on the date that they are due. **Late work will receive a 1/3 of a grade penalty for each 24-hour period that it is late beginning at 12:01 AM. (For example a paper due at Midnight on Tuesday that is turned in on Thursday at 8 AM would receive 2 deductions).**Extensions may be arranged as long as you contact me in advance of the deadline; if you suspect that you may need an extension or notice a conflict with a University approved event contact me as soon as possible.

*Discussion Facilitation:* You will sign up to facilitate discussion once during the semester. Barring the most extreme circumstances, missing a class meeting when you are scheduled to be the facilitator will lead to a failing grade for the assignment.

*Materials Covered:* All students are responsible for material covered from the first day of class.

*Participation*: Discussion in class and on Canvas will be a crucial part of the interpretive work that we will be doing during the semester; excessive absences or non-participation in virtual discussions will affect your performance and your grade will fall accordingly.

*Grading:* Your grades will be computed according to CSU’s 4 point scale in which A = 4.0; A- = 3.667; B+ = 3.334; B = 3.00; B- = 2.667; C+ = 2.334; C = 2.00; D = 1.00; F = 0.00.

*Academic Honesty:* This course will adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University [General Catalog](javascript:OpenPage('http://www.catalog.colostate.edu/FrontPDF/1.6POLICIES1112f.pdf')) and the [Student Conduct Code](javascript:OpenPage('http://www.conflictresolution.colostate.edu/conduct-code.aspx%23conduct')). Plagiarism is a serious offense, and occurs when one passes off as one’s work the ideas or words of someone else. This can happen whether the ideas of words come from the internet, a printed source (books, journals, magazines, etc.), a spoken source (such as class lecture and discussion), or another student’s paper (whether bought, borrowed, or stolen). You are plagiarizing whether the ideas or words that you take are substantial and multiple, or merely bits and pieces you believe to be unimportant. Since responsibility for one’s own intellectual work, and the respect for one another’s, is the very foundation of a university community, I take plagiarism very seriously. I am aware of just how many papers are on the web and I am vigilant about detecting internet plagiarism. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. We will discuss correct techniques for attribution to avoid any unintentional plagiarism. If you ever have any question if you are plagiarizing or not, please come see me. All assignments are to be completed with original work for this class. If you have any questions about adapting work from other classes for the demands of this course consult with me in advance.

*Special Accommodations:* If you are a student who will need accommodations in this class, please make an appointment to see me to discuss your individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation. A verifying memo from Resources for Disabled Students may be required before any accommodation is provided.

**Assignments**

*Short Essays:* Three short essays are required for the course. A schedule with instructions and a sample short essay are available on the Course Information page on Canvas. The essays are required to show careful engagement with and analysis of a question developed by the student. You must explore your question using properly cited textual evidence. The essays should be around 500-750 words (roughly 2-3 pages) in length. Papers that are too short or too long will be returned for revision.

*Discussion Questions:* I have scheduled designated days for student facilitated discussion. Each student will sign up to write discussion questions and facilitate class discussion. At least 24 hours before class the discussion facilitators will send their questions (between 3 and 5) to the class (and me) via a Canvas message. In order to receive full credit for the assignment, discussion leaders must send their questions to the whole class no later than 3:30 PM on the day before they are scheduled to lead discussion. If you have any difficulty sending the questions via Canvas you may email them to me and I will pass them on to the class. Feel free to discuss your questions with me during my office hours or via email.

*Midterm Exam:* The exam on 3/11 will consist of short passages that students will be asked to identify and an essay. There will be a midterm review 3/4.

*Final Project Proposal*: A brief (300-500 word) abstract that proposes a topic for your final project is due on 4/8. You must complete this assignment to proceed with your final project. All proposals for alternatives to a literary research project require instructor approval in advance of submitting the proposal.

*Final Project:* The final project will be a sustained research project that will run between 8 and 10 pages in length. Students are required to submit the proposal and are encouraged to discuss their projects with me as well. The project could take the form of a more involved reading of one of the texts we have covered, or of a further exploration of an idea or topic that we have taken up in the course in works that may not be among the course requirements. You will be expected to situate your argument in a critical context and to show how your ideas add to existing interpretations of the work/ideas you choose to address. Creative and non-traditional projects are welcome.

**Safety, Reporting and Resources:**  Recently the English Department recommended that faculty increase the visibility of our policies on Title IX reporting and student resources. I am happy to share them here and encourage you to talk with me about any experiences that I might be able to help you find resources for.  Here is the official language that CSU has adopted:

CSU’s Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as “Responsible Employees.”  This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments.  As “Responsible Employees,” faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety.

Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:

* + Emergency Response 911
  + Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment (970) 491-1350
  + Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency) (970) 491-6425

For counseling support and assistance, please see the CSU Health Network, which includes a variety of counseling services that can be accessed at: <http://www.health.colostate.edu/>.  And, the Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Team is a confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement and that can be of great help to students