ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES 200B
CRITICAL ISSUES IN ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Fall 2004                                M 1:00-3:50
# 521-013-200                                           Campbell 2226

Instructor: Kyeyoung Park                             Office hrs: W 12:30-2:00
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Description/Objectives:
This course provides a detailed and critical examination of contemporary issues
confronting Asian American communities against the backdrop of broad
economic, social, and political changes in an increasingly multi-racial American
society and globalized world. Central analytical concepts include issues of race,
gender/sexuality, and class; identity, representation and politics. In addition, we
will also ask the question of what “responsibility” means to Asian Americans in
these daily struggles.

The class starts with exploring the meanings of the Asian American category and
the purpose of Asian American studies: knowledge production grounded in
community development and change. We’ll focus on the emergence of new
post-1965 Asian Pacific communities in the U.S. and pay special attention to
documenting and analyzing immigrant children and the successive generations
as well as their experiences. With these historical and structural foundations,
we’ll situate and investigate the Asian American experience in relation to major
categories of social identity and inequality: i) racial tension and coalition building;
ii) a gendered look at the Asian American experience (and sexuality); iii) Asian
immigrants/refugees (along with issues of class, labor, and violence). Finally, to
scrutinize these theoretical and ethnographic studies, we will examine the visions
of resistance, politics, and culture in forming and practicing Asian American
communities. Throughout the class, critical ethnographic inquiry will be
stressed.

Requirements/Grading: Class Participation and Oral Presentation(s) 30%
Research Paper 70%
(+ Paper Prospectus)

Reading/Writing Assignments:
1) Oral Presentation
2) Paper Prospectus (3-4 page abstract; due in the 8th week)
3) Final Research Paper (15 pages; due, December 13). This will be based on
readings from the course and/or outside sources that engage with topics relevant
to our course. You will want to show evidence of serious engagement with the issues we have discussed in class, and applying insights from our readings/discussions to the topic you choose to work on.

Readings: The following texts are available at the University Bookstore.


The course reader will be available at Course Reader Material, 1141 Westwood Blvd. (310) 443-3303.

**Schedule of Classes**

**Week 1: Introduction and Writing Asian America**

Optional:

**Week 2: Racial Tension and Coalition Building**

Video, Twilight Los Angeles
• Abelmann, Nancy and John Lie, Blue Dreams

Optional
• Kim, Claire, Bitter Fruit: The Politics of Black-Korean Conflict in New York City. Yale Univ. P., 2000
• Umemoto, K., From Vincent Chin to Joseph Ileto: Asian Pacific Americans and Hate Crime Policy. In Transforming Race Relations, 243-278

**Week 3 & 4: Gender/Sexuality Challenges I & II**

Video, Orientations

**Video, Knowing her place**
• Dames, Vivian L., Chamorro Women, Self-Determination, and the Politics of Abortion in Guam. In Asian/Pacific Islander American Women, 365-384
• Volpp, Leti, (Mis) Identifying Culture: Asian Women and the “Cultural Defense.” In Asian American Studies: A Reader, ed. by J. Wu & M. Song, 391-422. Rutgers Univ. P., 2000

Optional:
• Eng, David L. and Alice Y. Hom (eds.), Queer in Asian America.
• Kelsky, Karen, Women on the Verge: Japanese Women, Western Dreams.
• Espiritu, Yen Le, “We Don’t Sleep Around Like White Girls Do”: Family, Culture, and Gender in Filipina American Lives. Signs 26 (2): 415-440
• Espiritu, Y. L. Asian American Women and Men
• Abraham, Margaret, Speaking the Unspeakable: Marital Violence among South Asian Immigrants in the United States.

Week 5-6 Immigrant/Refugee Acts I & II
Video, Taxi-vala/Auto-biography

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Video, The Story of Vinh

Optional:

• Lin, J., Reconstructing Chinatown

**Week 7-8: Successive Generations**


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Video, *Better Luck Tomorrow* (or *Passing Through*)

Optional:

Week 9: Asian Americans and Transnationalism

- Roth, Joshua Hotaka, Brokered homeland: Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan.

Optional

- Munasinghe, V., Callaloo or tossed salad? East Indians and the cultural politics of identity in Trinidad.
- Linger, Daniel T., No One Home: Brazilian Selves Remade in Japan.

Week 10: Continuing the Discussion and the Struggle
Video, Labor Women

- Park, Kyeyoung, Confronting the Liquor Industry in Los Angeles. IJSSP 24 (7/8): 103-136, 2004

Optional: