

English/Asian American Studies/American Studies 262
Spring 2008
TR 2:55-4:10
Rockefeller 104
ssw6@cornell.edu

Professor Shelley Wong
282 Goldwin Smith Hall
Office Hours: R10-12
5-9310;

Introduction to Asian American Literature

This course will introduce both a variety of writings by Asian North American authors and some critical issues concerning the production and the reception of Asian American literary texts. We'll be focusing primarily on prose fiction this semester. We will be asking questions about the historical formation of Asian American identities, about the forms of representation available to Asian American writers and artists, and the problem of mapping an Asian American literary or cultural history.

Course Readings:

Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart*
Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*
Fae Myenne Ng, *Bone*
Don Lee, *Yellow*
Lois-Ann Yamanaka, *Blu's Hanging*
Frank Chin, *Year of the Dragon*
John Okada, *No-No Boy*
Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee*
David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*
Monique Truong, *Book of Salt*
Michael Ondaatje, *Running in the Family*
A variety of essays to be announced in class

Course Requirements:

- Regular attendance and **completion** of assigned readings by the date we **begin** our discussion of a given text as noted in the syllabus. I check attendance at every class meeting and unexcused absences will affect your grade.
- Regular participation in class discussions
- One-page informal responses to the readings, due at the beginning of the first class devoted to a given text. The responses are intended to help you prepare for discussions and to enable you to begin formulating essay topics. You may be called upon during class to present your response. While these responses will not be graded, their absence will be duly noted.
- Two formal writing assignments: one 6-8 page mid-term essay (30%); one 8-10 page final essay (50%)
- Each student will take one or two turns as "class historian." At the beginning of each class, the class historian will provide a summary of the previous class' discussion. You will also be asked to give one or two short 10-minute class presentations on the readings (20%). We will discuss the format of these presentations at the beginning of the semester.

Your performance on the responses and other aspects of the course—attendance, being on time for class, turning in work on time, participation—will not receive a letter grade, but will be evaluated on a plus, check, or minus basis, and will be taken into consideration at the end of the term. Your grade may drop by one full letter grade if you have more than three unexcused absences.

Plagiarism:

All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content, with contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Make yourself familiar with Cornell’s Academic Integrity Code, distributed to students in the Policy Notebook and available on-line at <http://www.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>. The code, together with a guide to Acknowledging the Work of Others, can be downloaded from <http://www.cornell.edu/UniversityFaculty/docs/main.html>. In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the code is an “F” for the term.

Syllabus

Week 1

January 22 – Introduction: Terminologies, Histories, Methods

January 24 – Video screening: Stuart Hall lecture on “Representation and the Media”

Week 2

January 29 – Readings: Chang-Rae Lee, “The Faintest Echo of Our Language”; Class hand-out on “language”; Lisa Lowe, “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, and Multiplicity”
- Discussion of Stuart Hall lecture

January 31 – Reading: Frank Chin, “Year of the Dragon”

Week 3

February 5 – Reading: Frank Chin, “Year of the Dragon”; and David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

February 7 – David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*

Week 4

February 12 – Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart*

February 14 – Carlos Bulosan, *America Is In the Heart*

Week 5

February 19 – Carlos Bulosan, America Is In the Heart

February 21 – Joy Kogawa, Obasan

Week 6

February 26 – Joy Kogawa, Obasan

February 28 – Joy Kogawa, Obasan

Week 7

March 4 – John Okada, No-No Boy

March 6 – John Okada, No-No Boy

March 7 – Mid-term essay (6-8 pages) due by **noon** today in my GS 250 mailbox. Along with turning in the hard copy to my English Department mailbox, please also send me a copy of your essay by way of email attachment.

Week 8

March 11 – Monique Truong, Book of Salt

March 13 – Monique Truong, Book of Salt

Week 9

March 18 – SPRING BREAK

March 20 – SPRING BREAK

Week 10

March 25 – Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Blu's Hanging

March 27 – Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Blu's Hanging

Week 11

April 1 – Don Lee, Yellow

April 3 – Don Lee, Yellow

Week 12

April 8 – Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Dictee

April 10 – Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Dictee

Week 13

April 15 – Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Dictee

April 17 – TBA

Week 14

April 22 – Fae Myenne Ng, Bone

April 24 – Fae Myenne Ng, Bone

Week 15

April 29 – Michael Ondaatje, Running in the Family

May 1 – Michael Ondaatje, Running in the Family

May 5 – Final 8-10 page essay due by noon today in my mailbox in 250 Goldwin Smith Hall