

**Asian Pacific American Media**  
**SP 2013 (ASIAN 34001/ENGL 32354)**  
**Lecturer:** Alison Roh Park  
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**Phone:** (917) 805-0830  
**Class Location:** HN C100  
**Meeting Time:** M TH 4:10 - 5:25  
**Office Hours:** M 1:30-2:30 PM (1336W)

### **REQUIRED READING**

- Lee, Robert G. "Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture." Temple University Press, 1999 (Available on Amazon.com and Shakespeare & Co. Booksellers at 939 Lexington Ave by Friday 2/1/13)
- Additional required class readings will be posted to Blackboard, emailed, or provided to you

### **RECOMMENDED READING**

- Shimizu, Celine Parreñas, "The Hypersexuality of Race: Performing Asian/American women on screen and scene"
- Ono, Kent A. and Pham, Vincent N. "Asian Americans and the Media"
- Galang, M. Evelina (Ed.) "Screaming Monkeys: Critiques of Asian American Images"
- Prasso, Sheridan, "The Asian Mystique: Dragon Ladies, Geisha Girls, & Our Fantasies of the Exotic Orient"
- Zia, Helen, "Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People"

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will explore and critically analyze representations of Asian Pacific Islander Americans (APIAs) in the media, including stereotypical images of APIA identity, culture, behavior, sexuality and history, as well as media that contests or subverts these dominant narratives. This course will examine how political, social, and cultural forces have affected Asian American participation in the media and how these forces have shaped APIA media representations. Through class readings and analyzing films and other media, we will utilize frameworks on immigration, nationalism and citizenship, race, ethnicity, gender, capitalism, class, sexuality and transnationalism, all within the social construction of race in the United States both historically and currently. Specifically, using these frameworks, we will look at representations of APIAs in the media within the following contexts:

- Historical context;
- Current social context in the U.S. and globally;
- Political frameworks, i.e. media justice;
- Entertainment media, including film, television, radio, and video game genres;
- Sex and adult entertainment industry; and
- Mainstream news media and reporting.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The primary objective of this course will be to identify dominant narratives created and perpetuated by media representations of APIAs, and locate APIAs within U.S. media and the broader social, political, and economic context. This course aims to encourage and challenge students to: develop media literacy as consumers of mainstream news and entertainment media; understand and challenge how APIAs are cast within a broader social, political, migratory, historical, colonial and/or neoliberal context; and interrogate how gender, sexuality, nationality, transnationalism and race are encoded in the media. Through screenings, close reading, lecture, discussion, and reflection, students will have the tools to develop and understand media representation of APIAs, as well as the critical vocabulary, frameworks, and skills necessary to deconstruct race, gender, sexuality and class in the media we consume.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Participation and engagement—which includes attendance, punctuality, and in-class engagement—are critical for the successful completion of the course. In addition to reading assignments, class participation, and the midterm group and final projects, students regularly upload responses to the material covered during the previous week on

the Blackboard by the start time of Monday's class (see syllabus for specific due dates). You may be asked to complete pop quizzes or other fun activities related to the assignments to further demonstrate your engagement and comprehension. Read below for more detailed information on specific course requirements.

### **FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN (100 POINTS)**

- Attendance and punctuality (20)
- Preparation and engagement (15)
- Weekly responses and other assignments (20)
- Midterm group project (12)
- In-class test (13)
- Final paper (20)

A+	97.5 – 100	B+	87.5 – 89.9	C+	77.5 – 79.9
A	92.5 – 97.4	B	82.5 – 87.4	C	70.0 – 77.4
A-	90.0 – 92.4	B-	80.0 – 82.4	D	60.0 – 69.9

### **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY (20)**

- You are required to sign-in at the start of each class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to ask me to record your attendance and time of arrival.
- Lateness exceeding five (5) minutes will be calculated cumulatively. Every thirty (30) minutes of lateness will be counted as one (1) absence.
- One (1) unexcused absence is permitted during the semester. Additional unexcused absence will result in the deduction of five (5) points each from your final grade.
- If you are absent, you are required to do the in-class reading on your own time. Additionally, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate to find out what you have missed, including changes to the reading or assignment.
- If there are circumstances that will affect your attendance and punctuality, please speak with me as soon as possible to discuss your potential to do well in this class.

### **PREPARATION AND ENGAGEMENT (15)**

- While class may not be the most important thing in your world, you can't participate if you're not present. Bring your full self to the table, both in the classroom and in completing assignments. Your engagement and participation is required for your and the class' collective benefit. You cannot receive a passing grade in this class if all you do is show up and sit in silence.
- **Bring your book and printed readings to every class. Not doing so will affect your grade.**
- **Take notes.** You will be expected to refer to information from lectures and discussions in your final exam and weekly responses.
- Students who receive a high grade do not always agree with me or have the "right" answer. They are curious and active listeners, work hard, ask questions about the material (particularly when they don't understand it), share, and attempt to apply what they learn to other courses and/or their own lived experiences.
- You are expected to "step up" or "step down" during class discussions. Challenge yourself if you are a shy or hesitant speaker; or, if you tend to contribute a great deal, be mindful of how much space you take up.
- Some helpful guidelines for class discussion are to (in no particular order of significance): 1) be prepared; 2) be thoughtful in your responses; 3) be specific; 4) keep the text at the center; 5) trust good intentions; and 6) don't make assumptions.
- If you feel that you are unable to participate at this level, please come see me as soon as possible to discuss your potential to do well in this class.

## **WEEKLY REFLECTIONS, QUIZZES, AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS (20)**

You may be given quizzes or creative activities at the start of any given class. You will also be required to post a total of ten (10) weekly responses under the Blackboard Discussion Forum. Each week will be organized a different forum. Responses should be **five hundred (500) words or less** and to the readings, films, lectures, etc. of the prior week's classes. Your responses should:

- Demonstrate an understanding of concepts, frameworks, and facts from the prior week and cumulatively
- Highlight themes, facts, or ideas that resonated with you
- Reflect on how—if at all—you related the information learned
- Demonstrate critical and analytical thinking
- Share what aspects you found difficult to understand
- Practice effective writing and organization of thoughts to clearly convey key points

## **MIDTERM GROUP PROJECT (12)**

Students will be assigned groups and asked to create a twenty (20) to thirty (30) minute presentation analyzing and reinventing popular contemporary portrayals of Asian Pacific Americans in cinema. Students will analyze a mainstream major motion picture or season of a mainstream American television show from 1993 to 2013. A list of approved movies and shows will be furnished to you. The three (3) components of the group project on which you will be graded will include:

- 1) Presentation:
  - Summary and clip of the film you watched
  - Analysis of the representation and narratives about Asian American gender, sexuality, race, class, etc.
  - Linkages to conceptual frameworks and history as learned in the class
  - Comparison between portrayals of Asian American characters to protagonist(s)
  - Relationships between Asian Americans to non-Asian characters, i.e. Black, Latino, White
- 2) Media Production: This can be a skit, movie, group poem, visual art, street theater, music, or other creative product that reimagines the racial narrative and specific portrayals of Asian American characters in relation to the plot, messages, and other characters.
- 3) Individual Response: You must write a 2-3 page double spaced paper describing your group project; specific role in the development and implementation of the presentation and production; and some notes about your analysis of the media studied.

## **IN-CLASS QUIZ (13)**

You will be given an essay-based quiz related to the readings of a particular topic including questions on lectures, screenings and readings. Successful responses will:

1. Accurately describe (not just summarize) the collective histories and experiences of Asians Americans;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts discussed in class, including of the frameworks and terminology used throughout the semester;
3. Provide an honest reflection of your how you—personally or politically—related to the semester's learning;
4. Use quotations from class readings that clearly support your arguments or analyses (Note: quotations should be concise and clearly relate to your responses); and
5. Present clearly organized arguments and thoughts.

## **FINAL PAPER (ABSTRACT AND FINAL) (20)**

You will be asked to research, develop, and submit a five (5) to seven (7) page paper on one of the following prominent Asian Pacific American television or movie actors as a final assignment: **Sandra Oh; Lucy Liu; Anna May Wong; Sessue Hayakawa; John Cho; B.D. Wong; or Bruce Lee.**

**Abstract:** You will be asked to submit a draft and final version of a **300 to 500 word proposal/abstract (double-spaced)** several weeks before the final paper is due to receive feedback. An abstract is a concise but comprehensive statement that describes the substance and intent of your paper. Your abstract should introduce the scope of your paper; introduce the work and the actor; provide some background based on your research; themes you've identified; and your analysis of the work in relation to mainstream, historic representations of Asians and Asian Americans in U.S. mainstream media.

Some portions of these resources might be helpful to you: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/abstracts/> and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/656/1/>. By providing this several weeks before your paper is due, you will be able to streamline the presentation of your thoughts, edit for language and grammar, and further clarify your arguments.

**Paper:** Your sources should include both class readings and **at least additional two (2) academic sources required, e.g. JSTOR, databases. The only internet sources that will be accepted are interviews, online news and magazines, and commentary/analysis (no Wikipedia).** Your paper will provide:

- A brief biography of the actor with special attention to their ethnic, national, class, and gender background;
- A brief overview of the types of roles and films the actor has been featured in;
- An in-depth analysis of the types of roles the actor has played using the frameworks presented in class readings and lectures, i.e. 6 faces of the "Oriental," hypersexualization and militarized prostitution, colonialism and imperialism
- An argument for whether the Asian Pacific American actor or character has either fulfilled or subverted conventional racialized representations of Asian Pacific Americans in said roles; and
- The broader entertainment industry context that pushes or pulls the actor into said roles.

## **WRITING GUIDELINES**

**Everything you submit must be proofread** for spelling, grammar, sentence organization, word choice and tense. As stated in the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism, proper citations following APA, MLA or Chicago style guidelines are mandatory for any information taken from existing sources. You can find very helpful, brief PDF guides on these different styles at <http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pagelid=337>. For academic writing support, utilize the services of the Hunter College Reading/Writing Center (<http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/index.html>). All assignments must be submitted as follows:

- Times New Roman, Arial, Garamond, or Helvetica (10 to 12 point font)
- Printed with 1 inch margins on all sides
- Paginated
- Single spaced header (name, date, class)
- Double-spaced
- First line indented
- Left justified (*not* full justified)

## OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are an opportunity to ask questions not addressed in class; have more in-depth conversation about your experience with the class; and receive personalized attention and feedback on your performance and engagement in the class. While office hours are not required, it is your responsibility to schedule them with me in the event that there is anything impeding your ability to do well in the class, including the expectations and requirements described above.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAIGIARISM

Plagiarism is the use of another source (someone else's thinking and/or writing) without crediting that source. For example, if you are writing an essay on a film and you refer to an online review or use an excerpt from it to describe the theme of the film, you must cite the website in your essay both in the text, and in end notes (a Works Cited page or Bibliography). Even if you paraphrase, i.e. put it in your own words or change the order of facts, you are still using another source that requires attribution. Failure to do the above will result in failure of the class.

It is important to note that Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedure.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND WELLNESS

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1124 to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212) 772-4857/TTY (212) 650-3230.\*\*

Maintaining your physical, mental and emotional health are critical components to your academic and professional ability and potential. Hunter College's Counseling and Wellness Services offers a range of free and confidential physical and mental health services that can be found here: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/student-services/counseling-and-wellness/pcs>. CWS is located in Room 1123 East Building and can be reached at (212) 772-4931 or [PersonalCounseling@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:PersonalCounseling@hunter.cuny.edu). For assistance after 7:00 pm, or in an emergency, please call Public Safety: (212) 772-4444.

## CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

*NOTE: The readings listed below are due to be read for class discussion on the date it appears next to.*

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignment/Notes <i>*Blackboard</i>
TH 1/31	Introduction and syllabus review Asian Pacific Americans in the U.S.	Group Reading: Leslie Bow, "Making Sense of Screaming: A Monkey's Companion"
M 2/4	The Construction of Race Screenings: Clip from "On Orientalism" interview with Edward Said <a href="http://bit.ly/j10KS">http://bit.ly/j10KS</a> ; "Perpetual Foreigner" by kimcheebro <a href="http://bit.ly/10UwXkD">http://bit.ly/10UwXkD</a> ; "Shit White People Say... To Asian People" by crepepaperheart <a href="http://bit.ly/TstBCg">http://bit.ly/TstBCg</a>	Helen Zia, "Surrogate Slaves to American Dreamers" from "Asian American Dreams" Elaine Kim, preface to "Charlie Chan is Dead" Lisa Lowe, "Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian American"

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignment/Notes *Blackboard
		Differences**
TH 2/7	Orientalism, the Yellow Peril, and Yellowface Screening: Yellowface Clips (Charlie Chan)	Barbara Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History"*  Lee, Chap 2 "The Coolie and the Making of the White Working Class" (51-82)
M 2/11	Screening: Yellowface clips (Breakfast at Tiffany's, SNL, Fu Manchu, Mad TV, Broken Blossoms)	Weekly Response Due  Lee, Intro "Yellowface" and Chap 1 "The 'Heathen Chinese' On God's Free Soil" (1-50)  Ono and Pham, "Media Yellowface 'Logics'"*Lee, Chap 4 "Inner Dikes and Barred Zones" (106-144)
TH 2/14 -M 2/18	No class, holiday schedule	
W 2/20	Classes follow Monday schedule <b><i>Orientalism, the Yellow Peril, and Yellowface</i></b> Midterm Group Project Movie and TV Show List Distributed	Weekly Response Due  Sonia Shah, "Race and Representation: Asian Americans"*
TH 2/21	<u>Screening</u> : Clips from "Charlie's Angels": <a href="http://bit.ly/fPNpd">http://bit.ly/fPNpd</a> ; "X2"; Ally McBeal, etc.  <u>Screening</u> : Slaying the Dragon Reloaded (30)	
M 2/25	<b><i>The (Hyper/A)sexualization of Asian Pacific Americans</i></b>	Weekly Response Due  Ono and Pham, "Problematic Representations of Asian American Gender and Sexuality"*  Sheridan Prasso, "Mystery, Sex, Fear, and Desire: A Brief History"*  Celine Parreñas Shimizu, "The Sexual Bonds of Racial Stardom"*
TH 2/28	<u>Screening</u> : Memoirs of a Geisha	
M 3/4	<b><i>The Model Minority and the Assimilation Myth</i></b>	Weekly Response Due  Lee, Chapter 5 "The Cold War Origins of the Model Minority Myth" and Chapter 6 "The Model Minority as Gook"
TH 3/7	<u>Screening</u> : Better Luck Tomorrow	
M 3/11- TH3/14	<u>Midterm Group Project</u> : In-Class Group Work	
M 3/18-	<u>Midterm Group Project</u> : Presentations	Midterm Group Project Due

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Readings</b>	<b>Assignment/Notes</b> <i>*Blackboard</i>
TH 3/21		
M 3/25- M 4/1	No class, spring recess	

**AS OF APRIL 4, 2013**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Readings</b>	<b>Assignment/Notes (*Blackboard)</b>
TH 4/4	<b>Midterm Group Project Presentations (Continued)</b>	<b>Class Response Due</b>
M 4/8	<b>Cultural Hegemony and Cultural Appropriation</b>	Vijay Prashad, "Of Sly Babas & Other Gurus"*  Vijay Prashad, "Of Authentic Cultural Lives"*
TH 4/11	<u>Screening</u> : Eat, Pray, Love	Gita Mehta, Excerpt from "Karma Cola" (to be posted)*
M 4/15	<b>Framing, War on Terror, and Islamophobia</b>  <u>Clips</u> : TV Station Takes Four-Year-Old Child's Quote Out of Context <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mu_LK_iEFE8">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mu_LK_iEFE8</a> (Credit: Maynard Institute)  <u>Clips</u> : Splinter Cell Conviction Iraq Mission ( <a href="http://bit.ly/W8zeni">http://bit.ly/W8zeni</a> ); Homefront ( <a href="http://bit.ly/V5fzDP">http://bit.ly/V5fzDP</a> , <a href="http://bit.ly/XFML3f">http://bit.ly/XFML3f</a> ) (tentative)	<b>Class Response Due</b>  Stephen D. Reese and Seth C. Lewis, "Framing the War on Terror: The internalization of policy in the US press"*  Gottschalk and Greenberg, "Symbols of Islam, Symbols of Difference" from "Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy"*
TH 4/18	<u>Screening</u> : Reel Bad Arabs	
M 4/22	<b>Mythology and Reality: Asian/American and African American Communities</b>  <u>Clips</u> : Menace II Society ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8IRjXf2IK0">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8IRjXf2IK0</a> ) and Don't Be a Menace ( <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Klk0abbYgXQ">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Klk0abbYgXQ</a> )	<b>Class Response Due</b>  Robert Lee, Chap 7 "After LA" from "Orientals"  Vijay Prashad, "The Merchant is Always a Stranger"* and "Of Antiracist Racism"*
TH 4/25	<b>Draft Final Paper Abstracts In-Class Workshop</b>	<b>Draft Final Paper Abstract Due</b>
M 4/29	<b>Frameworks for Change</b>	<b>Final Version Paper Abstract Due</b>  <b>Class Response Due</b>  Kim, "Interracial Politics Asian Americans and Other Communities of Color"*  Vijay Prashad, "Kung Fusion: Organize the 'Hood Under I-Ching Banners"*
TH 5/2	<u>Screening</u> : "Yuri Kochiyama: Passion for Justice" (tent)	
M 5/6	<b>Contesting Representations: New APIA Representations in Mainstream and Independent Media</b>  <u>Screening</u> : Julie Whang, "Black Hair and Black Eyed"	<b>Class Response Due</b>  Richard Fung, "Looking for My Penis: The Eroticized Asian in Gay Video Porn"*  Eve Oishi, "Bad Asians: New Film and Video by Queer Asian American Artists"*
TH 5/9	<u>Screening</u> : Saving Face	
M 5/13	<b>Contesting Representations: New APIA Representations in Mainstream and Independent Media</b>  <u>Clips</u> : Mindy Project, Big Bang Theory, Parks and Recreation, Walking Dead (tentative)	Audrea Lim, "Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright: The Role of the Asian American in American Pop Culture"*  Esther Wang, "Reflections On "The Rise Of Asian Americans, or, Don't Believe Hype"*
TH 5/16	<b>Evaluations</b>	<b>Final Paper Due</b>