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AML 3673  
Spring '19  
T 7; R 7-8.

MAT 0116

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Office Hours: T 3:30-5:30  
R 4:30-6:00

### Refugees, Illegals, Immigrants and Other Impossible Subjects of Asian America

What constitutes a refugee? How do we think of refugees? Who is an illegal alien? When do immigrants become citizens or “American”? What does it mean to think of the Asian adoptee as “saved?” Asian American literature insistently raises these questions. This course will focus on the ways in which histories of militarism, imperialism, and racial exclusion have informed the construction of these impossible subjects of Asian America. We will examine how Asian American literary and cultural production figures the refugee, the illegal alien, and the immigrant/non-citizen/citizen. We will also see these texts in relation to specific immigration acts, laws of racial exclusion and restriction, as well as to racialized stereotypes such as “Orientals” and model minorities.

This course will introduce you to a variety of Asian American novels, short stories, autobiographies, graphic novels, and film. Because Asian American studies is interdisciplinary, we will be drawing on fields such as history, sociology, anthropology, as well as cultural studies.

This is an intensive discussion course. Please come to class prepared to raise questions about the readings for the day. I am interested in your active responses to the materials you are reading.

#### Texts

Jade Snow Wong Fifth Chinese Daughter (1950)  
Frank Chin Chickencoop Chinaman (1972)  
Carlos Bulosan America is in the Heart (1946)

Maxine Hong Kingston China Men (1980)  
Bharati Mukherji Jasmine (1989)  
\*Timothy Linh Bui Green Dragon (2001)  
Loung Ung Lucky Child (2005)  
Viet Thanh Nguyen The Refugees (2017)  
Aimee Phan They Should Never Meet (2004)  
\*Socheata Poouv New Year Baby (2006)  
Mine Obuko Citizen 13660 (1946)  
Julie Otsuka When the Emperor Was Divine (2002)  
Electronic readings on Canvas  
\*Films available on Amazon Prime

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution:

Pop Quizzes .....15%  
Oral Presentation.....8%  
Essay # 1.....30%  
Essay # 2.....35%  
Class Participation.....12%

Panels: Three or four students should get together to work on a panel. These panels are either intended to broaden, contextualize, or interrogate the topic being discussed in class. Many panels require you to take a position on a topic. Taking a position does not simply mean presenting an unverifiable opinion. A position must be supported by close readings of the text in question. Try to direct the class to a specific page and offer specific analyses. All panelists should e-mail a 1-2 page statement to each of the panel participants as well as to me at least **two days before** class. I like to check the statements and might ask you to make some revisions. Make sure you are not repeating other panelists.

During class, the panelists should read aloud their statements. Begin by telling the class the question you are addressing and the position you are taking. Then read your statement to the class slowly and loudly. Each panelist should ask one simple question to another panelist. After that the panel will open to class discussion. Please do not pose questions to the class because this usually inhibits discussion. If I do not get your paper two days before class, I will consider it late. Please upload the revised statement on Canvas on the day of the presentation. Please practice and time yourself before you present in class. Presentations and panels will be graded on the information provided, clarity, and on the ability to elicit

questions. A panel with three students should last no more than fifteen minutes. Questions and answers can take an additional ten to fifteen minutes.

Attendance: Please remember that this is a discussion class and that you are expected to attend every day. Attendance means bringing all reading material to class and being prepared to discuss the readings. If you come to class without the assigned readings you may be considered absent.

There is no way to simply "make up" work for missed classes. If you miss more than three hours of class, you will lose a third of a letter grade for each additional absence. The three-hour absence policy does not mean that I am encouraging these absences or that you should, indeed, miss four hours of class. The allowed absences are meant strictly to cover emergencies ( if you "use up" your absences and then have an emergency, you're out of luck). Missing eight or more hours of class constitutes failing the course. If you are absent you are still responsible for knowing the material and turning in assignments, including responses.

Because this is an intensive discussion course the learning will take place by building upon our conversations. Class participation means contributing to the flow and interrogation of ideas or asking questions when you have difficulty. Simply sitting in class is not enough.

Quizzes: These will generally be given at the beginning, middle or end of class as I consider appropriate. I might quiz you in the beginning of class on the readings for the day or at the end of a class period on what was discussed during class. The quizzes are easy. If you've done the reading you'll find it simple to get an "A." I will not be able to do any makeups for quizzes but I will drop the two lowest quiz grades.

Papers : I do not require any research for your papers other than the material in the packet. Please follow MLA guidelines for citation. Remember that any use of reference material, both in direct quote or paraphrase, must be meticulously footnoted. Plagiarism, while intentional or otherwise, will result in a failing grade in the course. Make sure your paper has a thesis (ie something you need to prove), that there is only one thesis for the entire paper, and that your paper is not a plot summary. Before writing your papers please consult my "Guidelines for Papers" on Canvas. I will be giving you specific instructions for both papers. If you are a senior English major and are planning to go to graduate school, you might want to do one long research paper instead of the two shorter papers. In that case, in addition to meeting the requirements for the short papers, you'll have to research

your topic on the MLA International Bibliography. This DEFINITELY NOT the easier option. If you want to follow this option, please see me by Feb 14. You may not make this decision any later. I will need to approve the topic.

I am available in my office to help you with your papers and am happy to read rough drafts ahead of time either in person or on e-mail. I will help you with organization, clarity, development and grammar, but will not proofread. Please allow enough time for me to get back to you.

Laptop/media policy: All cellphones MUST be turned off before the start of class. It is definitely better to have hard copies of all texts so you can take notes, underline, and follow class discussion. However I have grudgingly accepted the fact that some students work with e books and like to work electronically instead of using paper. You may bring your laptops, I pads etc to class but please make sure that you are only looking at the reading being discussed. **If I see anyone looking at social media at any point in the semester I will deduct two points from your overall grade for each time this happens.** I will keep a record of these points but will not inform you each time I make a note. If you feel you cannot resist the urge to be on social media please print out the readings and bring them to class.

Email: It is understood that you will check your UF email daily during the week. Any updates to the syllabus or changes to office hours will be sent on email. If you need to contact me outside of office hours please do so at [malini@ufl.edu](mailto:malini@ufl.edu) and **not on Canvas.**

You can expect things of me in return. I will be happy to answer any questions or help you with your writing. For quick questions, use my e-mail. I usually check it at least once a day. I am always there to help you during office hours. If you are not free during my office hours and need help, please don't hesitate to see me after class to set up an appointment.

Turning in Papers: Your papers are due in class on the days assigned. Please submit the papers as Word or PDF attachments on Canvas. Late papers will be reduced a third of a letter grade for each day. After one week they will earn an "E."

Rewrites: You may revise any one paper. For rewriting, please follow the long comments at the end of the paper. Remember that a rewrite is a serious effort and

not simply a correction of mechanical errors. When you rewrite a paper highlight all the revisions you have made. If you want to rewrite a paper, I recommend your doing so within two weeks of getting the graded paper back. Do not rewrite a paper with a grade higher than a 'B.' All rewrites are due April 26.

All papers and the panel must be done in order to pass the course. Work not done will receive a grade of "0"

For purposes of calculation A=90, B+=83 etc

You can expect things of me in return. I will be happy to answer any questions or help you with papers. If you are not free during my office hours and need help, please don't hesitate to see me after class to set up an appointment.

#### *Students with Disabilities*

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office in Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. If you haven't registered with the DRC but think you may be eligible for accommodation, please come talk to me in office hours and I can help advise you.

Syllabus: This is a tentative syllabus which might be changed according to the needs of the class.

Jan 8: Introduction

### **Asian Americans, Exclusion, Immigration, and Refugees**

Jan 10: Screening Dir David Grabias and Nicole Newnham Sentenced Home (2006)

Jan 15: William Peterson "Success Story Japanese American Style"

Jan 17: Lisa Lowe "Immigration, Citizenship, Racialization: Asian American Critique" from Immigrant Acts pp. 1-36

Aihwa Ong "Asian Immigrants as the New Westerners" from Buddha is Hiding pp. 253-273

Jade Snow Wong Fifth Chinese Daughter “Introduction to the 1989 Edition, pp. vii-xi”, “Author’s Note,” xiii, pp. 1-21 (first two chapters).

## **Models of Immigration**

### *Assimilation*

Jan 22 : Jade Snow Wong Fifth Chinese Daughter, pp. 22-120.

Jan 24: Jade Snow Wong Fifth Chinese Daughter, pp. 121-end.  
Sau Ling Cynthia Wong from Reading Asian American Literature pp. 55-71

Panel # 1 Is Fifth Chinese Daughter a work of food pornography?

### *Claiming America*

Jan 29: Michael Omi and Howard Winant “Racial Formation” from Racial Formation in the United States, pp. 105-132  
Frank Chin and Jeffrey “Racist Love”

Jan 31: Frank Chin Chickencoop Chinaman  
Panel # 2 How Does Chickencoop Chinaman resist “racist love?”

## **Impossible Subjects**

### *Undesirable Aliens*

Feb 5: Mae M. Ngai from Impossible Subjects pp. 1-14; 96-126  
Carlos Bulosan America is in the Heart, pp. 1-133 (chs 1-17)

Feb 7: America is in the Heart pp. 134-end

Panel #3: Is Carlos created as an “impossible subject?”  
Or Is America is in the Heart an anticolonial text?

### *Illegal Aliens*

Feb 12: The Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)  
<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=47&page=transcript>  
Maxine Hong Kingston China Men

Feb 14: China Men  
Panel #4: Does the effeminization of fathers stereotype Chinese men or challenge the stereotype?

Feb 19: Bharati Mukherji Jasmine chs 1-16  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bharati Mukherji “American Dreamer”

Feb 21: Jasmine chs 17-end  
Sherridan Prasso from The Asian Mystique, pp. 3-14

Panel #5: Does the illegal alien in Jasmine challenge American Society or confirm the “Asian Mystique?”

### **Paper # 1 Due Feb 23 1 pm**

#### **War, Militarization, Refugees**

Feb 26: Liisa H. Malkki “Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization”

Feb 28: Timothy Linh Bui Green Dragon (Please watch on your own)  
Mimi Thi Nguyen from The Gift of Freedom, pp. 1-32

March 5: Spring Break

March 12: Cathy Schlund-Vials from War, Genocide, Justice: Cambodian American Memory Work, pp. 1-25.

Loung Ung Lucky Child, pp. 1-126

March 14: Lucky Child pp. 127-end  
Viet Thanh Nguyen from Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War, pp. 1-19. The pdf has two chapters but you need to read only the first one.  
Panel # 6: Is Lucky Child a work of just memory or collected memories? .

March 19: Viet Thanh Nguyen The Refugees, pp. 211-224; 1-97  
Yen Le Espiritu from Body Counts, pp. 1-23.

March 21: Hannah Arendt “We Refugees”

The Refugees pp. 98-124; 151-207 (skipping “The Americans”)  
Panel # 7: An analysis of any one story

March 26: Yen Le Espiritu from Body Counts, ch 4  
Aimee Phan They Should Never Meet pp. 1-112

March 28: Aimee Phan They Should Never Meet, pp. 112-end  
Panel # 8: Do Phan’s refugees challenge imperialist recuperations of Vietnam?

April 2: Michael Schudson “Dynamics of Distortion in Collective Memory” from Memory Distortion: How Minds, Brains and Societies Reconstruct the Past, pp. 346-364.

April 4: Socheata Poevn New Year Baby (please watch on your own)  
Panel # 9: How does New Year Baby represent memory work?

### **Denationalization and Internment**

April 9: Ronald Takaki “The Myth of ‘Military Necessity’ for Japanese\_American Internment” From Strangers From a Different Shore, pp. 379-405.

Mine Obuko Citizen 13660 “Preface to the 1983 Edition” and pp. 1-51

April 11: Mine Obuko Citizen 13660, pp. 52-end  
James Scott From Weapons of the Weak, pp. 314-329

Panel # 10: Does Citizen 13660 challenge the racial politics of internment? Or Are there “hidden transcripts” in Citizen 13660?

April 16: Julie Otsuka When the Emperor Was Divine pp. 1-92

April 18: Julie Otsuka When the Emperor Was Divine, pp. 93-end.

Panel # 11: What is the relationship of the last section of the novel to the others?

April 23: Work on Papers

**April 25: Paper #2 Due 10:00 am**