

Professor Malini Johar Schueller

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3:30-5:30

AML 3673: Asian American Women Writers

Spring '22

T 7 (1:55-2:45); R 7-8 (1:55-3:50)

**Course Description:**

This course will focus on Asian American women’s cultural productions—novels, critical essays, short stories, memoirs -- from the early twentieth century to the present. In our discussions of these texts, we will explore questions of literary and cultural affiliation as well as identity formation in relation to factors such as racial discrimination, military conflict, sexuality, immigration, and colonialism as well as tropes such as Orientalism. We will attend to how Asian American women negotiate multiple affiliations whether ethnic, familial, or national. In addition to looking at works that emphasize forms of national belonging we will also examine the afterlives of US colonialism in Asia and the literary portrayal of geopolitics. Finally, we will look at ways in which literature can be a forum for a critique of both domestic race relations and international politics.

**Required Texts:**

Onotoo Watanna *Heart of Hyacinth*

Jade Snow Wong *Fifth Chinese Daughter*

Maxine Hong Kingston *The Woman Warrior*

Soo Kim Abboud and Jane Kim *Top of the Class*

Bharati Mukherji *Jasmine*

Gina Apostol *Insurrecto*

Le thi diem thuy *The gangster we are all looking for*

Julie Otsuka *When the Emperor Was Divine*

Additional readings on Canvas

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution:

Pop Quizzes .....15%

Oral Presentation on readings.....10%

Essay # 1.....30%

Essay # 2.....30%

Class Participation.....15%

## **Tech Requirements and Policies**

You are required to have access to Canvas for accessing course materials and turning in assignments. It is expected that you will check your email daily for any updates and announcements. If you need to contact me, please do so through email ([malini@ufl.edu](mailto:malini@ufl.edu)) rather than Canvas. I usually check my email at least once a day during the week from 9 am-5 pm.

For help with all tech issues, contact the UF Computing Help Desk:

Web: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>

Phone: (352) 392-HELP (4357)

Email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)

Walk-in: HUB 132

## **Recording Policy**

According to state law, students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited.

Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## **Classroom Expectations**

1. Respectful interactions among students are expected. Participation grades will be negatively affected by a failure to adhere to professional, polite, scholarly, and respectful communication in all formats, both written and oral.
2. Per university policy <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/faqs/> you are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated against COVID.

3. If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.u&ealth.org/vaccinaioons/vaccine-availability/>

Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.

4. If you get sick, you are expected to stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/>

about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email [covid@shcc.ufl.edu](mailto:covid@shcc.ufl.edu)) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Continue to regularly visit <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/> and <https://coronavirus.ufl.edu/> for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

5. If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to me when requesting accommodation

**Help From Me and About me:** I am available during office hours 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 indicate some grammatical errors but will not proofread. Please allow enough time for me to get back to you. For quick questions, use my e-mail. If you are not free during my office hours and need help, please don't hesitate to email me or wait after class to set up an appointment.

I am a Professor of English. I was born and raised in India, hold a PhD in English from Purdue University, and since 1986 I have been at UF teaching courses on American literature, postcolonial theory, and Asian American studies. You can learn more about me and my interests by checking my UFL page <https://english.ufl.edu/malini-johar-schueller/> and my website <https://wordpress.com/view/malinischueller.wordpress.com>

**Panels:** Two or three 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. It is best to use a powerpoint to put up specific passages (with page numbers) being discussed so students can follow. By all means, 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 24 hours before class so I can make sure it's okay and that you're not repeating each other. This statement should be formally written, with proper

paragraphing and should state the argument and analysis you will present. Please do not pose questions to the class because this usually inhibits discussion. If I do not get your paper 24 hours before class, I will consider it late. Please submit the final statement online before class on the day of the presentation. 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. Plan on 5-6 minutes for each presentation and 10 minutes for questions.

**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 four hours of class, you will lose a third of a letter grade for each additional absence. The four-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. Attendance alone is not enough.

**Quizzes:** These will generally be given at the beginning of class although I might quiz you 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 lowest quiz grade.

Papers: You are required to write two 8-9 page papers due on the dates indicated on the syllabus. 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. 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. I will put a "Guidelines for Papers" handout on canvas as well as sample graded papers. You are required to read these before you start writing.

Turning in Papers: All papers should be turned in on canvas. Late papers will be reduced one letter grade for each class period; after one week they earn an "E."

Readings, cell phones and Laptop Use: Cell phones MUST be turned off at the beginning of class. I would prefer it if you bought hard copies of texts because discussion is far easier that way.

Laptop/media policy: I have grudgingly accepted the fact that 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.** If you feel you cannot resist the urge to be on social media, please print out the readings and bring them to class.

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

**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 turn in the original graded paper along with the rewrite. In the new 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 B. All rewrites are due Dec 9.

For purposes of calculation A=93, A-=90, B+=87 etc

Announcements will be made via email so please check your ufl email daily. I will, of course, post all assignments on canvas.

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

Thu Jan 6: Introduction

Tue Jan 11: Yamada, M. "Invisibility is an Unnatural Disaster" *Bridge, An Asian American Perspective*, v7 n1 p11-13 Spr 1979

Thu Jan 13: Shah, S. "Slaying the Dragon Lady: Toward an Asian American Feminism"  
"Asian Women in Film: No Joy no Luck" Jessica Hagedorn  
Rachel Leng "Calling all 'Dragon Ladies,' 'China Dolls,' and 'Lotus Blossoms'"  
*The Duke Journal of Gender and Sexuality*, 4 (Spring 2013), 15-26.

### **Two Inaugural Sisters**

Tue Jan 18: Onotoo Watanna *Heart of Hyacinth*, chs 1-11.

Thu Jan 20: Onotoo Watanna *Heart of Hyacinth* ch 12-end.

*Panel #1:* Does *Heart of Hyacinth* challenge or confirm representations of Asian Women as China Dolls or Lotus Blossoms?

Tue Jan 25: Sui Sin Far "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eurasian"

Thu Jan 27: Haney Lopez from White By Law pp. 37-47, 217-225 (check book)

Sui Sin Far "The Story of One White Woman Who Married a Chinese Man"

Sui Sin Far "Her Chinese Husband"

Panel #2: Do Sui Sin Far's stories demonstrate how race is a legal construction?

### **The Aesthetics of Silence**

Tue Feb 1: Elaine Showalter from "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness" in *Abel ed Writing and Sexual Difference* pp. 27-34. Pay particular attention to p. 34

Hisaye Yamamoto "Seventeen Syllables"

Thu Feb 3: Hisaye Yamamoto "The Legend of Miss Sasagawara"

Hisaye Yamamoto "Yoneko's Earthquake"

Panel #3 (no more than two): What is unspoken in "Yoneko's Earthquake" and why is it significant? Is the use of "silence" effective in the story?

### **Cold War Individualism and Food Pornography**

Tue Feb 8: Jade Snow Wong *Fifth Chinese Daughter* pp. 1-120 (chs 1-14)

Thu Feb 10: Jade Snow Wong *Fifth Chinese Daughter* pp. 120-246 (ch 15-end)

Sau Ling Cynthia Wong "Food Pornography"

Panel #4: Is *Fifth Chinese Daughter* a work of Food Pornography?

### **Asian American Feminism and Its Controversies**

Tue Feb 15: Maxine Hong Kingston *The Woman Warrior* pp. 1-53 (No Name Woman and "White Tigers")

Thu Feb 17: Maxine Hong Kingston *The Woman Warrior* pp. 57-109 ("Shaman")

Frank Chin "Come All Ye Asian American Writers..." from The Big Aiiieeeee, pp. 1-9

Tue Feb 22: Maxine Hong Kingston *The Woman Warrior* pp. 113-209 ("At the Western Palace")

King-kok Cheung "The Woman Warrior versus the Chinaman Pacific"

Sau-Ling Cynthia Wong "Autobiography as a Guided Chinatown Tour?"

Panel #5: Do you agree with Chin that Kingston caters to a Western/American audience?

Thu Feb 24: Evelina Galang "Talk to Me Milagros"  
"Her Wild American Self"

Friday Feb 25: Paper #1 Due 11:59 pm

### **Model Minorities**

Tue March 1: Peterson "Success Story..." New York Times, Jan 9, 1966

Soo Kim Abboud and Jane Kim Top of the Class pp. 1-104 (end of Secret 8)

Thu March 3: Soo Kim Abboud and Jane Kim Top of the Class pp. 104-end

Panel #6: Does Top of the Class endorse racism?

Tue March 8: Spring Break

Thu March 10: Spring Break

### **Orientalism and Resistance**

Tue March 15: Bharati Mukherji *Jasmine*, pp. 1-103 (end of ch 15).

Thu March 17: Bharati Mukherji *Jasmine*, pp. 104-end.

Bharati Mukherji "American Dreamer"

Edward Said from *Orientalism*

Panel #7: Is Jasmine a work of Orientalism or a novel about immigrant aspiration?

### **The Empire Writes Back**

Tue March 22: Gina Apostol *Insurrecto*, pp. 1-98 (Part One)

Thu March 24: Gina Apostol *Insurrecto* pp. 101-216 (end of "What She Wants is the Sense of a Ghost")

David Lloyd "Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery" *Interventions* 2 ii (2000), 212-228 (focus on pp. 212-220).

Tue March 29: Gina Apostol *Insurrecto* pp. 217-end

Panel #8: Is *Insurrecto* a novel about healing or keeping traumatic memories alive?

Thu March 31: Le thi diem thuy *The gangster we are all looking for*, pp. 3-77 (first two sections)

Tue Apr 5: *The gangster we are all looking for* pp. 78-158 (till end)

### **Internment, Memory, Identity**

Thu Apr 7: Julie Otsuka *When the Emperor Was Divine*, pp. 1-48 (First two sections)

Ronald Takaki "The Myth of 'Military Necessity for Japanese-American Internment'"  
From Strangers From a Different Shore, pp. 379-405.

Tue Apr 12: Julie Otsuka *When the Emperor Was Divine*, pp. 49-144 (till end)

Cornel West from *Prophetic Thought in Postmodern Times*, pp. 5, 19.

Panel 9: How does the last section of the novel relate to the earlier parts?

**Food, Identity, Resistance**

Thu Apr 14: Jhumpa Lahiri "When Mr Pirzada Came to Dine"

Jhumpa Lahiri "Mrs Sen's"

L. Law "Home Cooking" in D. Howes Ed *Empire of the Senses* pp. 224-41.

Panel 10: Is Mrs Sen able to challenge racial hierarchies through cooking?

Tue Apr 19: Work on papers

Wed Apr 20: Second paper due 10 am