CAST 204: Asian Americans in Popular Culture  
Spring 2014, Monday | Wednesday | Friday, 2:30-3:20pm [KING 327]

Professor Maria Paz G. Esguerra

Office: King 141-F

Office Hours: Monday | Wednesday, 3:30- 4:30pm and by appointment

Mailbox: King 141 Suite

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While I make every effort to respond promptly to emailed questions and concerns, I will respond to emails within one business day from Monday to Friday. If you need immediate attention, please bring all substantive questions or concern to me in person during office hours or before/after class. If you are having trouble making it to my office hours, I am happy to schedule an appointment with you.

Course Overview
This course will examine popular culture and how it has reflected and shaped Asian culture in American history. Topics to be covered will include: Asian immigration and early stereotypes; white actors in “yellowface”; representations of Asian American sexualities; the relationship between Asian Americans and African Americans; hate crimes and anti-Asian violence; community activism; and the relationship between the U.S., Asia, and the Pacific. We will focus on popular forms of media such as fashion, television, film, art, music, theater, and the Internet.

Required Readings
Lee, Robert. Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture

The book will be available for purchase at the Oberlin College Bookstore and on reserve at Mudd Library. All other required readings will be available on Blackboard or distributed in class. Please expect

Required Assignments and Class Participation
Students in the class will be evaluated on the basis of their individual performance on assignments, exams, and class participation. You are responsible for submitting your assignments on the date it is due in class (unless otherwise noted). Assignments are due at the beginning of class.

Class Attendance and Participation [10%]
Regular attendance is mandatory. Please do not be tardy to class. If you expect to miss class, please meet with me and notify me in advance. If there is an emergency or you are ill, you are required to provide documentation of your illness or emergency upon your immediate return to class. Emails do not count as proper documentation. An absence without my prior consent or proper documentation will be considered an unexcused absence. Please be aware that consistent tardiness or absence from the class will affect your class participation.
Class participation means attending class, thinking, listening attentively, and speaking. To ensure that everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas, we will all listen and respond respectfully to one another.

Three Reading Responses, 3-5 pages [30%]
You will be responsible for three reading responses during the semester. Reading response papers will summarize, analyze and evaluate the themes and connections between the week’s readings. You may choose which week/set of readings you want to respond to, but you must one in each month of the semester. You will sign up in advance for the readings you are interested in. All reading responses are due on Fridays at the beginning of class. NO late assignments will be accepted.

Creative Visual Assignment [10%]
This assignment will require that you think outside the box and create a visual art piece along with a 3-5 pages critical analysis that explains your work in the context of our class. More details will be provided later in the semester.

Blackboard Discussion [10%]
A small group of you will offer an informal conversation about the day’s reading. Groups will be assigned and you will sign up for your dates ahead of time. Prior to meeting for class, your group will post a Blackboard prompt on the assigned readings by 6 pm the day before your presentation. Your group’s post must reflect substantive and thoughtful engagement with the readings as well as questions for discussion.

Final Paper [40%]
For the final assignment, you will write an 8-10 page essay based on your own individual research on Asian Americans and popular culture. Using themes and content in our class, you will do independent research that examines a particular topic of interest to you that relates to things we have covered in our class. Your paper will offer historical and critical analyses of primary and secondary sources.

Classroom Etiquette and Expectations
Please come to class prepared to discuss class readings and materials.
The use of cell phones, mobile devices, and laptops are prohibited in class.

Honor Code
As a student you are bound by the Oberlin College Honor Code policy regarding plagiarism and cheating. Violation of these rules is grounds for failure in the assignment and/or course. If you have any specific concerns or questions about the Honor Code, please come and talk to me. http://new.oberlin.edu/office/dean-of-students/honor/students.dot

Disability Services
If you have a need for reading and writing accommodations, please come and discuss this with me as soon as possible. The Office of Disability Services offers accommodation for students with documented disabilities.

Office of Disability Services:
http://new.oberlin.edu/office/disability-services
Spring 2014 Class Schedule

Week One: Asian America and Popular Culture
Monday 2/3   Class Introduction

Wednesday 2/5   What is popular culture?  
                 Lowe, “The Power of Culture”

Friday 2/7   Lee, “Introduction”

Week Two: American Orientalism: The Orient on Display
Monday 2/10   Tchen, “Stereotypes and Realities”

Wednesday 2/12   Lee, Ch. 1 “The ‘Heathen Chinee’ on God’s Free Soil”
                 “Barnum’s Chinese Museum” in Ten Thousand Things Chinese
                 [Introduction; p. 4-6 and p. 205-206]

Friday 2/14   Haddad, “The Chinese Lady and China for the Ladies”

Week Three: Early Asian America and U.S. Chinatowns
Monday 2/17   Lee, Ch. 2 “The Coolie and the White Working Class”

Wednesday 2/19   Molina, “Interlopers in the Land of Sunshine”

Friday 2/21   Ward, “Dreams of Oriental Romance”

Week Four: Novelties of Empire: “Dog-eaters,” and “Head-Hunters” Our Newest “American” Subjects
Monday 2/24   Kramer, “Making Concessions: Race and Empire Revisited at the Philippine Exposition”

“Report of the Philippine Exposition Board to the Louisiana
Purchase Exposition” ***Please feel free to skim the document, but
the following pages are required reading: “The Educational Exhibit”
15-18; “The Battalion of Philippine Scouts” 26-29; “The Visayan
Village,” “The Moro Village,” “The Igorot Village,” “The Negrito
Village,” and the “The Bagobo Village” 32-38; “Publicity and
Exploitation” 38-40; “Financial Statement” 52-53;
“Retrenchments” 54-58

Wednesday 2/26   Imada, “Hawaiians on Tour: Hula Circuits Through the
                 American Empire”

Friday 2/28   hooks, “Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance”
Week Five: Marvels and Monsters: The Threat of the Yellow Peril
Monday 3/3  Lee, Ch. 4 “Inner Dikes and Barred Zones”

Wednesday 3/5  Chen, “Dissecting the ‘Devil Doctor': Stereotype and Sensationalism in Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu”

Friday 3/7  “Who Gets To Be A Superhero? Race and Identity in Comics”
Rubin and Melnick, “Cyberspace, Y2K: Giant Robots and Asian Punks”

Week Six: What's in a Face?: Blackface & Yellowface in American history
Monday 3/10  Rogin, “Blackface, White Noise: The Jewish Jazz Singer Finds His Voice”

Wednesday 3/12  Whaley, “Black Bodies/Yellow Masks: The Orientalist Aesthetic in Hip-Hop and Black Visual Culture”

Saturday 3/15  ***Attend Midwest Asian American Students Conference event***

Week Seven: Youth Culture & the Performance of Race and Sexuality

Wednesday 3/19  Lim, “Shortcut to Glamour: Popular Culture in a Consumer Society”
Lim, “Contested Beauty: Asian American Beauty Culture during the Cold War”

Friday 3/21  No Readings | No Class

Week Eight:  SPRING BREAK 3/22 -3/30

Week Nine: Cold War Orientalism
Monday 3/31  Klein, “Musicals & Modernization”

Wednesday 4/2  Klein, “Asians in America: Flower Drum Song and Hawaii”

Friday 4/4  Lee, Ch. 5 “Cold War Origins of the Model Minority”

Week Ten: “Everybody was Kung-fu Fighting”
Monday 4/7  Lee, Ch. 6 “The Model Minority as Gook”

Wednesday 4/9  Wheeler and Kaufman, “Is Kung Fu Racist?”
Ongiri, “He Wanted to be Just Like Bruce Lee”

Friday 4/11  Ho, “Kickin’ the White Man’s Ass: Black Power, Aesthetics, and the Asian Martial Arts”
### Week Eleven: Monitored Peril: Asian Americans and Popular Media

**Monday 4/14**  

**Wednesday 4/16**  
TBD

**Friday 4/18**  
Manalansan, “Cooking up the Senses: A Critical Embodied Approach to the Study of Food and Asian American Television Audiences”

### Week Twelve: Globalization and Cultural Legacy

**Monday 4/21**  

**Wednesday 4/23**  
Desai, “Planet Bollywood: Indian Cinema Abroad”

**Friday 4/25**  
Phi, “Yellow Lines: Asian Americans and Hip-Hop”

### Week Thirteen: Eating Asian America

**Monday 4/28**  
Yu, “Chop Suey: From Chinese Food to Chinese American Food”  
Som, “Chinese Restaurant Drive-Thru”

**Wednesday 4/30**  
Lok, “Twenty-First-Century Food Trucks: Mobility, Social Media, and Urban Hipness”

**Friday 5/2**  
No Readings | No Class

### Week Fourteen: Contemporary Asian America

**Monday 5/5**  
Lee, Ch. 8 “Disobient Citizenship: Deconstructing the Oriental”

**Wednesday 5/7**  
“My America or Honk if you love Buddha”

**Friday 5/9**  
LAST DAY of CLASSES