CAST/HIST 382
Afro Asian America: Intra-Minority Connections in Historical Perspective

Fall 2016
Oberlin College

4 SS, CD, WADV  Professor Shelley Lee
TR 9:30 - 10:50 | Rice 100B  Office hours: T 11-12; R 11-12 & 1-2

King 141-G

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS
This seminar engages students in problems and methods in historical research and writing, through
the subject of Afro-Asian relations in America and the world during the 20th century. Throughout
the term we will attend to issues pertinent to doing history, with regard to scholarly debates and
directions, the crafting and pursuit of research questions, and applying historical knowledge and
perspectives to contemporary issues. As such, it will provide a crucial foundation for History
majors, while other students will benefit from doing hands on work in History as well. The first
two sections of the course will also incorporate topical study on issues such as Asian and Black
comparative racial formations, the connections between Asian American and African American
histories, and salience of Black-Asian thought and relations against major U.S. and world historical
developments. The final section will be focused on developing individual research proposals that
synthesize and build upon our studies through the term and can serve as preparation for advanced
research projects undertaken in the future.

As this is a history research seminar, our work will be academic and scholarly in nature. You will
work closely with classmates, provide and receive peer feedback, and are expected to play a
regular and consistent part in class discussions and activities. The design and pacing of
assignments reflect the intensive level of engagement and study expected at the History 300 level,
as well as my larger pedagogical goal of elevating your learning and reinforcing good habits.

REQUIREMENTS
Below are the three books we will read in their entirety. All are available on reserve in Mudd
Library. Other readings will be available on Blackboard. Assignments are designed to develop a
specific set of skills and masteries related to doing research in history.

Nico Slate, Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and
India (Harvard UP, 2012)

Final grades are based on the following components, details about which will be given in class:

**Attendance and participation (20%).** More than four absences (equivalent of two weeks) will result in failing the class. If you do need to miss class, I expect you will inform me ahead of time.

**Weekly journals (20%).** This assignment, in which you write short entries no more than 2-3 paragraphs in length, allows you to engage in informal, impressionistic writing. I recommend you do this for all your reading assignments but you are only required to turn in one per week. These should be uploaded to Blackboard using the journal function by midnight before class. Here you should respond to readings as well as synthesize what you’re reading with our in class discussions. Some weeks will have specific prompts. These are ungraded but entries that do not engage class content or are late will not receive credit.

**Secondary source analysis (10%)** You will select from a list of readings provided and write a 4-5 page essay analyzing a secondary source. The purpose of this assignment is for you to work on your formal writing and to demonstrate your skills in analyzing and discussing research. Due Sept. 27 in class.

**Primary source analysis (10%).** For this 4-5 page assignment you will find your own historical primary source related to a topic you are considering as the focus of your research proposal, and write a close analysis of it. You’ll have a chance to share a draft and your source with a group of peers. Due Nov. 3 in class.

**Research proposal (20%).** 8-10 page research proposal (not including bibliography). You will workshop a draft in small groups prior to turning in your final paper. This is a formal proposal of your research project and will contain a discussion of your topic and rationale for your research question, a literature review, methodology statement, and research plan. You will not actually execute the project, though I hope you will later find an opportunity to do so (in an honors or capstone seminar, e.g.). Due Friday, Dec. 16 by 11:00AM.

**Presentations (10%).** The last two sessions will be devoted to presentations of proposals as works in progress talks. We will organize the class into three panels, and everyone participate, playing role of audience, presenter, chair, and discussant.

**Peer review (10%).** You will give peer feedback on three occasions during the semester. Twice on assignments related to the research proposal, and once in group presentations. For each, you will prepare formal reports for your peers, providing a copy to them and me.
Grades for coursework are based on following instructions, displayed intellectual content, originality of thought, mastery of materials, and quality of expression. Any late papers are penalized 1/3 of a grade for each day late and will not receive extensive written feedback.

**HONOR SYSTEM**
By enrolling in this class, you agree to abide by Oberlin’s Honor System. This means that you will not plagiarize or cheat on assignments, and that all written work will include a signed honor pledge (“I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in the assignment”). On papers, cite all written sources that you consulted, whether quoted directly or paraphrased, for electronic or printed materials, as incomplete or improper citations are a form of plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with proper citation formats, or have questions please consult me, a reference librarian, a writing tutor and/or a style manual. Failure to adhere to the Honor Code will result in a grade penalty, withholding of a grade, and/or reporting to the Student Honor Committee.

**CLASSROOM RULES, ETIQUETTE, AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**
We are individuals with unique perspectives and together we form a learning community, sharing an interest in and desire to learn about race and American history. Course materials may provoke a range of reactions, and in-class discussions might reveal disagreements. I expect everyone to commit to making our classroom a space for each person to explore new ideas, ask questions of me and each other, take intellectual risks, and engage in open, honest, respectful debate.

Toward fostering a positive and productive learning environment, you should also be mindful of others and refrain from disruptive behavior, which includes interrupting others, making ad hominem attacks, arriving late or leaving the room while class is in session, and engaging in personal conversation or other diversions unrelated to class activity. Students who persist in such behavior may be asked to leave the class.

The use of cell phones and other devices in class is disruptive and therefore prohibited, except in emergencies. Turn them off or put them on silent mode. Students can to use computers for note-taking purposes or reading reference only. Education research overwhelmingly shows that students learn and absorb information more effectively when taking notes by hand. The use of laptops in class has been shown to undermine the learning not only of the laptop user, but of nearby classmates, due to the distraction they create (see links below for more). I understand that many students do their readings on computers, and that computers can facilitate certain in-class activities. If I receive complaints that computers in class are creating a distracting learning atmosphere, I will implement a ban.


**ACADEMIC INCOMPLETES**
If you are unable to complete the class, the College allows two kinds of incompletes, educational and emergency. You can read about these on the Dean of Studies website: http://new.oberlin.edu/office/dean-of-studies/policies/incompletes.dot

DISABILITY SERVICES
The college will make accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should notify the Office of Disability Services located in Peters G-27/G-28 (440-774-5588) and me of any disability related needs.

Other FAQs:

How should I address the professor? Call me “Professor Lee,” in person and in email correspondences.

What is office hours for and do I sign up? Talking about anything in relation to the class, specific questions or concerns, or if you simply want to chat. This is time that I’m available to you. At the beginning of each week there will be a sign-up sheet outside my door. I suggest you sign up rather than drop in, just in case.

What if I can’t make your office hours? Send me an email or talk to me after class and we can set something up.

How quickly do you respond to email? I aim for an email turnaround of 24-48 hours, so emergencies or very time sensitive issues should be brought to me in person, whether in office hours or class. Alternatively, if it is something a fellow student can assist with, try posting to the class discussion board.

What is the best way to get my questions answered? First re-read the syllabus as your answer may be there. If not, you may post a question to the Blackboard discussion board, which will reach all of your classmates and me. This will ensure a quicker response than waiting for me.

I have trouble talking in class and am worried about my participation grade! Discussion and oral expression can greatly enhance one’s learning, and when everyone is engaged and contributes, the class is better for it. If it helps, draw on your journal entries to formulate in-class comments. If all else fails, come see me so we can discuss strategies.

I’m nervous about writing! Everyone is capable of being a good writer, but good writing takes work. Consider visiting the writing center and working with a peer tutor. Also, start your assignments early. Make outlines and drafts and talk with me at any point in the process. Turn to your classmates and make the most of peer review too.
SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Course Introduction and Rationale
Aug. 29 Afro-Asian Encounters and Historical Research

Aug. 31 Thinkers and Questions
Reading: Ho, “Nobody Knows the Trouble I’ve Seen” (Bb); Prashad, “Bandung is Done” (Bb)

PART I. QUESTIONS AND APPROACHES

WEEK 2: Relational Racial Formations in the 19th century
Sept. 6: Coolies, Slavery and Freedom
Reading: Jung, “Outlawing Coolies” (Bb)

Sept. 8: Chinese Exclusion and Black Freedom
Reading: Jun, “Black Orientalism” (Bb)

WEEK 3: Third World Solidarity and the “Darkers Nations”
Sept. 13: The Black Freedom Struggle and Building Connections to Asia
Reading: Slate, Colored Cosmopolitanism, Introduction - Ch. 4

Sept. 15 Bandung and Postcolonial Possibilities
Reading: Slate, Colored Cosmopolitanism, Ch. 5- Conclusion

WEEK 4: Close Encounters at Home and Abroad
Sept. 20 Interracial intimacy as American history
Reading: Green, “The Public Politics of Intimate Affairs” (Bb); Boggs, “Jimmy” (Bb)

Sept. 22 Race and urban geographies
Reading: Jenks, Bronzeville, Little Tokyo and the Unstable Geography of Race in Post-World War II Los Angeles (Bb); Brooks, “In The Twilight Zone Between Black and White” (Bb)

PART II: SOURCES AND METHODS

WEEK 5 The Convergences/Cross-Fertilizations of Yellow Power and Black Power
Sept. 27 Alliances and Inspirations between Social Movements
Reading: Maeda, Chains of Babylon, Introduction - Ch. 3
PAPER #1 DUE
Sept. 29  Finding Common Ground  
Reading: Maeda, *Chains of Babylon*, Ch. 4 - Conclusion

**WEEK 6**  In Search of Revolution

Oct. 4  Romancing China  
Reading: Kelley and Esch, “Black Like Mao” (Bb); Mao Zedong, “Statement” (Bb)

Oct. 6  Vietnam and Radical Orientalism  
Reading: chapters from Wu, “Anticitizens, Red Diaper Babies, and Model Minorities” and “A Revolutionary Pilgrimage” (Bb)  
Peer review workshop

**WEEK 7:** Working Together, Creating Together

Oct. 11  Actualizing alliances and coalitions  
Reading: Higashida, “Not Just a ‘Special Issue’” (Bb); Tang, “A Gulf Unites Us” (Bb)

Oct. 13  Aesthetics and Politics  
Reading: Reed, “The Yellow and Black” (Bb); Mullen, “Making Monkey Signify” (Bb)

**WEEK 8**  **FALL RECESS**

**WEEK 9**  Triangulations

Oct. 25  The Anti-Blackness of the Model Minority Construct  
Reading: Wu, “Success Story, Japanese Style” (Bb); Peterson, “Success Story, Japanese Style” (Bb)

Oct. 27  Relational Racial Formations in the late 20th century  
Reading: Ishikuza, “Living in B&W” (Bb); Kim, “The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans” (Bb)  
Send draft to peer review group

**PART II. INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS**

**WEEK 10:** Unpacking the “Korean-Black Conflict”

Nov. 1:  Immigration and Inequality in the Postindustrial City  
Reading: Stevenson, *The Contested Murder of Latasha Harlins*, Ch. 1-4  
Peer review workshop

Nov. 3:  Friends or Foes?
Reading: Stevenson, *The Contested Murder of Latasha Harlins, Ch. 5 - Epilogue*

**PAPER #2 DUE**

**WEEK 11:**

**Pop Cultural Convergences**
Nov. 8  Kung Fu and African Americans  
Reading: Ongiri, “He Wanted to Be Just Like Bruce Lee” (Bb)

Nov. 10  Asian Americans and Music  
Reading: “Asai, Cultural Politics” (Bb); Maira, “Desis Reprazent” (Bb)

**WEEK 12:**

**Borrowing and the Impact of Cultural Globalization**
Nov. 15  Hip Hop in Japan  
Reading: Condry, “Yellow B-Boys, Black Culture and the Elvis Effect” (Bb)

Nov. 17  Preliminary presentations  
Reading: Booth, Ch. 1-2 (Bb)

**PART III. WORKSHOPPING AND FEEDBACK**

**WEEK 13**

**Workshop #1**
Nov. 22  On research proposals/discussion of sources  
Reading: Booth, Ch. 5-6 (Bb)

Nov. 25  **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**WEEK 14:**

**Workshop #2**
Nov. 29  On formulating research questions and planning research  
Reading: Booth, Ch. 3-4 (Bb)  
*Proposal drafts due to peer reviewers no later than 5:00PM Tuesday*

Dec. 1  Peer review session  
Reading: Booth, Ch. 7 (Bb)

**WEEK 15:**

**Proposal Presentations**
Dec. 6  Panels 1 & 2

Dec. 8  Panel 3 and Course wrap-up  
Reading: TBA

Final papers due Friday, December 16 at 11:00 AM. Instructions on how to turn in will be given in class.