

Colorado College
Intro to Asian American Studies: Food, Music and Place
Spring 2019
Instructor: Julian Saporiti (julian_saporiti@brown.edu)

COURSE OUTLINE and WEEKLY GOALS:

WEEK 1: April 22-27 : Introduction

Goals: Introducing the main historical issues and topics in Asian American Studies

- Chinese Exclusion & Immigration Laws
- Japanese American Incarceration
- Vietnam War & Refugees

WEEK 2: April 29 - May 3 : Music

Goals: Explore Asian diasporas as well as western imperialism in Asia through musical encounters including:

- rock n' roll bands in southeast asia in the 60s and 70s
- Chop Suey circuit (Chinese American night clubs across the US)
- Jazz in Japanese American Incarceration camps
- Contemporary Asian American musicians: Mitski, Japanese Breakfast, Kishi Bashi, Anderson .Paak, Dumbfoundead, Awkwafina, Joyce Kwon, Thao Nguyen, Takénobu

WEEK 3: May 6-10 : Food

Goals: Eat delicious foods and explore Asian American culture by looking at each experience (meal + setting) as a text. Learn the history of each dish the cultures which brought it to your plate. Explore a dramatic and culinary take on imperialism in the Philippines. Watch excellent food shows and read excellent food writing.

WEEK 4: May 13-15 : Field Trip / Wrap Up

Goals: Go the Amache (Granada) WW2 Japanese American Incarceration Camp and walk around the site as we discuss the history and cultural memory surrounding the site.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Participation (15%) :

Do your best to speak in class and bring thoughtful takes and responses to small group discussions of the previous night's homework. Any in class assignments such as participating in acting out scenes from "A Taste of Empire" will count in this category.

Daily Outline (35% of total grade) :

Each day you will be expected to produce an outline of the previous night's homework which will include the following:

1. Summary of each text
2. Notes and quotations to share in class and assist class or small group discussion
3. Questions for class discussion.

This should be typed out and 1 to 2 pages and will be collected after class each day. This will make up 75% of your participation grade.

Short Music paper/podcast/youtube video (10% of total grade) :

The Monday after Music Week you will be responsible for contributing a piece of music journalism on any Asian American artist we did not cover in class. This may take the form of a 2,000 word magazine feature, a 10 minute podcast or 3 to 5 minute youtube video.

Requirements:

1. Provide biographical information on the artist
2. Discuss their music
3. Discuss their music in a larger cultural context of Asian American culture
4. Have at least five primary sources cited (songs, videos, interviews, social media)
5. Have at least five secondary sources (criticism or articles from another writer)

DUE MONDAY, MAY 6th

Short Food paper/podcast/youtube video (10% of total grade) :

The Monday after Food Week you will be responsible for contributing a reflection on your week of Asian American food exploration. This may take the form of a 2,000 word magazine feature, a 10 minute podcast or 3 to 5 minute youtube video. Use the articles and videos we watched that week as inspiration for form.

Requirements:

1. Visit at least 2 local restaurants and cook one meal
2. Conduct ethnographic research by noting the experience of each restaurant, or the food aisle where you buy ingredients. Speak to the wait staff or restaurant owner if possible.
3. Reflect on what food means culturally and provide examples from your personal experience.
4. Use at least two historical sources to provide background on the meals and cultures you are investigating.
5. Take pictures or video of each meal.

DUE MONDAY, MAY 13th

FAMILY HISTORY CREATIVE NON-FICTION PIECE (30%) :

Based on your conversation with your grandparents, parents or other close relations, spend the last week of the course reflecting on a question or topic in your family which you want to investigate more. Find a specific family story or choose a cultural artifact or heirloom and zoom out from their. Contextualize that story or object historically and then how it relates to your identity, family history, and where it sits in our larger cultural history. You may either write 4,000

word creative non-fiction piece or record a well produced 12-15 minute podcast. I am open to other creative ideas but it must be discussed and OK'd by FRIDAY, MAY 10th.

Requirements:

1. Use 5 primary sources including interviews, journals, postcards/letters, family photos, scrapbooks, recipes, etc.
2. Use 10 secondary sources to situate your family story in a larger historical and cultural context. This may be histories, newspaper articles, podcasts, documentaries, etc.
3. Provide a detailed description of the story or object you choose and then expand your scope to let us know how this both speaks to you personally and how it fits into the larger project of history.

DUE FRIDAY, MAY 17th

ATTENDANCE and CLASSROOM POLICY:

You are expected to attend all class sessions. Be prepared for class: complete all readings and assignments before class/due date and be prepared to share your thoughts, questions, ideas about the reading and the day's topics.

If you cannot attend class because of illness or emergency, please notify your professors by email—if you cannot personally notify your professors, ask a friend, RA to help you. If you need to miss class because of other important obligations (e.g., religious observation, unavoidable co-curricular obligations [athletic, debate, performances]), please inform your professor on the first day of class.

For any day that you miss, you need to turn in a 3 page paper (due within 3 days) on the topics that we covered during class.

You cannot pass the class if you miss more than 3 days of class for any reason—you will receive an NC, or should petition for an excused grade if circumstances beyond control made it impossible to complete the class.

Laptop and electronic Devices: If you have a laptop or a tablet device, you are welcome to bring it to class for when there is a need for in-class research exercises. Please print out the readings to bring to class for discussion. Because this is a discussion centric class, please do not use your computer to take notes in class.

Please refrain from eating in class. Drinking is fine.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

You will not be required to buy any books. I will supply the .pdfs for all readings through my website nonoboyproject.com and link to all other media we will use for this class.

In lieu of spending money on books, I will ask you to rent several documentaries online and buy meals during food week.

Monday, April 22 : Intro to Asian American Studies

In-Class

1. Introductions and a brief overview of course expectations, assignments and material
2. Model assignments for students: Papers and/or Podcasts

Tuesday, April 23 : Chinese Exclusion, Coolies, and Hemispheric Asian American Studies

Homework Due: Carefully read and outline Erika Lee's "Hemispheric Asian American Studies" and Moon-Ho Jung's "Outlawing 'Coolies'" and listen to the Still Processing podcast on Asian Americans (parts I and II)

In-Class

1. Watch segments of "Chinese Exclusion Act"
2. Discuss early Chinese Immigration.
3. Havana's Fading Chinatown.
4. Watch short Angel Island Poetry doc.

Wednesday, April 24 : Angel Island Poetry, Japanese American Incarceration

Homework Due: Read and outline article on New Yorker article on poetry at Angel Island as well as introduction to Duncan William's *American Sutra*. Also, copy out five poems from Angel Island by hand and write a short paragraph (free writing) reflecting on how each poem makes you feel. Go to a nice quiet spot to work with the poetry.

In-Class

1. Discuss poetry from Angel Island
2. Mindfulness practice
3. Buddhism for dummies
4. Discuss *American Sutra*
5. Japanese American Incarceration overview + media: "kids meet a survivor...", "drunk history: frank emi"

Thursday, April 25 : Japanese American Incarceration / topics in Asian American Studies

Homework Due: Explore densho.org and fact check Randall Park's telling of the Frank Emi/Heart Mountain FairPlay committee. Write a page contextualizing the actual history and then make a list of what Park got right and what Park got wrong. Look up encycolpedia entries for Heart Mountain, Frank Emi, No-No Boys, Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee and Draft Resistance and then find 10 primary sources from the digital repository which you find of

interest to share in class. The primary sources can be photos, oral histories, or documents. Please put these in a powerpoint to share with your classmates.

In-Class

1. Discuss Frank Emi and Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee
2. Share densho explorations
3. Current topics in Asian American Studies / Keywords

Friday, April 26 : Vietnam & Southeast Asia / Refugees and Recent Immigration

Homework Due: Read and outline the following articles: Vietnam History (kind of boring but get the keywords and timeline down), Espiritu “Critical Refugee Studies,” and “America, Say My Name” by Viet Nguyen.

In-Class

1. History of Vietnam
2. American War in Southeast Asia
3. Ken Burns’ Vietnam

Monday, April 29: Music Monday #2, Vietnam continued

Homework Due: Listen to, watch visuals and read annotated lyrics for No-No Boy 1942. Come with particular questions or comments about the work which can serve as discussion in class. Read and outline: Espiritu “Militarized Refugee” and Tang “A Gulf Unites Us.”

In-Class

1. Ken Burns’ Vietnam
2. Espiritu discussion
3. Tang discussion
4. No-No Boy performance
5. The George Igawa Orchestra

Tuesday, April 30: Cambodian rock n’ roll, Southeast Asian Deportations

Homework Due: Watch “Don’t Think I’ve Forgotten” and read about Cambodian/Laos history (also kind of boring...), and then read articles on Cambodian and Viet immigrants facing deportations as well as Wong’s article on a Boston Chinatown immigration raid from the early 20th c “The Eagle Seeks...”.

In-Class

1. Thoughts on the film
2. Discussion of Cambodian and Laos history
3. Immigration raids and deportation

4. 20 minutes to research 3 articles or news stories on the immigration situation in El Paso
5. Watch “The Flute Player”

Wednesday, May 1: Kishi Bashi, Mitski, Japanese Breakfast

Homework: Listen to the top tracks from Kishi Bashi, Mitski, and Japanese Breakfast. Just listen. Don’t do anything else while you listen... maybe go for a walk... but really listen. Then read my interviews with Mitski and Japanese Breakfast. Outline your findings and prepare for class discussion. Also, listen to “Saigon Rock n’ Soul”

In-Class

1. Mindfulness practice
2. Asian American Indie
3. Kishi Bashi & *Omoiyari*
4. Japanese Breakfast
5. Mitski
6. CBC Band

Thursday, May 2: Asian American hip hop

Homework Due: Listen to Anderson .Paak, Dumbfounded. Just listen. Write down some of your favorite lyrics. Chill. No Outline. Watch “Forbidden City, USA” — make outline.

In-Class

1. Forbidden City / Chop Suey Circuit
2. Watch “Bad Rap”
3. The Wedge, LA Riots

Friday, May 3: MIA, Joyce Kwon, Thao Nguyen

Homework Due: Watch MIA documentary. Listen to Joyce Kwon’s “Dream of Home” album and outline the lyrics on her website.

In-Class

1. Discuss MIA film
2. Joyce Kwon, “Dream of Home” music video
3. Thao Nguyen
4. Watch “A Song For Ourselves”
5. The inventors and gatekeepers of the “Asian American movement”

Monday, May 6: Music Presentations

Homework Due: None, finish your project and present in class.

In-Class

1. Presentations
2. David Chang *Ugly Delicious* “Shrimp and Crawfish”
3. No-No Boy performance #3

Tuesday, May 7: Representation: Cowboys and East Indians

Homework Due: Read short story by Nina McConingley from *Cowboys and East Indians*. Watch the Master of None episodes “Parents” and “Indians On TV” on Netflix. Outline please. Scroll through “Beyond Bollywood.”

In-Class

1. The problem with Apu
2. Watch “Much Apu About Nothing”
3. Cowboys and East Indians
4. Master of None

Wednesday, May 8: A Taste Of Empire

Homework Due: Read Sy’s “A Taste of Empire” and make an outline

In-Class

1. Mindfulness practice
2. Representation discussion continued: Fu Manchu, Flower Drum Song, Crazy Rich Asians
3. A brief history of the Philippines
4. Small group acting troupe time
5. *Ugly Delicious* “Fried Rice”

Thursday, May 9: A Taste of Empire 2

Homework due: Make sure you have eaten at least one Asian restaurant by this point. Work in your small groups on the section of the play you need to perform.

In-Class

1. Watch “In Search of General Tso’s Chicken”
2. Rehearse “A Taste Of Empire” scenes

Friday, May 10: A Taste of Empire 3

Homework Due: Read Luling Osofky's "Wild, Wild East" and Michelle Zauner's "Crying in H Mart" and outline. Prepare "A Taste Of Empire" for class

In-Class

1. Perform A Taste of Empire
2. *Ugly Delicious* "Home Cooking"
3. Meditate on the meaning of food

Monday, May 13: Food Presentations

Homework Due: None. Hand in your food project.

In-Class

1. Presentations
2. No-No Boy performance #4
3. Final project check-ins

Tuesday, May 14: Amache Field Trip

Homework Due: Read the Densho encyclopedia entries on Amache (Granada), read Robinson's "Great Unknown Queer Heritage," and read No-No Boy part 1. Outline all.

In-Class

1. Explore Amache site and discuss the readings.

Wednesday, May 15: No-No Boy

Homework Due: Read and outline No-No Boy part 2.

In-Class:

1. Mindfulness practice
2. Discuss No-No Boy
3. Final project check-ins
4. Wrap up class with current issues in Asian American Studies