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Los Angeles

The Alternative Academic Journey:
Transformative Histories of Asian Americans

A Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in Asian American Studies

by

Carina Zheng Lee

2023

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2023

The thesis of Carina Zheng Lee is approved.

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Keith L. Camacho, Committee Chair

Valerie J. Matsumoto

University of California, Los Angeles

2023

*Dedicated to my immigrant parents who planted their seeds in a foreign land
and made a lifetime's worth of sacrifices just so that I can bloom and thrive.*

My degrees are yours as well.

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**AAS 197: Asian American Activism
1960s to the Present**
UCLA Spring 2024 — Mon/Wed 10AM-11:15AM

Professor: Carina Zheng Lee (she/her) Email: misscarinalee@ucla.edu Location: Public Affairs Room 1220	Office Hours: By appointment Booking Link: https://misscarinalee.youcanbook.me
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Course Description

This course is designed to navigate and unpack the various grassroots movements and collective efforts that shape Asian American history. Students will develop a critical consciousness to examine both historical and recent events, beginning with the formation of Ethnic Studies during the Third World Liberation-era, then transitioning to the rise of #StopAsianHate and COVID-19-related xenophobia and violence. Although this course will primarily focus on activism among Asian Americans, such as the justice for Vincent Chin movement, we will also draw upon the experiences of other marginalized ethnic groups, particularly African Americans, to widen our understanding of how these events are interconnected. Activities will include weekly lectures, discussions, two journal reflections, a midterm exam and a cumulative final exam. Classes will meet twice weekly on Monday and Wednesday for 75 minutes per class.

Land Acknowledgement

This course will feature important, marginalized, and hidden histories of Asian Americans that are often excluded from school curriculum. Before doing so, we must acknowledge that UCLA occupies the homelands of the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples. By acknowledging our occupation of Gabrielino/Tongva land, we recognize the ongoing project of settler colonialism and pay respect to the original caretakers of this land who still fight for Indigenous sovereignty. [Mapping Indigenous LA](#) is one resource to learn more about the Indigenous communities of Los Angeles.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to identify the key events and figures in Asian American activism, particularly with a focus on the 1960s and leading up to this current decade.
2. Students will learn how to think critically as researchers, historians, and informed members of society.
3. Students will learn how to engage in an inclusive community-building process with fellow classmates and the larger external community.
4. Students will be able to describe the key events that define Asian American activism and contextualize its relevance to present-day phenomena.

Required Readings

This class will also be based on these two main books, with the support of additional readings:

1. Lee, Erika. *The Making of Asian America: A History*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2021.
2. *Mountain Movers: Student Activism & the Emergence of Asian American Studies*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 2019.
3. Xu, Jun, and Jennifer. C. Lee. "The Marginalized 'Model' Minority: An Empirical Examination of the Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans." *Social Forces* 91, no. 4 (2013): 1363-97.

Grading Contract

As part of my teaching pedagogy, I believe that true learning comes from a place of genuine curiosity. By continuing with this course, students will thus have a space to meaningfully engage with each other and the material as per this transparent grade contract.

1. I, the student, understand that all assignments and presentations will be evaluated by way of an A-F letter grade format. I will also receive full credit as long as I am making an honest effort to create and submit work that is meaningful, important, and authentic to my own process of learning.
2. I, the student, will show respect to my fellow classmates and guest presenters by being mentally present and engaging with the material that they took the time to prepare.
3. I, the student, will also show respect and be kind to myself by prioritizing self-care, checking-in and connecting with others, setting boundaries for myself, and giving myself positive affirmations for every accomplishment.
4. I, the student, understand that life can be unpredictable, which is why there is no penalty for submitting late work. **However, ALL coursework must be submitted by Wednesday, June 1 @ 12PM of Week 10 to be considered. Failure to do so will result in an 'Incomplete' or 'F' letter grade.**

Grading Breakdown

A = 90-100	B = 80-89	C = 70-79	D = 60-69	F = 0-59
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[TOTAL GRADE: 100 possible points]

[20 points]: Attendance and Active Participation — *2 points each week*. Participation will be collected based on class activities, in-class assignments, worksheets, etc. To help you prepare for lecture and discussion, you are required to bring at least one question and one comment based on the themes presented for that week. During Week 7, our in-class activity will require you to bring an item for our Cultural Museum.

[20 points]: Reflective Journals — *2 pages, total of 2 journal entries @ 10 points each*. Journals are an important tool to help you process, analyze, and synthesize the course material in a way that makes the most sense to you. Each journal entry should include a reaction to the major themes discussed. Journals will be due at the middle and end of the quarter.

[0 points]: Midterm & Final Exam — *30 points each*. Exams will be a combination of 20 multiple choice questions along with 5 short essay questions. The midterm and final exam questions are based on the review sheet provided during the class session prior to the exam.

Academic Integrity

Given the collaborative nature of this course, it is imperative that the work you submit is a genuine reflection of your own learning process. Otherwise, you may be subject to [UCLA's Policy on Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#).

Writing Resources

Essay writing skills are necessary for this course. Although there are many resources available, the UCLA Undergraduate Writing Program is a fantastic place to strengthen your writing skills. [Click this link to access this handout](#).

Self-Care Note

Lastly, prioritize your own needs **and take care of yourself!** Your own physical, mental, and emotional well being is far more valuable than any grade or assignment. If you want to boost your productivity, you **MUST** incorporate rest, so remember that health is wealth!

Accessibility/Accommodations Resources

Center for Accessible Education: <http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) <http://www.counseling.ucla.edu/>

Arthur Ashe Student Health & Wellness Center: <https://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu/>

Undergraduate Academic Counseling (UAC):

<https://www.registrar.ucla.edu/Academics/Academic-Counseling>

Student in Crisis resource: <https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <https://wp.ucla.edu/wc/>

Iris Cantor Women's Health Center: <https://www.uclahealth.org/womenshealth/>

LGBTQ Campus Resource Center: www.lgbt.ucla.edu/

UCLA Rape Treatment Center: www.careprogram.ucla.edu/Rape-Treatment-Center

Undocumented Student Resources: www.usp.ucla.edu

Course Schedule

MAIN THEMES	ASSIGNMENTS
Part I: The Birth of the Asian American Movement	
Week 1 Introduction & Foundations <u>Monday, March 25</u> Activity: Icebreaker Video: “Cookies as a Form of Activism Jasmine Cho TEDxPittsburgh” (2019, 11 mins.) <u>Wednesday, March 27</u> Lecture: “Crash Course: What is Activism?”	Reading: <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , Introduction <i>Mountain Movers</i> , Introduction
Week 2 1960’s: Activism in College Spaces <u>Monday, April 1</u> Lecture #1: “1965” <u>Wednesday, April 3</u> Lecture #2: “Yellow Power” Guest Speaker: Jean-Paul R. Contreras deGuzman	Reading: <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , Ch. 13 <i>Mountain Movers</i> , Ch. 1, 7, 8
Week 3 1970’s: Community-Based Activism <u>Monday, April 8</u> Lecture #1: “After Saigon Fell” <u>Wednesday, April 10</u> Lecture #2: “The Fall of the I-Hotel”	Reading: <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , Ch. 14 <i>Mountain Movers</i> , Ch. 2, 6
Part II: Recognizing Resistance	
Week 4 1980’s: Call for Pan-Ethnicity <u>Monday, April 15</u> Lecture: “Vincent Who?” <u>Wednesday, April 17</u> Film: <i>Who Killed Vincent Chin?</i> (1988)	Reading: <i>Mountain Movers</i> , Ch. 9 <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , Ch. 17
Week 5 Mid-Quarter Review <u>Monday, April 22</u> Activity: Group Timeline <u>Wednesday, April 24</u>	Due: Journal Reflection #1

	Midterm Exam	
Week 6	1990's: LA Uprising <u>Monday, April 29</u> Lecture: "Sa I Gu" <u>Wednesday, May 1</u> Film: Sa I Gu (1993)	Reading: <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , Ch. 17
Part III: 21st Century Development		
Week 7	2000's: Post 9/11 <u>Monday, May 6</u> Lecture: "South Asian American Citizenship" <u>Wednesday, May 8</u> Activity: Cultural Museum	Reading: <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , Ch. 14
Week 8	2010's: Black-Asian Solidarities <u>Monday, May 13</u> Lecture: "Racial Triangulation Theory" <u>Wednesday, May 15</u> Guest Speaker: Virginia Nguyen	Due: Journal Reflection #2 Reading: Xu, Jun, and Jennifer C. Lee. "The Marginalized 'Model' Minority: An Empirical Examination of the Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans." (2013)
Week 9	2020's: Covid-Era Context <u>Monday, May 20</u> Lecture #1: "#BlackLivesMatter" <u>Wednesday, May 22</u> Lecture #2: "#StopAsianHate"	Reading: <i>The Making of Asian America</i> , "Postscript: Asian Americans' Racial Reckoning" (2021)
Week 10	Final Exam Week <u>Monday, May 27</u> Activity: Final Review Prep <u>Wednesday, May 29</u> Final Exam	Final Reminder: Submit *all* work before the end of this week!

**Syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.*

RATIONALE #1

Introduction

"Asian American Activism: 1960s to the Present" is a 10-week course based on a 100-point system featuring a combination of lectures, in-class activities, writing assignments, guest speakers, film screenings, along with a midterm and a cumulative final exam. Class meetings will take place in-person twice weekly on Mondays and Wednesdays at 75-minute sections with a maximum cap of 60 students. Reading materials include two textbooks: *The Making of Asian America* (2015) by Erika Lee, and *Mountain Movers* (2019) edited by Russell Jeung, Karen Umemoto, Harvey Dong, Eric Mar, Lisa Hirai Tsuchitani, and Arnold Pan. Logistically, this course will utilize a grading contract, which serves as a written social contract between the educator and students with the goal of promoting authentic learning rather than arbitrary ranking. Incorporating a grading contract eliminates the uncertainty of grades in favor of a straightforward approach that encourages honest participation, as supported by author-educator Susan D. Blum. In *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*, Blum contends that the ranking of students and the curving of grades creates artificial scarcity, thus deterring the focus of learning in favor of an arbitrary system based on competition.¹ Given that the premise of this course is based on community coalition formation and reflection, my teaching philosophy encourages empowerment and solidarity-building.

The structure of this course is divided into three thematic parts: 1) The Birth of the Asian American Movement, 2) Recognizing Resistance, and 3) 21st Century Development. Upon course completion, students will be able to 1) identify the key events and figures in

¹Blum, Susan D, et al. *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*. First edition. ed., Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2020. muse.jhu.edu/book/78367.

Asian American activism, 2) develop their critical thinking skills, 3) engage in inclusive community-building processes with their fellow classmates and the larger external community, and 4) describe the key events that define Asian American struggles for justice and contextualize their relevance to present day phenomena.

Part I: The Birth of Asian American Movement

Before diving into the material, the first session of the Week 1 class will be dedicated to introducing the syllabus and course expectations. Additionally, students will participate in an icebreaker activity to learn more about their classmates. The large group will be divided according to the size and time allocated, where students will introduce themselves to a smaller group with a predetermined set of friendly, neutral questions. These icebreaker questions may ask: 1) “How did you find yourself taking this class?”; 2) “What ethnic background do you identify as?”; and 3) “What is one hobby or interest that you would like to share about yourself?” In the weeks moving forward, each class will begin with a 5-minute icebreaker about the previous week to encourage students to be accountable about their reading and to practice interacting with one another.

As their first reading assignments, students will read the introductory chapters of the two books assigned. In *The Making of Asian America*, professor-historian Erika Lee opens with a portrait of the “American Dream,” but continues with discussion points including reasons for immigration, racism, as well as status markers such as class, education, and gender. Meanwhile, *Mountain Movers* is a 50th anniversary collection of oral histories, publications, archival photographs, and documents based on three different collegiate environments primarily during the 1960s-1970s: San Francisco State University (SFSU), University of California at

Berkeley (UCB), and University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). As such, the chapters are grouped thematically rather than chronologically. Similarly, both introductory chapters utilize the stories and struggles of real people, thus offering a humanistic narrative to the history that we study. To lightheartedly conclude the first class, we will view a 2019 recording of TEDxTalks presented by Jasmine Cho, a Korean American woman who utilizes her passion for baking to promote Asian American activism. “Privilege is when your history is taught as core curriculum, while mine is taught as an elective,” said Cho who is also the founder of online bakery Yummyholic. By using edible blank canvases as a medium for storytelling, Cho demonstrates how an artist-activist is able to make a meaningful impact with her baking skills, thus revealing the transformative power of activists outside of academia.²

For the next meeting we will move forward with the first lecture, “Crash Course: What is Activism?” To answer the question, activism is the collective effort taken in response to the discrimination, exclusion, and prejudice that nondominant groups face as result of their minority status. In the fall 2019 special issue of *Amerasia Journal*, Diane Fujino and Robyn Rodriguez published a historiographical examination of the legibility of Asian American activism studies based on each decade of the second half of the 20th century.³ Their research acknowledges a new social history with scholars paying closer attention to grassroots activists and everyday people as makers of history. Fujino and Rodriguez also stress that allyship and solidarity-building with interracial groups, including African American and Chicanx communities, are key to overcoming anti-imperialist struggles.⁴

² [TEDxTalks \(2019, July 9\). Cookies as a Form of Activism | Jasmine Cho | TEDxPittsburgh. \[Video\]. YouTube.](#)

³ Fujino, Diane C., and Robyn M. Rodriguez. “The Legibility of Asian American Activism Studies.” *Amerasia Journal* 45, no. 2 (May 4, 2019): 111–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00447471.2019.1687253>.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 112.

Week 2 will describe the events that marked the existence of activism in college spaces. The 1960's decade represents an era of new generations with the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, coinciding with movements that fought for the end of the war in Vietnam, along with civil rights, women's liberation, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights.⁵ As such, the first lecture for week 2, "1965," will set the stage of how the Hart-Cellar Act came into existence under the Lyndon B. Johnson Administration, which serves as the foundation for contemporary immigration policy as it increased access for new immigration groups.⁶ Chapter 13 of *The Making of Asian America* will introduce activists such as Yuri Kochiyama, who was born in 1921 to Japanese immigrants, raised during the Depression, and incarcerated in Arkansas' concentration camps. Her anti-Japanese experiences eventually brought her and her husband Bill to connect with community organizer Malcom X, a leader of the African American civil rights movement.⁷ All of these separate events served as the building blocks to make the Ethnic Studies movement possible, as demonstrated in the next lecture.

The second lecture for week 2, "Yellow Power," will pivot towards a collegiate perspective of the 1960's, which represented the origins and birth of Ethnic studies. This lecture will describe the conditions that resulted in the Third World Liberation Front, a student-based coalition that demanded an education that represented the ethnic diversity of the student population as described in Chapter 1.⁸ Chapter 8 of *Mountain Movers* will reveal the frustration that Amy Uyematsu experienced growing up as a third-generation Japanese American or *sansei* in a post-war period. Eventually, this led to her finding the first ever class

⁵ *The Making of Asian America*, p. 283

⁶ *Mountain Movers*, p. 285

⁷ *The Making of Asian America*, p. 201

⁸ *Mountain Movers*, Chapter 1.

about Oriental Studies, taught by Yuji Ichioka at UCLA in 1965. To conclude week 2, our first guest speaker will be Jean-Paul R. Contreras DeGuzman, a UCLA alumnus with an M.A. in Asian American Studies and a Ph.D. in History. DeGuzman is a Lecturer for the Asian American Studies Department, and is also a contributing author for Chapter 7 of *Mountain Movers*, titled “The Founding of the UCLA Asian American Studies Center.” This reading assignment also reveals how DeGuzman will present his findings regarding the evolution of the Asian American Studies Center at UCLA, as well as speak about his experience as a collaborator for this book project.

Week 3’s topic will focus on the events of the 1970’s, specifically the grassroots movements based on ethnic communities. Lecture #1, “After Saigon Fell,” will consider the mass immigration of refugees from Southeast Asia seeking political asylum in the United States. Arriving as a refugee is an emotionally difficult matter, characterized by grief, guilt, and the broken memories of a home country without the ability to speak the language or access familiar food.⁹ Chapter 14 of *The Making of Asian America* will reveal more about what occurred in 1975, when the first wave of refugees escaped via plane or boat, or failed to survive while on trek. In addition, Hmong and Cambodian communities received less resources and assistance as they arrived in subsequent waves.

Meanwhile, Lecture #2, “The Fall of the I-Hotel,” will illuminate the Filipino American laborers or *manongs* of the San Francisco Manilatown communities and their forced eviction in 1977. Dorothy B. Fujita-Rony, Associate Professor of the Asian American Studies Department at UC Irvine, reveals the complexity of Filipino immigration, which originated as the result of colonialism and the U.S. war in the Philippines. Until the passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in

⁹Nguyen, Phuong Tran. “From Grief to Gratitude: Reaffirming the Past by Rewriting It.” *Becoming Refugee American: The Politics of Rescue in Little Saigon*. University of Illinois Press, 2017.

1934, Filipino/a Americans were able to enter the U.S. without passports as nationals returning home; however, the Great Depression era transformed the context of labor needs as sugar became the leading export.¹⁰ Alternatively, Chapter 6 of *Mountain Movers*, “Stand Fast and Don’t Go Quietly into the Night,” will feature the oral history of Lillian Fabros, a daughter of immigrants who served in the Filipino Regiment of the U.S. Army. Fabros discusses the challenges that she faced while advocating for the I-Hotel and the accusations she faced as a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) informant, which was enough to discourage her former allies and spur them to disappear into the night. Fabros’ story reveals how activism is not for the faint of heart—her dedication as an activist was only made possible by her resilience and grit.

Part II: Recognizing Resistance

Week 4 will begin with the lecture “Vincent Who?” before we watch the 1982 film *Who Killed Vincent Chin* to learn more about race-based violence and its controversial aftermath. During a random bar encounter at his bachelor party in Detroit, Chin was incorrectly racially profiled and attacked by two white automobile workers who were frustrated about losing work due to the increased profile and profits of the Japanese auto industry. As a result, these two men were charged only with manslaughter and faced zero prison time, thus triggering anger and a call for pan-ethnic communities to take action.¹¹ For our second meeting, we will watch part of the 1988 film, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*, created by activists and independent filmmakers Renee Tajima-Peña and Christine Choy, awarded Best Documentary from the

¹⁰ Fujita-Rony, Dorothy B. “Introduction.” *American Workers, Colonial Power: Philippine Seattle and the Transpacific West, 1919-1941*. University of California Press, 2003.

¹¹ *Mountain Movers*, Chapter 9.

Hawaii International Film Festival and a nomination from the Academy Awards. The film features an outcry from Vincent's mother Lily Chin, who advocated for this case to the Supreme Court.¹² The demand for a social justice and a retrial was only made possible with a call for pan-ethnic support from Asian American communities banding together.

To assist students with midterm preparation, the group timeline activity will provide an opportunity to accomplish multiple points: 1) recap important dates learned, 2) tie in new and recent dates, and 3) make space for discussion that promotes critical thinking. While this activity is meant to be organic, several key dates will be included, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Hart-Celler Act of 1965, the demands of Third World Liberation Front in 1968-1969, and the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. These events not only represent the larger portrait of Asian America today, but also reveal the consequences of larger politics and the human cost of war. This class activity will be performed collaboratively using the classroom white board or online via Google Docs. By the end of class, students will have the opportunity to develop a complete midterm study guide. In the next class, students will enter with 75 minutes to complete their midterm, consisting of 20 multiple choice questions and 5 short answers. Midterm questions will ask students to identify key events and figures, such as the Hart-Celler Act or the demands of the Third World Liberation Front. Additionally, the short-answer questions will ask students to reflect upon the case of Vincent Chin or the fall of the International Hotel.

Week 6 will begin a new chapter about the lessons learned from the 1992 Los Angeles Uprising with "Sa I Gu," which translates to "April 29" in the Korean language. In this lesson, we learn more about the day that the Rodney King verdict wreaked havoc for over 10,000 Korean

¹² *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1988)

American business owners and community members, whereas Chapter 17 of *The Making of Asian America* will describe in more detail the media representations that portrayed this event as solely a Black-Korean conflict. In reality, this racial tension is the result of two minority communities that have been economically pitted against each other as a disguise for perpetuating white dominant narratives. A similar narrative refers to the 1991 conflict, when Korean grocer Soon Ja Du shot dead a 15-year old African American Latasha Harlins. When Superior Court Judge Joyce Karlin fined Du \$500 with probation and community service, tensions within the African American community exploded with the American media perpetuating the model minority myth in favor of Du. In the book, *LA Rising: Korean Relationships with Blacks and Latinos After Civil Unrest*, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Asian American studies Kyeyoung Park builds on Claire Kim's racial triangulation theory, offering the concept of racial cartography.¹³ To complement the lecture, we will screen the film of the same name, "Sa I Gu," created by Christine Choy along with narrator Dai Sil Kim-Gibson. This film features the voices of Korean women who were affected by the uprising.

Part III: 21st Century Development

The final four weeks of this course are dedicated to empowering the voices of our real-life community while also considering the pandemic context of this developing 21st century. During Week 7, we will discuss the consequences of post September 11, 2001, with the lecture, "South Asian American Citizenship." Sue Brennan from Ohio State University argues that South Asian American citizenship is not attained through assimilation, but by

¹³Park, Kyeyoung. *LA Rising: Korean Relationships with Blacks and Latinos After Civil Unrest*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019.

the collective experience of loss and grief.¹⁴ The remainder of Week 7 will focus on creating a Cultural Museum. In this activity, students will bring one item that they consider to be meaningful to their cultural identity. The purpose of this activity is to 1) demonstrate how these various items serve as an extension of their owners, 2) offer an opportunity to be creative both inside and outside the classroom, and 3) allow classmates to further socialize by learning more about each other's personal history. In other words, the Cultural Museum will demonstrate how we as human beings have the power to create meaning through the materials we own by utilizing our intention and in-person interactions.

To speak more about current racial tensions, our guest speaker for Week 8 will be Virginia Nguyen, creator of Educate to Empower and a U.S. history teacher at Portola High School in Irvine. Nguyen utilizes social media, including Instagram and Twitter, to include links to further resources that make Asian American studies curricula more accessible.¹⁵ For Nguyen, her Vietnamese history was not available during her K-12 education experience, so she is transforming the landscape of academia as a response to the eight women who were killed while working at a massage parlor in Atlanta, Georgia.¹⁶

Week 9 will transition to this current 2020 decade, which is defined by the Covid-19 public health crisis. The first lecture, “#BlackLivesMatter,” will observe the conditions of the protests sparked by the death of George Floyd, an African American man who was choked to death by a white officer and his accomplice in Minneapolis, Minnesota on Memorial Day of 2020, his infamous last words were, “I can't breathe.” Researchers Gail Ferguson, Eales Lauren, Sarah Gillespie, and Keria Leneman describe this phenomenon as a “whiteness

¹⁴ Brennan, Sue. “Time, Space, and National Belonging in The Namesake: Redrawing South Asian American Citizenship in the Shadow of 9/11.” *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 15, 2011).

¹⁵ Instagram profile: @edu_to_empower

¹⁶ *LAist*. “So You Want To Teach Asian American History? These Educators Are Here To Help,” April 11, 2022.

pandemic” to describe the socialization that affects all Americans, both perpetrators and victims.¹⁷ The second lecture, “#StopAsianHate,” will build on and compare, contrast, and discuss recent events. In particular, we will consider the Atlanta shooting of 6 female massage therapists. “Postscript: Asian Americans' Racial Reckoning” is the latest edition added to Erika Lee’s *The Making of Asian America*. This chapter will consider the recent events of the 2020 decade, in the Covid-19 pandemic and the resurgence of violence against Asian Americans.

Week 10 will serve as the conclusion of this course with the final exam and its preparation. The first session will offer a review session for the students. Similar to the midterm, students will have 75 minutes to complete their final, consisting of 20 multiple choice questions and 5 short answer responses. Examples of multiple-choice questions include themes about the conditions leading up to the Black-Korean conflict or the *Sa I Gu* film. Finally, the short answer questions will ask students to reflect upon recent historical events, such as the recent Covid-19 events of resistance.

Conclusion

On Tuesday, January 28 of 2020, Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto presented the activist-artist with a proclamation declaring it to be "Jasmine Cho Day." Peduto granted this award as a result of her creative drive and her commitment to empowering underrepresented communities in Pittsburgh, and Cho humbly accepted this honor as motivation to inspire others to become their best selves.¹⁸ As of summer 2023, Cho

¹⁷ Ferguson, Gail M., Lauren Eales, Sarah Gillespie, and Keira Leneman. "The Whiteness Pandemic Behind the Racism Pandemic: Familial Whiteness Socialization in Minneapolis Following #GeorgeFloyd's Murder." *American Psychologist* 77, no. 3 (04, 2022): 344-361.

¹⁸ Cho, Jasmine M. "Mayor Proclaims 'Jasmine Cho Day' in City of Pittsburgh." Jasmine M Cho. Accessed July 29, 2023. <https://jasminemcho.com/blogs/news/mayor-proclaims-jasmine-cho-day-in-city-of-pittsburgh>.

continues to sell custom cookie orders through the Yummyholic website, but has since expanded her focus to offer educational workshops and traditional fine art by writing, illustrating, and publishing her first children's book, *Role Models Who Look Like Me: Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders Who Made History* (2019). Cho's story demonstrates how being involved in higher academia is not a requirement for raising awareness about cultural history, identity, and inequalities; rather, a bit of paint and imagination have the power to make transformation change.

The formation of the Ethnic Studies programs that exist today would not be possible without the pain, sacrifices, and resilience of a community that is motivated by justice. Editor including Amy Uyematsu and other scholars worked tirelessly with the newly formed Asian American Studies Center at UCLA to set the foundation by pioneering the first ever book, *Roots: Asian American Reader*, which later sold over 50,000 copies.¹⁹ In addition, activists such as Yuri Kochiyama lived through history as she was interned for two years at a concentration camp in Arkansas, who later befriended Angela Davis and joined Malcolm X's group, the Organization of Afro-American Unity, to refine narratives about social justice.²⁰ These movement leaders began their journey as ordinary people who used their deep passion as motivation for supporting the greater community.

This course about activism will equip students with the toolkit to better understand their own privilege, purpose, and positionality to become powerful leaders within their own communities. The goal of this curriculum is to establish visibility and discover real-life stories about what it means to be a minority person in America who advances social justice,

¹⁹ *Mountain Movers*, p. 203.

²⁰ "News | AASC." Accessed August 1, 2023. <https://www.aasc.ucla.edu/news/yurikochiyama2014.aspx>.

racial equity, and gender equality. By considering the themes of how movement is created, we will learn how to incorporate activism into our everyday lives.

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- Park, Kyeyoung. *LA Rising: Korean Relationships with Blacks and Latinos After Civil Unrest*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019.
- Nguyen, Phuong Tran. "From Grief to Gratitude: Reaffirming the Past by Rewriting It" *Becoming Refugee American: The Politics of Rescue in Little Saigon*. University of Illinois Press, 2017.
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SYLLABUS #2
AAS 198: Celebrating Asian American Women
UCLA Spring 2024 — Monday/Wednesday 12PM-1:15PM

Professor: Carina Zheng Lee (she/her) Email: misscarinalee@ucla.edu Location: Public Affairs Room 1220	Office Hours: By appointment Booking Link: https://misscarinalee.youcanbook.me
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Course Description

In this 10-week course, we will examine the experiences, challenges, and accomplishments of Asian American women, a population that is historically underrepresented and dehumanized. We will do this by analyzing the intersections of race and gender within the parameters of Asian American feminisms, immigration, labor, refugees, war, and family formation. By looking at the diverse identities, histories, and social realities of Asian American women, we can discover, understand and celebrate the connections between these Asian American women and other people of color. Course activities will include weekly lectures or discussions, biweekly journal reflections, and a cumulative creative final project.

Land Acknowledgement

This course will feature important, marginalized, and hidden histories of Asian Americans that are often excluded from school curriculum. Before doing so, we must acknowledge that UCLA occupies the homelands of the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples. By acknowledging our occupation of Gabrielino/Tongva land, we recognize the ongoing project of settler colonialism and pay respect to the original caretakers of this land who still fight for Indigenous sovereignty. [Mapping Indigenous LA](#) is one resource to learn more about the Indigenous communities of Los Angeles.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to understand the historical and social contexts that shaped the experiences of Asian American women.
2. Students will be able to analyze the intersections of race, gender, class, and other social categories in the lives of Asian American women.
3. Students will be able to critically discuss how Asian American women are represented in media, literature, and popular culture.
4. Students will develop interview, public speaking, and writing skills, as well as learn how to critically think as researchers, historians, and informed members of society.

Required Readings

This class will also be based on these readings:

1. Gendry-kim, Keum Suk. *Grass*. Drawn and Quarterly, 2018.
2. Bui, Thi. *The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir*. New York: Abrams ComicArts, 2017.

3. Choy, Catherine. "Nursing Matters: Women and U.S. Colonialism in the Philippines." *Empire of Care: Nursing and Immigration in Filipino American History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
4. Fujiwara, Lynn and Shireen Roshanravan. "Introduction." *Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Politics*, edited by Lynn Fujiwara and Shireen Roshanravan, 3–24. University of Washington Press, 2018.
5. Lim, Shirley Jennifer. "'I Protest': Anna May Wong and the Performance of Modernity." *A Feeling of Belonging: Asian American Women's Public Culture, 1930-1960*. American History and Culture. New York: New York University Press, 2006.
6. Trask, Haunani-Kay. "Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture," *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i*. Revised Edition. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993.
7. Ninh, erin Khue. "Desirable Daughters." *Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.
8. Welty Tamai, Lily Anne. "7 to be Hybrid Anticipates the Future: Multiracial and Multiethnic Community and Activism." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 25, no. 2 (2022): 229-246.
9. Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun, and Gwendolyn Mink. "Introduction: Speaking Truth to Power." *Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress*. New York: New York University Press, 2022.

Grading Contract

As part of my teaching pedagogy, I believe that true learning comes from a place of genuine curiosity. By continuing with this course, students will have a space to meaningfully engage with the material with this transparent grade contract.

1. I, the student, understand that all assignments and presentations will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. I will receive full credit as long as I am making an honest effort to create and submit work that is meaningful, important, and authentic to my own process of learning.
2. I, the student, will show respect to my fellow classmates and guest presenters by being mentally present and engaging with the material that they took the time to prepare.
3. I, the student, will also show respect and be kind to myself by prioritizing self-care, checking-in and connecting with others, setting boundaries for myself, and giving myself positive affirmations for every accomplishment.
4. I, the student, understand that life can be unpredictable, which is why there is no penalty for submitting late work. **However, ALL coursework must be submitted by Wednesday, June 1 @ 12PM of Week 10 to be considered. Failure to do so will result in an 'Incomplete' or 'F' letter grade.**

Grading Breakdown

A = 90-100	B = 80-89	C = 70-79	D = 60-69	F = 0-59
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[TOTAL GRADE: 100 possible points]

[20 points]: Attendance and Active Participation — *2 points each week.* Participation will be collected in the form of class activities, in-class assignments, worksheets, or a sign-in sheet. You must bring at least one question and one comment for each required reading.

[20 points]: Reflective Journals — *2 pages, total of 2 journal entries @ 10 points each.* Journals are an important tool to help you process, analyze, and synthesize the course material in a way that makes the most sense to you. Each journal entry should include a reaction to the themes discussed within the two-week timeframe; each week will offer a guiding question to help think about connecting the course themes to your own life. Journals will be due during Weeks 4 & 8.

[60 points]: Women's Day Celebration Project — *Visual Booklet, Written Essay, & Presentation. 20 points each.* Our class will work together to showcase and celebrate feminine-empowered stories! The purpose of this project is to create a learning community by utilizing your creative skills, knowledge, and resources to teach the class and empower a group that deserves more attention. **You may not repeat a study of an Asian American woman who already appears in this syllabus.**

For your cumulative project, begin by choosing an Asian American woman or a minority figure who is not already on the course syllabus. Ideally, this person can be 1) someone you personally know, such as a parent or a community leader, or 2) a historical figure who deserves more recognition. You must prepare a list of ten questions to conduct an interview, either in-person or virtually, or be able to identify archival sources about this person (newspaper, oral history interviews, articles, digital collections, etc.). Alternatively, you may also select a non-Asian minority person (including Indigenous, Black, or Pacific Islander-identified), but your work must demonstrate their contribution to the collective social justice of Asian American communities.

The first part of this project is to investigate the conditions and connections within a 3-4 page essay. Your essay should include a basic structure, with an introduction, body, conclusion, and bibliography using Chicago style, APA, or MLA format. Your role as a researcher is to examine the context including gender roles, law and policy, and so on. You may ask questions like, How did motherhood, reproduction rights, and/or transgender equality affect this person's development? How did misogyny or the hatred of women impact this person's character? How has the history of racism challenged or favored this person?

Secondly, after developing an interview list and an essay structure, create a picture book or a visual booklet with at least ten images for a minimum of ten pages. Each page should have a caption, with the final page that includes the full references. The final book can be either digital or printed on paper. Your book should center on one of the themes that we touched on in class.

Finally, each person will have 5 minutes to present their findings during Week 9. Our class presentations will celebrate all your hard work with a potluck!

Project Mini-Deadlines:

Week 3	April 10	Draft: Interview List/Archival Sources
Week 5	April 24	Draft: Bibliography
Week 7	May 8	Rough Draft: 2+ pages
Week 9	May 20 & May 22	Visual Booklet & Class Presentations
Week 10	May 29	Final Paper: 3-4 Page

Academic Integrity

Given the collaborative nature of this course, it is imperative that the work you submit is a genuine reflection of your own learning process. Otherwise, you may be subject to [UCLA's Policy on Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#).

Writing Resources

Essay writing skills are necessary for this course. Although there are many resources available, the UCLA Undergraduate Writing Program is a fantastic place to strengthen your writing skills. [Click this link to access this handout](#).

Accessibility/Accommodations Resources

Center for Accessible Education: <http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>
 Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) <http://www.counseling.ucla.edu/>
 Arthur Ashe Student Health & Wellness Center: <https://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu/>
 Undergraduate Academic Counseling (UAC):
<https://www.registrar.ucla.edu/Academics/Academic-Counseling>
 Student in Crisis resource: <https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/>
 Undergraduate Writing Center: <https://wp.ucla.edu/wc/>
 Iris Cantor Women's Health Center: <https://www.uclahealth.org/womenshealth/>
 LGBTQ Campus Resource Center: www.lgbt.ucla.edu/
 UCLA Rape Treatment Center: www.careprogram.ucla.edu/Rape-Treatment-Center
 Undocumented Student Resources: www.usp.ucla.edu

Course Schedule

MAIN THEMES		ASSIGNMENTS
Week 1	<p>Introduction & Foundations <u>Monday, March 25</u> Activity: Generational Lineage</p> <p><u>Wednesday, March 27</u> Lecture: “The Female History of Asian America”</p>	<p>Reading: <i>Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Politics</i>, Introduction</p>
Week 2	<p>Asian American Feminisms <u>Monday, April 1</u> Lecture: “Grace Lee Boggs”</p> <p><u>Wednesday, April 3</u> Lecture: “Patsy Mink”</p>	<p>Reading: Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun, and Gwendolyn Mink. “Introduction: Speaking Truth to Power.” <i>Fierce and Fearless</i> (2022)</p>
Week 3	<p>Immigration & Family Formation <u>Monday, April 8</u> Film: <i>Picture Bride</i> (1995)</p> <p><u>Wednesday, April 10</u> Lecture: “Patricia Montellano”</p>	<p>Due: Interview List/Archival Sources</p> <p>Reading: Choy, Catherine Ceniza. “Nursing Matters: Women and U.S. Colonialism in the Philippines.”(2003)</p>
Week 4	<p>Hollywood Hyperexoticization <u>Monday, April 22</u> Lecture: “Anna Mae Wong & Nancy Kwan”</p> <p><u>Wednesday, April 24</u> Lecture: “Haunani-Kay Trask”</p>	<p>Reading: 1. Lim, Shirley J. “‘I Protest:’ Anna May Wong and the Performance of Modernity.” (2006) 2. Trask, “Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture.” (1993).</p>
Week 5	<p>The Human Cost of War <u>Monday, April 15</u> Discussion: <i>Grass</i></p> <p><u>Wednesday, April 17</u></p>	<p>Reading: <i>Grass</i> (2018)</p> <p>Due 8/15: Reading Reflection #1, Bibliography</p>

	Film: <i>The Apology</i> (2016)	
Week 6	Refugee Displacement <u>Monday, April 29</u> Lecture: "Thi Bui" <u>Wednesday, May 1</u> Discussion: <i>The Best We Could Do</i>	Reading: <i>The Best We Could Do</i> (2017)
Week 7	Topics about Immigration <u>Monday, May 6</u> Guest Speaker: Siyue "Lena" Wang <u>Wednesday, May 8</u> Activity: Project Check-In	Due: Essay Rough Draft (2+ pages)
Week 8	Contemporary Issues <u>Monday, May 13</u> Lecture: "Sexualized Intergenerational Conflict" <u>Wednesday, May 15</u> Lecture: "#WeToo"	Due 8/13: Reading Reflection #2 Reading: 1. Ninh, erin Khuê. "Desirable Daughters." (2004) 2. Ninh, erin Khuê, and Shireen Roshanravan. "#WeToo: A Convening." (2021)
Week 9	Women's Day Celebration <u>Monday, May 20</u> Class Presentations <u>Wednesday, May 22</u> Class Presentations	Due: Visual Booklet
Week 10	Multi-Cultural & Interethnic Implications <u>Monday, May 27</u> Guest Speaker: Lily Ann Welty Tamai <u>Wednesday, May 29</u> Activity: Consciousness Reflection	Due: Final Paper (3-4 Pages) Reading: Welty Tamai, Lily Anne,"7 to be Hybrid Anticipates the Future: Multiracial and Multiethnic Community and Activism." (2022)

*Syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

RATIONALE

Introduction

“Celebrating Asian American Women” is a 10-week course that will meet twice weekly on Monday and Wednesday for 75 minutes, or a weekly total of two hours and thirty minutes. The size of this undergraduate seminar will also be capped at 30 students. The course will be based on a 100-point system featuring a combination of lectures, discussion, in-class activities, two guest speakers, two film screenings, two reading reflections, and a cumulative final project. The final project will entail three parts: a visual book, a presentation, and a written essay portion, worth 20 points each with a grand total of 60 points for this cumulative project. The visual book will be a digital or a printed copy, with a minimum of 10 pages, each page containing a photo and caption. Finally, the written essay will be 3-4 pages, double spaced and 12-point font, due at the end of Week 10. Reading materials will include two nonfiction graphic novels: *Grass* by Keum Suk Gendry-Kim (2018) and Thi Bui’s *The Best We Could Do* (2017). In addition, we will study the works of prominent scholars including Shirley Jennifer Lim, Catherine Choy, and Haunani-Kay Trask. Drawing from Asian American studies and feminist studies, this class will learn about history through the biographical lens of Asian American women.

For the syllabus day of Week 1, we will discuss course expectations and also create space for class introductions among smaller groups. Since this course is intimate in nature, our opening icebreaker activity will involve introducing ourselves and sharing about our mothers, grandmothers, or our chosen-mother figures. The purpose of this activity is to recognize our appreciation for the generational lineage that came before us, many of whom did not have the same opportunities that we currently do now. Our next class meeting will present the first lecture, “The Female History of Asian America.” For example, the Page Law of 1875 marked the

very first federal law in the United States to restrict immigration that targeted Chinese and East Asian women, who were associated with prostitution and slavery. The Page Law was the precursor to the 1882 Exclusion Act, which banned immigration of Chinese men just seven years afterward.²¹ The purpose of this lecture is to offer a framework for understanding the upcoming weekly themes about Asian American feminisms, immigration, labor, refugees, war, and family formation. To supplement these concepts, students will be assigned the Introduction chapter of Lynn Fujiwara and Shireen Rosharavan's book, *Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Politics* (2018), as this reading offers insight on the works of feminist scholars including Grace Kyungwon Hong and Y en L  Espiritu who interact with the complex politics of gender and ethnicity.

Week 2 will explore Asian American feminism by recognizing revolutionaries who shattered glass ceilings. Asian American women co-created Third World feminism through the process of alliance creation and solidarity building.²² The first lecture will be dedicated to "Grace Lee Boggs," who is a woman recognized as a key figure in the Asian American, Black Power, and Civil Rights movements. The majority of revolutionary Grace Lee Boggs' work took place in Detroit, Michigan, where she eventually opened a charter school to address the need for free critical thinking and character-building. In her book, *The Next American Revolution*, co-authored with historian Scott Kurashige, Boggs argues that a paradigm shift is needed for the outdated U.S. education system, comparing the roles of students as factory workers and teachers as wardens.²³ Ultimately, Boggs' fight for social justice would not have been possible

²¹ *A Feeling of Belonging*, p. 5

²² Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun. "Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Feminisms: Radicalism, Liberalism, and Invisibility." *Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018.

²³ Boggs, Grace Lee and Kurashige, Scott. "A Paradigm Shift in Our Concept of Education." *The Next American Revolution: Sustainable Activism for the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2012.

without the solidarity and support of the African American community and the Black Power movement. The next lecture, “Patsy Mink,” will reveal the story of the first woman of color to serve in the House of Representatives after running for the second time in 1964. Born as Patsy Matsu Takemoto in 1927 to grandparents who arrived to Hawai‘i from Japan as contract farm workers, Mink graduated from the University of Chicago Law School and pursued a career in politics where she fought for education and women’s rights. She co-authored Title IX, a federal civil rights law which passed in 1972; the law now protects against discrimination based on sex. Given that she consistently experienced discrimination herself, Mink believed Title IX to be one of her “most significant accomplishments as a Member of Congress,” as stated in *Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress*. The book, newly released in 2022, is a collaboration between Professor Judy Wu and Patsy’s sole offspring, Professor Gwendolyn Mink, whereas students will be assigned to read the introductory chapter.²⁴ In 2014, President Barack Obama posthumously awarded Patsy Mink the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Week 3 will explore topics regarding family formation, ranging from the domestic role of imported brides and healthcare workers. We will begin this week with a partial screening of *Picture Bride* (1995), an independent film created by Kayo Hatta, an alumnus of Stanford and UCLA. This film is significant as it highlights the social realities of early Japanese immigrant women in Hawai‘i such as Riyo, the lead character who was disappointed by her new husband and arduous lifestyle as a laborer on a sugar plantation. Riyo’s journey shows her resilience and how she made the most of what was available to her, echoing the reality of many picture brides. When Chinese immigration exclusion was in effect during 1882, the Japanese migrated

²⁴ Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun, and Gwendolyn Mink. *Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress*. New York: New York University Press, 2022.

to fill plantations and other labor needs in Hawai'i and the West Coast. As Japan's government had much greater international standing, the Gentlemen's Agreement (1907) allowed for the migration of Japanese women as picture brides. Japanese men abroad who wished to marry a Japanese woman had to provide evidence of savings and income levels before families arranged the marriages, including an exchange of photographs.²⁵

The latter half of Week 3 considers Filipino American women and their unique roles in the historical migration of nursing professionals to the continental United States. Catherine Ceniza Choy, Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley, conducted an interdisciplinary examination of how the migration of nurses is connected to American imperialism. Choy opens the first chapter of her book, *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*, with a biography of Patrocinio Montellano, a Filipino woman who sojourned to the U.S. returned home in 1924 to become nurse supervisor of the Philippine Chapter of the American Red Cross.²⁶ Montellano's story represents an era of opportunity when U.S. colonial nursing in the Philippines played a critical role in the formation of American modernity, specifically in American women's construction of themselves as professional caretakers during a time in which midwifery was one of the only medical paths open to them.

Week 4 will consider the consequences of war and militarization by analyzing the role of Korean comfort women. At this point, students will be prepared to discuss the novel's lead, Granny Lee Ok-sun, as she recounts her real-life experiences during World War II in a reimagined modality based on art and illustration. The second part of class will build upon this topic with the 2016 documentary, *The Apology*. Directed by Tiffany Hsuing, this film follows

²⁵ *A Feeling of Belonging*, p. 5

²⁶ Choy, Catherine Ceniza. "Nursing Matters: Women and U.S. Colonialism in the Philippines." *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History*. American Encounters/Global Interactions. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

how three former comfort women—Grandma Gil in South Korea, Grandma Cao in China, and Grandma Adela in the Philippines—are transforming their experiences of pain into strength, reconciliation, and justice more than seventy years later. Each of the three grandmother figures originates from a different country, but shares similar stories as each person was deceived, kidnapped and raped by Japanese soldiers as young teenagers during the years of 1937-1941.²⁷ The guiding question for Reading Reflection #1 will ask students to reflect on the parallels between Asian American women and war, immigration, and sexual violence.

Week 5 will explore the role of hyperexoticization, particularly generated by Hollywood elites and opportunists. The first lecture, “Anna May Wong & Nancy Kwan,” will explore the performative role of Asian American women in early to mid-20th-century Hollywood. These two actresses are perhaps most recognized for their casting of stereotypical tropes, where Wong struggled with rejection due to yellowface while Kwan was criticized for playing a prostitute in her breakout film, *The World of Suzie Wong* (1960). Joey Lee, the Managing Editor of *BRIDGES: Undergraduate Academic Journal* from Wilfrid Laurier University, makes an excellent argument comparing the tropes of the submissive “China doll” and the “evil dragon lady.” These dichotomies represent the characters that Wong and Kwan portrayed in their respective films, in that the role of the hyper-exotic female is to cater to the romanticized ideals of the white man. In reality, both Wong and Kwan worked in an industry that was dominated by Hollywood elites, with virtually no control over the characters they portrayed. An example of this stereotyping is the Page Act of 1875, which specifically banned Chinese females assumed to be prostitutes. As historian Shirley J. Lim contends, the Hollywood cinema of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s was predicated on the controlling gaze of the male camera and the male

²⁷<https://www.mufilms.org/films/within-every-woman-directed-by-tiffany-hsiung/#.WLhuwvJ8m60>

spectator upon the female body.²⁸ On the other hand, the latter lecture of Week 8 features the work of “Haunani-Kay Trask,” who was recognized as a leader of the Hawaiian Sovereignty movement and founder of the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa until her passing in 2021. Trask’s book chapter “Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture,” reveals the objectification of her culture, where hypersexualization is a commodity to be sold to tourists. The problem with Hollywood’s fictitious narrative about native Hawai‘i is that it portrays indigenous people as tourist artifacts and objects of fantasy, which perpetuates the oppressive reality of colonization by stripping this indigenous group of its resources and authenticity.

In Week 6 we will focus on refugee displacement and generational trauma. We will discuss Thi Bui’s 2017 book, *The Best We Could Do*. This illustrated memoir about Bui’s family took more than a decade for Bui to write, illustrate, and publish. The result is a reimagined generational story that intertwines the human cost of war and the displacement from the Vietnam War. Bui reveals the complicated narrative between her parents’ upbringing compared with the birth of her children, thus indicating her in-between role between the generations that came before and after her. Linda Trinh Vo, who holds a Ph.D in Sociology from UC San Diego and is a Professor at UC Irvine, discusses the role of 1.5 generation “defiant daughters” who utilize their bilingual skills to build their Vietnamese American identities with the backdrop of war entangled in their 1st generation parents.²⁹

Week 7 will focus on topics about immigration. On Monday, May 6, we will have our first guest speaker Siyue “Lena” Wang, who is currently a Ph.D. student from UCLA’s Education

²⁸ *A Feeling of Belonging*, p. 69

²⁹ Vo, Linda Trinh. “Defiant Daughters’: The Resilience and Resistance of 1.5-Generation Vietnamese American Women.” *Our Voices, Our Histories: Asian American and Pacific Islander Women*, 2020.

Department As an immigrant herself, Wang's research is dedicated to increasing the visibility of immigrant student scholars, particularly those who are undocumented. She will discuss the precarity this demographic faces in navigating a bureaucratic system without the social or cultural capital necessary in order to adapt to collegiate standards. The second half of Week 7, Wednesday, May 8 will be student-focused, as this time will be offered to students to check in and prepare for their upcoming project. During this class, students will be able to interact and work together in small groups to share more about their chosen interviewee or archival resources.

Week 8 acknowledges the 21st-century landscape of sexual violence that comes after generations of war and trauma. The lecture, "Sexualized Intergenerational Conflict," will explore the academic publications of erin Khuê Ninh. She is a Ph.D. alumna of UC Berkeley English, the author of *Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature*, and winner of the 2013 Literary Studies Book Award from the Association for Asian American Studies.³⁰ Students will be assigned Chapter 4 of this book, "Desirable Daughters," to explore the role of shame concerning virginity, obedience and gossip amongst the family and community. Reading Reflection #2 will also be due, which can include themes regarding generational trauma. Moving forward, the lecture, "#WeToo," is based upon the special issue of the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, which aims to offer young Asian Americans the tools to navigate the rape culture commonly present in college fraternities, first adult relationships, activist organizations, and among academic leaders at elite institutions including Harvard.³¹ The "we" of the title casts Asian Americans as

³⁰ Ninh, erin Khuê. *Ingratitude: The Debt-Bound Daughter in Asian American Literature*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

³¹ Ninh, erin Khuê, and Shireen Roshanravan. "#WeToo: A Convening." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 24, no. 1 (2021): 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jaas.2021.0001>.

subjects rather than objects, whereas Ninh's work demands that Asian Americans be heard, believed, and backed up in their experiences regarding sexual violence. Students will supplement with Ninh and Roshanravan's "#WeToo: A Convening" (2021) as their reading assignment, which reflects upon the emotionally difficult issues of untold stories of rape and sexual violence while in the context of an unfolding pandemic.

Week 9 is the most student-centered part of this course as the spotlight will shine on the cumulative Women's Day project. In this activity, students will present their findings based on their experiences with their interviewees or their archival research findings, in addition to the 10 page visual book. Each student will have 5 minutes to share their visual book presentation and share what they learned outside of the class. The remainder of the project, the 3-to-4-page essay, will be due on Wednesday, June 8 of Finals Week. The written portion will dive deeper into the connections based on the material we learned and their historical figure's real-life story. The entire project is worth 60 points, or 60% of their final grade. As per the grading contract, students will receive full credit for their presentation as long as there are no pressing concerns or issues.

Week 10 will serve as the conclusion of this course, by acknowledging the relevance of diversity in a continuously changing landscape. Our final guest speaker will be Lily Anne Welty Tamai, who earned her Doctorate in History from University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) and is a continuing lecturer at UCLA. Her current book project, *Military Industrial Intimacy: Mixed-race American Japanese, Eugenics and Transnational Identities*, documents the history of mixed-race American Japanese and American Okinawans born after World War II and raised during the post-war period.³² As such, Dr. Tamai is an

³² "Lily Anne Welty Tamai – UCLA Asian American Studies Department," April 4, 2019. <https://asianam.ucla.edu/person/lily-anne-welty-tamai/>.

excellent educator to speak about multiculturalism, as she argues in favor that mixed-race history is also Asian American history. To prepare, students will read Tamai's publication, "7 to be Hybrid Anticipates the Future: Multiracial and Multiethnic Community and Activism," which explores topics including the stigma of interracial marriage.³³

For our final class meeting, we will also take a moment to reflect on and apply the lessons that we learned as a collective. To offer space for reflection, we will use this time to create a chronological timeline to assist students with organizing and contextualizing all of the events that we have already discussed, including the Page Act of 1875 and the 1975 immigration of Southeast Asian groups to the United States. After reflecting upon the pieces of history, our final activity for this curriculum is a Consciousness Reflection, which is an opportunity to reflect as a group and situate about how our real-life experiences connect with the course material.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this course will commemorate the challenges and victories of a demographic that is traditionally underserved. "Celebrating Asian American Women" is based on themes including immigration, family formation, hyperexoticization, war, and displacement as the course features biographical stories of Asian American women in history. By utilizing a combination of graphic novels, film screenings, journals, and creative activities, students will have ample opportunity to contextualize the role of women as simultaneous leaders, caretakers, and visionaries. This course will offer a positive light on the darkness that once shrouded the history of Asian American women.

³³ Lily Anne, Welty Tamai. "7 to be Hybrid Anticipates the Future: Multiracial and Multiethnic Community and Activism." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 25, no. 2 (2022): 229-246.

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- Ninh, erin Khuê, and Shireen Roshanravan. "#WeToo: A Convening." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 24, no. 1 (2021): 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jaas.2021.0001>.
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- Vo, Linda Trinh. "'Defiant Daughters': The Resilience and Resistance of 1.5-Generation Vietnamese American Women." *Our Voices, Our Histories: Asian American and Pacific Islander Women*, 2020.
- Welty Tamai, Lily Anne. "7 to be Hybrid Anticipates the Future: Multiracial and Multiethnic Community and Activism." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 25, no. 2 (2022): 229-246. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jaas.2022.0020>.
- Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun. "Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Feminisms: Radicalism, Liberalism, and Invisibility." *Asian American Feminisms and Women of Color Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018.
- Wu, Judy Tzu-Chun, and Gwendolyn Mink. *Fierce and Fearless: Patsy Takemoto Mink, First Woman of Color in Congress*. New York: New York University Press, 2022.

SYLLABUS #3

AAS 199: Asian American Perspectives on Alternative Healing Modalities

UCLA Spring 2024 —Tuesday/Thursday 12PM-1:15PM

Professor: Carina Zheng Lee (she/her) Email: misscarinalee@ucla.edu Location: Public Affairs Room 1220	Office Hours: By appointment Booking Link: https://misscarinalee.youcanbook.me
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Course Description

“Asian American Perspectives on Alternative Healing Modalities” is a 10-week course that examines the history, techniques, and critiques of alternative healing modalities that originated in the regions of China, India, and Japan and further transformed into contemporary practices in the United States. In particular, we will consider the historical and sociological contexts of commodification, orientalism, gender and self-empowerment. We will also learn about the contributions and sacrifices of pioneers and activists, including Miriam Lee, Hawayo Hiromi Takata, and Mutulu Shakur. Class will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12PM-1:15PM, featuring weekly lectures or discussions, two reading reflections, in-person interactive activities, a midterm and a final exam.

Land Acknowledgement

This course will feature important, marginalized, and hidden histories of Asian Americans that are often excluded from school curriculum. Before doing so, we must acknowledge that UCLA occupies the homelands of the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples. By acknowledging our occupation of Gabrielino/Tongva land, we recognize the ongoing project of settler colonialism and pay respect to the original caretakers of this land who still fight for Indigenous sovereignty. [Mapping Indigenous LA](#) is one resource to learn more about the Indigenous communities of Los Angeles.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will understand the historical and social contexts of healing modalities from the Asian regions of China, India, and Japan to the westernized United States.
2. Students will be able to critically discuss how traditional healing modalities are represented in Western media, literature, and popular culture.
3. Students will be able to recognize the work of movement leaders who advocated for the establishment or authenticity of holistic healing modalities in the United States.
4. Students will learn how to incorporate basic, beginner-level techniques into their own practice and improve comfort, concentration, and overall wellness.

Required Readings

This class will also be based on these books, along with additional readings:

1. Fan, Arthur Yin, and Ziyi Fan. “Dr. Miriam Lee: A Heroine for the Start of Acupuncture as a Profession in the State of California.” *Journal of Integrative Medicine* 12, no. 3 (May 2014): 182–86. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2095-4964\(14\)60016-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2095-4964(14)60016-9).

2. Huang, Sam Xian Sheng, and Jun Hu. "An Important Acupuncture Demonstration in the History of Legalization of Acupuncture in the United States." *Chinese Medicine and Culture* 3, no. 4 (2020): 241–44. <https://doi.org/10.4103/CMAC.CMAC.38.20>.
3. Kale, Sunila S. and Christian Lee Novetzke. "The Cultural Politics of Yoga in India and the United States." *At Home and Abroad: The Politics of American Religion*, ed. Elizabeth Shakman Hurd and Winnifred Fallers Sullivan. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2021.
4. Shakur, Mutulu, and Urayoana Trinidad. "The Seed: History of the Original Acupuncture Detoxification Program at Lincoln Hospital." *Souls* 23, no. 1–2 (April 1, 2022): 36–48.
5. Jain, Andrea R. "Namaste all day: Appropriating and Commodifying the Ancient, Exotic, and Evocative." *Peace Love Yoga: The Politics of Global Spirituality*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.
6. Jayasundar, Rama. "Ayurveda: A Distinctive Approach to Health and Disease." *Current Science*. Bangalore, India: Current Science Association. Vol. 98, No. 7 (2010): 908-914.

Grading Contract

As part of my teaching pedagogy, I believe that true learning comes from a place of genuine curiosity. By continuing with this course, students will have a space to meaningfully engage with the material with this transparent grade contract.

1. I, the student, understand that all assignments and presentations will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. I will receive full credit as long as I am making an honest effort to create and submit work that is meaningful, important, and authentic to my own process of learning.
2. I, the student, will show respect to my fellow classmates and guest presenters by being mentally present and engaging with the material that they took the time to prepare.
3. I, the student, will also show respect and be kind to myself by prioritizing self-care, checking-in and connecting with others, setting boundaries for myself, and giving myself positive affirmations for every accomplishment.
4. I, the student, understand that life can be unpredictable, which is why there is no penalty for submitting late work. **However, ALL coursework must be submitted by Wednesday, June 1 @ 12PM of Week 10 to be considered. Failure to do so will result in an 'Incomplete' or 'F' letter grade.**

Grading Breakdown

A = 90-100	B = 80-89	C = 70-79	D = 60-69	F = 0-59
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[TOTAL GRADE: 100 possible points]

[20 points]: Attendance and Active Participation — *10 points per activity*. During Weeks 4 & 8, we will apply beginner-level yoga movement and reiki meditation techniques as part of our in-class activities. Each student is expected to be present and participate to the best of your ability.

[20 points]: Reading Reflections — *2 pages, total of 2 journal entries at 10 points each.*

Journals are an important tool to help you process, analyze, and synthesize the course material in a way that makes the most sense to you. Each journal entry should include a reaction to the themes discussed within the two-week timeframe. Each week will offer a guiding question to help think about connecting the course themes to your own life. Reflections will be due at the middle and the end of the quarter.

[60 points]: Midterm & Final Exam — *30 points each.* Exams will be a combination of 20 multiple choice questions along with 5 short essay questions. The midterm and final exam questions are based on the review sheet provided during the class session prior to the exam.

Academic Integrity

Given the collaborative nature of this course, it is imperative that the work you submit is a genuine reflection of your own learning process. Otherwise, you may be subject to [UCLA's Policy on Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#).

Writing Resources

Essay writing skills are necessary for this course. Although there are a breadth of resources available, the UCLA Undergraduate Writing Program is a fantastic place to strengthen your writing skills. [Click this link to access this handout.](#)

Self-Care Note

Last but not least, prioritize your own needs and take care of yourself! Your own physical, mental, and emotional well-being is far more valuable than any grade or assignment. If you want to boost your productivity, you must incorporate rest, so remember that health is wealth!

Accessibility/Accommodations Resources

Center for Accessible Education: <http://www.cae.ucla.edu/>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) <http://www.counseling.ucla.edu/>

Arthur Ashe Student Health & Wellness Center: <https://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu/>

Undergraduate Academic Counseling (UAC):

<https://www.registrar.ucla.edu/Academics/Academic-Counseling>

Student in Crisis resource: <https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/>

Undergraduate Writing Center: <https://wp.ucla.edu/wc/>

Iris Cantor Women's Health Center: <https://www.uclahealth.org/womenshealth/>

LGBTQ Campus Resource Center: www.lgbt.ucla.edu/

UCLA Rape Treatment Center: www.careprogram.ucla.edu/Rape-Treatment-Center

Undocumented Student Resources: www.usp.ucla.edu

Course Schedule

MAIN THEMES		ASSIGNMENTS
Part I: Traditional Chinese Medicine		
Week 1	<p>Introduction & Foundations <u>Tuesday, March 26</u> Review Syllabi Activity: Mindfulness Meditation</p> <p><u>Thursday, March 28</u> Lecture: “The Illusion of Orientalism”</p>	<p>Reading: Fan, Arthur Yin, and Ziyi Fan. “Dr. Miriam Lee: A Heroine for the Start of Acupuncture as a Profession in the State of California,” (2014)</p>
Week 2	<p>Acupuncture <u>Tuesday, April 2</u> Lecture: “History & Theory”</p> <p><u>Thursday, April 4</u> Lecture: “Road to Legalization”</p>	<p>Reading: Huang, Sam Xian Sheng, and Jun Hu. “An Important Acupuncture Demonstration in the History of Legalization of Acupuncture in the United States.” (2020)</p>
Week 3	<p>Acupuncture, cont. <u>Tuesday, April 9</u> Lecture: “Community Activism”</p> <p><u>Thursday, April 11</u> Screening: <i>Dope is Death</i> (2020), 82 mins.</p>	<p>Reading: Shakur, Mutulu, and Urayoana Trinidad. “The Seed: History of the Original Acupuncture Detoxification Program at Lincoln Hospital.” (2022)</p>
Part II: Indian & Hindu Systems		
Week 4	<p>Yoga <u>Tuesday, April 17</u> Lecture: “History & Theory”</p> <p><u>Thursday, April 19</u> Lecture: “The Politics of Yoga”</p>	<p>Reading: Kale, Sunila S. and Christian Lee Novetzke. “The Cultural Politics of Yoga in India and the United States.” (2021)</p> <p>Due: Reading Reflection #1</p>
Week 5	<p>Yoga, cont. <u>Tuesday, April 23</u> Activity: Beginner Asana Postures</p> <p><u>Thursday, April 25</u> Activity: Midterm Review</p>	<p>Reading: Jain, Andrea R. “Namaste all day: Appropriating and Commodifying the Ancient, Exotic, and Evocative.” (2020)</p>

Week 6	Mid-quarter <u>Tuesday, April 23</u> Midterm Exam <u>Thursday, May 2</u> Guest Speaker: Laurie Cirel	N/A
Week 7	Ayurveda <u>Tuesday, May 7</u> Lecture: "History & Theory" <u>Thursday, May 9</u> Activity: "Controversies & Politics"	Reading: Jayasundar, Rama. "Ayurveda: A Distinctive Approach to Health and Disease." (2010)
Part III: Japanese Methods		
Week 8	Reiki <u>Tuesday, May 14</u> Lecture: "History & Theory" <u>Thursday, May 16</u> Lecture: "Controversies & Politics"	Reading: Stein, Justin B. "Universe Energy," (2019)
Week 9	Contemporary Japanese Minimalism <u>Tuesday, May 20</u> Activity: Reiki Share <u>Thursday, May 22</u> Lecture: "The KonMari Method" Screening: <i>Tidying Up with Marie Kondo</i> , Ep. 2	Optional Reading: Kondo, Marie. <i>The Life Changing Making of Tidying</i> (2014) Due: Reading Reflection #2
Week 10	Final Exam Week <u>Tuesday, May 27</u> Activity: Final Review <u>Thursday, May 29</u> Final Exam	Final Reminder: Submit all work before the end of this week!

*Syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

RATIONALE

Introduction

“Asian American Perspectives on Alternative Healing Modalities” is a 10-week course that examines the history, techniques, and critiques of alternative healing modalities that originated in the regions of China, India, and Japan and further transformed into contemporary practices in the United States. In particular, we will consider the historical and sociological contexts of commodification, orientalism, gender and self-empowerment. We will meet twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday for 75 minutes, or a weekly total of two hours and thirty minutes. This course will be based on a 100-point system featuring a combination of lectures, discussion, in-class activities, writing assignments, guest speakers, film screenings, and a cumulative final exam with a cap of 60 students. Reading materials will also include books such as Marie Kondo’s *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up* (2014), Miriam Lee’s *Insights of a Senior Acupuncturist* (1992), as well as articles including Sunila S. Kale and Christian Lee Novetzke’s “The Cultural Politics of Yoga in India and the United States,” (2021) and Mutulu Shakur and Urayoana Trinidad’s “The Seed: History of the Original Acupuncture Detoxification Program at Lincoln Hospital.” We will also learn about the contributions and sacrifices of pioneers and activists, including Miriam Lee, Hawayo Hiromi Takata, and Mutulu Shakur.

Part I: Traditional Chinese Medicine

Week 1 will serve as the introduction for this course on Asian American perspectives. After reviewing the syllabus and course expectations, we will proceed with mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness is both a practice and a skill, based on processes of

attention and acceptance to attain a state of positive wellbeing and calm concentration.³⁴ As such, the goal for this activity is to create a sense of peace and unity through stillness, which will help promote mental clarity and self-awareness. This shared experience will then transform into our first small group discussion, where students will use this opportunity to meet their desk-neighbor and recap their experiences. The next meeting will begin with our first lecture, “The Illusion of Orientalism,” which will introduce late Palestinian American and Columbia University literary professor Edward Said and his concept of orientalism, which critiques constructed ideas of how the Western world perceives the Orient.³⁵ Furthermore, we will review concepts based on Asian American history, including push-pull immigration factors, the capitalist need for large-scale cheap labor, the desire to pursue the “American Dream,” and the model minority myth or the damaging assumption that Asian Americans are naturally successful when in actuality the model minority myth is a stereotype used as a racial wedge among nonwhite groups. By offering a foundation for understanding how Asian America came to exist, students will be able to situate and identify the complex issues of commodification and orientalism.

Week 2 will investigate the history, conflict, and legalization of acupuncture in the United States, with a focus on Dr. Miriam Lee. Dr. Lee was born in 1926 in Shandong Province, China, studied in Singapore, and settled in Palo Alto, California, where she worked on an assembly line in a Hewlett-Packard factory. After running an underground acupuncture practice, treating up to 80 patients in a single day, Lee was arrested by agents of the Department of Consumer Affairs on April 16, 1974 on charges of practicing

³⁴ Bisht, Prachi, Rashmi Upreti, and Rani Shiksha. “Mindfulness and Mindfulness-Based Interventions: A Review Study.” *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology* 14, no. 2 (2023): 256–58.

³⁵ Said, Edward W., *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.

acupuncture in California without a medical license.³⁶ Over one hundred of her patients appeared to protest her arrest, revealing the social and cultural demand to recognize this medical practice. As a direct result, the charges were reversed and in 1975, Governor Jerry Brown signed the SB86 Bill legalizing acupuncture in California, the eighth state in the U.S. to do so. Because of her hard work and dedication to her patients, Lee is credited as the most influential pioneer in California's legalization of acupuncture and later lived to be 82 until 2009.³⁷

Another pivotal moment in acupuncture's recent history is the demonstration jointly organized by the San Francisco Medical Society and the San Francisco Medical School held on May 9, 1972.³⁸ On this day, 500 medical doctors from the California Medical Association (CMA) attended the demonstration and witnessed the immediate effects of the treatment of pain with only a handful of needles performed by Dr. Pien Bae Chi from Changwu, Jiangsu province, and Dr. Leung Kok Yuen from Guangdong province of China. The work of an acupuncture doctor is highly beneficial yet controversial, as the lectures and discussions will show in the upcoming week.

Week 3 will consider the Americanization of acupuncture as a form of relief aid to underprivileged communities and victims of heroin-addiction, most notably during the 1970s. Dr. Mutulu Shakur is among the first African American acupuncturists remembered as a healer and a revolutionary leader in the Black liberation movement. As a leader for the New Afrikan Independence Movement, Shakur created the Lincoln Detox acupuncture

³⁶ Fan, Arthur Yin, and Ziyi Fan. "Dr. Miriam Lee: A Heroine for the Start of Acupuncture as a Profession in the State of California." *Journal of Integrative Medicine* 12, no. 3 (May 2014): 182–86. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2095-4964\(14\)60016-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2095-4964(14)60016-9).

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Huang, Sam Xian Sheng, and Jun Hu. "An Important Acupuncture Demonstration in the History of Legalization of Acupuncture in the United States." *Chinese Medicine and Culture* 3, no. 4 (2020): 241–44. https://doi.org/10.4103/CMAC.CMAC_38_20.

program to support victims of the War on Drugs by 1) using acupuncture to detoxify heroin withdrawals, and 2) by teaching recovering addicts about the political histories of the socioeconomic role of organized crime.³⁹ In a journal memoir, Shakur reveals the extreme tensions of his acupuncture work by writing about the mysterious assassinations of his colleagues, including Dr. Richard Taft, the medical director who oversaw the state and health regulations.⁴⁰ Other prominent supporters include Japanese American activist Yuri Kochiyama, who took the New Afrikan oath of allegiance from Herman Ferguson, another associate of Malcolm X, in 1969 and dropped her “slave name” (Mary) in favor of her Japanese name “Yuri.”⁴¹ Shakur first discovered alternative healing modalities when close friend Kochiyama brought him and his sons to New York’s Chinatown, where he witnessed firsthand how acupuncture and moxibustion, an East Asian medical heat therapy, cured his sons’ car accident injuries.⁴² As illustrated, the story of Black political resistance is intertwined with the histories of Asian American supporters and healing practices.

In the second class meeting, we will screen *Dope is Death*, a 2020 documentary created by filmmaker Mia Donovan. The film focuses on the impact of the Young Lords, a predominantly Puerto Rican group operating out of East Harlem, and the Black Panther Party, an organization which had 30 chapters in 1969, in support of the needs of the Black American community. The film also highlights the 5 point technique that Shakur created and passed on to younger generations. In addition, the film features archival photos and videos based on the Lincoln Hospital takeover in the South Bronx of New York on July 14,

³⁹ Umoja, Akinyele. “Straight Ahead: The Life of Resistance of Dr. Mutulu Shakur.” *Souls* 23, no. 1–2 (April 1, 2022): 4–35.

⁴⁰ Shakur, Mutulu, and Urayoana Trinidad. “The Seed: History of the Original Acupuncture Detoxification Program at Lincoln Hospital.” *Souls* 23, no. 1–2 (April 1, 2022): 36–48.

⁴¹ Umoja, Akinyele.

⁴² Shakur, Mutulu, and Urayoana Trinidad.

1970. Dr. Mutulu Shakur describes this area “like a ravaged war zone: arson sprees by landlords left the area’s residents homeless, while landlords, city government, and media conveniently blamed the youth and gangs for the damage.”⁴³ A self-identified political prisoner of war, Shakur was incarcerated for 38 years and denied compassionate release over ten times. Shakur peacefully passed away on July 7, 2023, at 72 years old after being released for less than eight months.

Another African American advocate for acupuncture is Dr. Tolbert Small of Oakland, California, the sole physician who traveled with the Black Panther Party on a trip to China in 1972, after Mao Zedong, chairman of the Chinese government, issued a global call to support the Black struggle against U.S. government oppression. Small was inspired by the movement of how one million barefoot doctors brought medicine into China’s local communities, later becoming one of the first “research acupuncturists” as acupuncture was still illegal in 1972.⁴⁴ Small and members of the Lincoln Detox program have never met, but the Black Panther revolutionaries created their own version of a self-assembled toolkit, which allowed space for quick and accessible care and healing. In other words, the establishment of acupuncture in the United States was only made possible through the collective grassroots efforts of multicultural and interethnic community members who demanded a drug-free medicine.

Part II: Indian & Hindu Systems

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Meng, Eana. “Use of Acupuncture by 1970s Revolutionaries of Color: The South Bronx ‘Toolkit Care’ Concept.” *American Journal of Public Health*.

Week 4 will begin with the lecture, “The History & Theory of Yoga,” a practice that has been recorded in *The Yoga Sutra* by Hindu philosopher Patanjali during the 2nd century to the 4th century. Yoga is a philosophical system that is based on the Spirit and Matter, consisting of eight limbs: *yama* (external restraints), *niyama* (internal restraints), *asana* (poses), *pranayama* (breathing), *pratyahara* (withdrawal of the senses), *darana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation), and *samadhi* (enlightenment).⁴⁵ During this week, students will submit two pages of Reading Reflection #1, which will encapsulate the major themes that we discussed this far such as concepts of resistance, social reproduction, or the need for community-accessible tools. The second lecture, “The Politics of Yoga,” will then examine the Western commodification of yoga, a practice that originated in India. Sunila Kale, Associate Professor at Jackson School of International Studies who is also Chair and Director of the South Asia Studies Center, argued in favor of yoga as a tool for understanding how Indians opposed colonial rule, specifically built upon high-caste and upper-class Hindu.⁴⁶ In actuality, the earliest yoga is documented in the Vedas, India’s earliest scriptures, since BCE (before Common Era). Yoga has also continuously reinvented these four basic principles: 1) analysis of perception and cognition, 2) the raising and expansion of consciousness, 3) a path to omniscience, 4) a technique for entering into other bodies, and 5) the attainment of other supernatural accomplishments.⁴⁷ Andrea R. Jain, professor of religious studies at Indiana University in Indianapolis, discusses how the mainstream phenomenon of the multi-billion-dollar global industry of yoga is characterized by entrepreneurs and corporations rebranding the concept into a lifestyle filled with

⁴⁵ Villate, Vanessa M. “Yoga for College Students: An Empowering Form of Movement and Connection.” *Physical Educator* 72(1): 44–66, 2015.

⁴⁶ Kale, Sunila S. and Christian Lee Novetzke. “The Cultural Politics of Yoga in India and the United States.” *At Home and Abroad: The Politics of American Religion*, 210-227.

⁴⁷ White, David Gordon. “Yoga, Brief History of an Idea.” *Yoga in Practice*. Princeton Press, 2012

apparel, products, leisure travel, and teacher training programs.⁴⁸ In brief, yoga exists as a form of hierarchical knowledge that holds room for appropriation and commodification.

Week 5 will build on the prior week with an activity that puts yoga theory into practice: we will meet outside of the classroom on a grass field. To prepare for this outdoor activity, students will be required to bring a yoga mat or towel, proper athletic wear, and water to hydrate during this light yet kinesthetic exercise. For students who have physical disabilities or are limited in movement or time outside, an alternative activity will be provided in the form of a controlled breathing activity known as *pranayama*.⁴⁹ Since this course will be primarily focused on the historical examination of healing arts practices, students will receive full credit for participating in this physical activity. Vanessa Villate, professor of pedagogy and a 200-hour certified yoga instructor, conducted a study with her Texas public university students as a part of a physical education requirement. The study results found that the students experienced calmness, focus, and empowerment after engaging in the weekly yoga class.⁵⁰ In this respect, this in-person activity will offer students an opportunity to experience holistic learning that is cognizant of the mind, body, and spirit.

During our second meeting in week 5, students will return to the classroom for the opportunity to review for their midterm. As an incentive for attending this session, students will develop a review sheet consisting of keywords, definitions, and short-answer questions. Moving into Week 6 will be the midterm exam, which is worth 100 points or 30% of the overall grade. The midterm will consist of 20 multiple choice questions and 5

⁴⁸ Jain, Andrea R. "Namaste all day: Appropriating and Commodifying the Ancient, Exotic, and Evocative." *Peace Love Yoga: The Politics of Global Spirituality*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.

⁴⁹ Villate, Vanessa M. "Yoga for College Students: An Empowering Form of Movement and Connection." *Physical Educator* 72(1): 44–66, 2015.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

short-answer questions that will ask about the role of the Black Panther Party in the social history of acupuncture. In addition, the midterm will include questions regarding Asian American histories of acupuncture, medicine, and healing. The final question will ask students to reflect on the application of their own-lived experiences in regards to the in-class yoga or breathing activity.

For our second meeting, we will have Master Yoga Trainer Laurie Cirel as our guest speaker. Cirel is also a graduate of CSU Fullerton's Master of Arts in Political Science with over a decade of experience as a kinesiological movement instructor. Cirel is a full-time instructor who teaches a cohort of upcoming yoga instructors twice yearly at Ra Yoga University, an institution accredited with the Yoga Alliance Foundation which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization founded in Virginia in 1993. As a guest speaker, she will discuss the role of yoga within the context of neoliberal capitalist market, as well as the importance of existing in the present moment during a time of excess digital realities by offering tools that only require the breath or movement of our own bodies. The purpose of this guest lecture is to offer insight on the political ramifications of modern yoga, as well as to promote long-term health sustainability by managing stress and burnout during a pandemic era of collegiate education.

During Week 7, we will expand our knowledge by critically learning about classical Indian medicine, Āyurveda, in the lecture, "History & Theory." Āyurveda, or in Sanskrit "the knowledge for long life," is based on the body of medical theory and practice first documented in 250 BCE.⁵¹ Āyurveda is a complete medicinal herb system that deals with all aspects of physical health, mental balance, spiritual well-being, social welfare, and

⁵¹ Wujastyk, Dominik. "The Path to Liberation through Yogic Mindfulness in Early Āyurveda," *Yoga in Practice*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

environmental consideration. Āyurveda focuses on disease prevention, optimizes vitality, and removes illnesses by following a holistic approach to health. This method requires the balancing of the three biological factors known as *tridosha* (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) together with aspects of life in a philosophy where *satma* (mind), *atma* (spirit), *sharira* (physical) and *indriya* (sense organs or intellect). The main aim of *Chikitsa* (therapeutic management/treatment) is to convert unhappiness into happiness by being fundamentally guided by *Samanya* (general) and *Visesha* (particular) principles. In this perspective, a person's body is made up of a unique proportion of each of the five elements of nature: ether, air, fire, water, and earth.⁵² Rama Jayasundar, Professor at All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi, India, asserts that Āyurveda situates a conceptual framework for understanding the complex human body, which is an important resource for filling in the gap that traditional biomedicine does not possess a vocabulary for, such as the three different *doshas* (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*) that refer to the various psycho-physiological functions of the body.⁵³ Meanwhile, Asian American groups who possess low socioeconomic status, particularly those who are foreign-born, are twice as likely to be at poverty-level compared to their U.S. born and naturalized counterparts.⁵⁴ By illuminating the holistic structure of Āyurveda, which includes an emphasis on diet and lifestyle activities, underprivileged minority communities can access better quality health without depending on expensive insurance or hospital bills.

⁵² Mukherjee, Pulok K., Ranjit K. Harwansh, Shiv Bahadur, Subhadip Banerjee, Amit Kar, Joydeb Chanda, Sayan Biswas, Sk. Milan Ahmmed, and C.K. Katiyar. "Development of Ayurveda – Tradition to Trend." *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 197 (February 2017): 10–24.

⁵³ Jayasundar, Rama. "Ayurveda: A Distinctive Approach to Health and Disease." *Current Science*. Vol. 98, No. 7 (2010): 908-914.

⁵⁴ Kim, Isok, Juan Chen, and Michael S. Spencer. "Social Determinants of Health and Mental Health Among Asian Americans in the United States." *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research* 3, no. 4 (January 2012): 346–61.

In the next lecture, “Controversies & Politics,” we will explore the challenges of recognizing Āyurveda as an herbal drug therapy. The assigned reading includes the article, “‘Science’ vs. ‘Religion’ in Classical Āyurvedic,” by Steven Engler who holds a PhD in Religion from Concordia University in Montréal and is Professor of Religious Studies at Mount Royal University in Alberta, Canada. Engler’s work describes the possible categories and the intersections between the competitor roles given between Western physicians and *brahmins*, or members of the highest castes who Hindu priests considered to be spiritual and intellectual leaders. Engler contends that conceptual tensions between “religion,” “magic,” and “science” reflect ongoing socioeconomic conditions, such as social, political, and economic pressures. Additionally, we will consider the cross-cultural role of ayurvedic medicine as a culture, in the context of social reproduction in contemporary India.⁵⁵

Amreen Sekhon, who holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Psychology and is faculty of the same alma mater in Panjab University in Chandigarh, India, contends that mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social aspects—is fundamental to an individual’s overall well-being. Sekhon’s research demonstrates how mindfulness training significantly reduces anxiety symptoms particularly among those with generalized anxiety disorders.⁵⁶ Despite the controversial religious and political history of Āyurveda, socioeconomic status continues to situate a critical influence on physical and mental health outcomes of Asian Americans.⁵⁷ For individuals who lack insurance or possess limited

⁵⁵ Abraham, Leena. “Medicine as Culture: Indigenous Medicine in Cosmopolitan Mumbai.” *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 44, No. 16 (April 2009), 68-75

⁵⁶ Sekhon, Amreen. “Mindfulness and its Impact on Mental Health: A Review.” *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*. 114, no. 2 (2023): 252-255

⁵⁷ Kim, Isok, Juan Chen, and Michael S. Spencer. “Social Determinants of Health and Mental Health Among Asian Americans in the United States.” *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research* 3, no. 4 (January 2012): 346-61.

English-language proficiency, Āyurvedic treatment can serve as an important resource for long-term health and disease prevention.

Part III: Japanese Methods

Week 8 will focus on topics about *reiki*, beginning with the lecture, “History & Theory,” where we will learn about the system created by Dr. Mikao Usui, born in Japan in 1865. Usui acquired this knowledge from studying Sanskrit Sutras of Tibet and was enlightened with the symbols of its knowledge during a 21-day fasting retreat on Mount Kurama, a mountain located north of the city of Kyoto in Japan. Usui went on to initiate a cohort of 16 Reiki Masters. One of his disciples is Dr. Chujiro Hayashi, who is credited with developing formal hand positions for a written manual.⁵⁸ The foundation of the Usui Reiki healing system is based on self-healing, where the recipient must move forth with their own agency after the session ends.

Reiki is a Japanese name for a universal life force that exists among all living beings. *Reiki* is both a practice and a form of life-force energy, characterized by the gentle placement of the practitioner's hands onto the patient. This hands-on healing approach is universally accessible as it requires no tools. A *reiki* session may have the recipient sitting or lying with a straight spine, with the practitioner moving and repositioning their hands above the crown, forehead, or chest. This gentle, hands-on interaction between the practitioner and the recipient is a channel that emphasizes the power of human touch, as the natural warmth of the hands along with a moment of peace is effective in lowering cortisol levels and redirecting the flow of blood. This flow can also be labeled as *qi*, or the energy flow, in a process that is related to

⁵⁸ Gilberti, Theresa C. “Reiki: The Re-Emergence of an Ancient Healing Art in Modern Times.” *Home Health Care Management & Practice* 16, no. 6 (October 2004): 480–86.

acupuncture.⁵⁹ *Reiki* provides a framework for understanding the holistic nature of the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and spirit, with the spiritual aspect open to the user's interpretation of faith.

The next lecture, "Controversies & Politics," will consider the development this healing art faced as a result of Usui's Zen Buddhist origin and its development from the Sutras, an Eastern philosophical format. Hawayo Takata was born in Kaua'i in the year 1900 to Japanese immigrant laborers in Hawai'i. After suffering from intense abdominal pains, she traveled to Japan to the Hayashi Reiki Research Society where she was completely healed after three weeks of treatment. She studied reiki in Japan under the training of Chujiro Hayashi. In 1936, she returned to Hawai'i, where she primarily taught and practiced Reiki in the *Nikkei* or Japanese American community. Takata then incorporated teaching tours during the period of the 1950s-1970s to reach primarily white, English-speaking audiences in the continental United States. During this time, she also appealed to the Christian hegemony in her advertisements by describing *reiki* as "God's power made available to those who desire to be free of suffering." But religion does not matter because *reiki* is universal, and different cultures recognize this energy as their own cultural knowledge.⁶⁰ While Takata is credited with introducing *reiki* to the *Nikkei* community in Hawai'i, she also charged upwards of \$10,000 to attune the next generation of *Reiki* masters who were predominantly white-students in the mainland United States. From the perspective of Asian American studies, this dichotomy highlights the complexity of Takata's role in the reproduction of what would have been a lost healing art. Takata gained recognition through her hard work and dedication, but

⁵⁹ Lee, Miriam. *Insights of a Senior Acupuncturist: One Combination of Points Can Treat Many Diseases*. 1st ed. Boulder, CO: Blue Poppy Press, 1992.

⁶⁰ Stein, Justin B. "Universe Energy." *Asian Medicine* (Leiden, Netherlands) 2019 (1): 81-103.

accomplished this by offering reiki as a luxury commodity to be purchased at a high price point. However, most of her travel teaching work occurred after World War II, an era when anti-Japanese sentiment still echoed and financial opportunities were scarce.

Week 9 will move towards contemporary techniques with a focus on Japanese author and celebrity Marie Kondo, who invented the KonMari technique that sold over 6 million books. The premise of this approach to minimalism is to reject consumer culture in favor of removing clutter and reducing the need for materialism. The “magic” that Kondo refers to in her book is the emotion of joy resulting from the shift in the mindset of valuing quality and ease of life, including our relationship with ourselves and others.⁶¹ This process of decluttering also serves as an act of self-respect and gratitude to challenge and critically evaluate our attachments to worldly possessions. Susan Noh, who holds a Ph.D. in Media and Cultural Studies from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and is Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia, responds to criticism by pinpointing the cultural and spiritual differences of Kondo, a female figure inspired by Zen Buddhism in contrast to America’s insatiable consumer consumption.⁶² In this case, the controversy between Kondo’s critics and their attachment to overindulgent possessions represent a gap in societal consciousness and mindfulness that serves the purpose of holistic healing.

Upon the next meeting, we will watch the second episode of the Netflix series, *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo* (2019), which features three generations in a Japanese American family. This episode highlights the cultural differences between the native-Japanese Kondo and the

⁶¹ Kondo, Marie. *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up: the Japanese Art of Decluttering*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House, 2014.

⁶² Noh, Suan. “Cosmopolitan Fan Activism.” *Race and Media: Critical Approaches*, edited by Lori Kido Lopez. New York, NY: NYU Press, 2020.

Akiyama family, a Japanese American family drowning in mountains-sized clutter, boxes, and miscellaneous items. Ron and Wendy Akiyama, married for 42 years, met as next-door neighbors who later inherited the same house Ron's parents purchased in 1968. After six weeks of committing to the KonMari process, the retired couple discovered buried treasure: a handwritten journal that belonged to Ron's father, which includes an entry that dates to December 7, 1941 in reference to the Japanese military attack on Pearl Harbor. In the episode, Ron Akiyama uses the term "interned" to describe the experiences that his father documented about his family's forced relocation to the Santa Anita racetrack; however, "incarceration" serves as a better term to appropriately describe the prison-like conditions that Japanese Americans faced.⁶³ Moreover, this historical artifact might not have been discovered without the assistance of Marie Kondo. Because of the techniques and resources that she created for an American audience, Kondo is able to assist Asian Americans including the Akiyama family to rediscover how the most valuable items are not commodified products. Before the week concludes, Reading Reflection #2 will submit two pages about themes concerning the parallels between the various modalities of healing and cross-cultural conflicts that we already discussed.

Week 10 will cumulatively conclude this course with a Final Exam, where we will begin the week with a final review session. This session will allow students to ask questions to create a review guide filled with topics covered since the beginning of the course, including historical moments such as the acupuncture demonstration. Similarly to the midterm, students will have 75 minutes to complete their final, consisting of 20 multiple choice questions and 5 short-answer responses. The final exam questions introduce new concepts such as the history

⁶³ Seattle Japanese American Citizens League. *Power of Words Handbook: A Guide to Language about Japanese Americans in World War II; Understanding Euphemisms and Preferred Terminology*, Revised 2020.

of *reiki* and *yoga*, as well as content from the film and TV screenings. The final exam questions cover the assigned academic readings of the entire course, as well as reflective questions regarding the in-class *reiki* share activity.

Conclusion

“Asian American Perspectives on Alternative Healing Modalities” will support the knowledge of healing arts recreated and reproduced in the Western world. We explored the history, controversies, and contemporary landscape of practices that hold roots in the cultures and regions of China, India, and Japan. What makes the natural healing modalities of *reiki*, acupuncture and *yoga* unique is that their creation is the result of the social reproduction of ancient wisdom, in which records are ambiguous. In other words, the history of healing modalities adds a significant dimension to the field of ethnic studies as these histories are intertwined and interconnected with minority communities that would not have been able to access these resources otherwise. The most notable examples about grassroots activism include Dr. Mutulu Shakur’s 5-point acupuncture system used as a tool for assisting drug-addicts to recover from withdrawal. The common, underlying theme of the flow of *qi* is that the receiver must be proactive in their own life-long healing process rather than it being a single event. In this course, we will discuss the importance of maintaining a balanced lifestyle to promote sustainability in a contemporary society that is obsessed with productivity. Students will also benefit from learning about the application and praxis of beginner techniques they can use to develop their consciousness beyond the conclusion of this course.

I created this course as a means of deepening my own practice as a Reiki Master and my interests in the healing arts, which are not typically recognized by Western bureaucracy. Overall, conducting research for this project was difficult as the volume of academically recognized materials produced by Asian American scholars is still scarce. As such, I hope that my work will contribute to filling the gap of knowledge that is traditionally passed orally and in-person. Given that we are now recovering from a pandemic era marked by an overabundance of conflicting information, surveillance data, and disposable technology, I am making a call to action that we, as a society, need to promote sustainability by turning to natural methods that remind us about the healing power of human beings.

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