

Fall 2019 Course Descriptions

Instructor: Vanita Reddy

Course: ENGL 474

Title: Studies in Women Writers: Asian American Women's Literature and Media

Description: In this upper division course, we will examine a range of literary and cultural production by Asian American women produced after the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, which marked a significant rise in the numbers of Asians immigrating to the U.S. We will explore the ways in which these artists' various cultural forms--novels, short stories, poetry, memoirs, film, performance, and digital media--serve as sites for the formation of subjectivities and communities within and beyond the national borders of "America." This course will challenge you to think critically about categories that might otherwise be taken for granted (such as race, gender, nationality, sexuality, and citizenship) and to try to see the world from the perspective of someone who is located in a different body, situation, place than perhaps your own.

Imperial wars abroad, military interventions, immigration laws, gendered labor migrations, and the global restructuring of capital all have served to make invisible if not erase the histories of Asian migrant and Asian American women. We will think about these histories through Asian American women's writing (broadly conceived), as it constructs and disrupts national identity--even how it points to the limits of nation-centered models of identity and community formation--by revealing its multiple gaps and fissures.

Proposed Readings: Fae Ng, *Bone* (1993) (novel)

Shailja Patel, *Migritude* (2010) (prose-poem)

Najla Said, *Looking for Palestine* (2015) (memoir)

Mira Nair, *Mississippi Masala* (1991) (feature film)

Deanne Borshay Liem, *First Person Plural* (2000) (documentary film)

Chitra Ganesh and Miriam Ghani, *A Warm Database* (2004) (digital media)

Gina Kim, *Never Forever* (2007) (feature film)