

Wellesley

Syllabus for WOST 307
Imaging Asian/American Women
Friday: 12:30-2:40pm

Professor Elena Tajima Creef
Founders 422/xt. 2199
Office Hours: Friday 3-5pm

This course will look at Orientalism as a historical discourse as a way of framing the representation of Asian women in American culture. We will look at the historical representations of Asian women in the U.S. beginning with the turn of the century world's fairs and the immigration of "picture brides," wartime and postwar incarnations of the "dragon lady" in popular culture (in cartoons and through the figures of "Tokyo Rose" and Yoko Ono), and the work of contemporary Asian American feminist performance, installation, and spoken word artists who engage in self-reflexive critiques of Asian American Orientalism in their creative work.

Required Books

Edward Said. <i>Orientalism</i> (1978)	(2003)
Shirley J. Lim. <i>A Feeling of Belonging</i> (2006)	Nikki S. Lee. <i>Parts</i> (2005)
Denise Uyehara. <i>Maps of City and Body</i>	

Section One: Photographic Histories of Asian Women in America

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| Week 1 | Introductions |
| Feb. 3 | Film: Sut Jally's "Edward Said's 'Orientalism'" (2002) |
| Week 2 | Orientalism as a Framing Theoretical Discourse |
| Feb. 10 | Edward Said. <i>Orientalism</i> (1978): Read "Preface," "Introduction"; Chapter One: "The Scope of Orientalism"; & Section IV ("The Latest Phase") in Chapter Three: "The New Orientalism." |
| Week 3 | Turn-of-the-Century American Orientalism: Asians at the Worlds' Fairs |
| Feb. 17 | Robert Rydell: "Introduction" & "The Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Saint Louis, 1904" (e-reserve); Carol Ann Christ: 'The Sole Guardians of the Art Inheritance of Asia': Japan and China at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair" (e-reserve); James W. Vanstone: "The Ainu Group at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904" (e-reserve). |
| Week 4 | East to America: Picturing Japanese "Picture Brides" in American History |
| Feb. 24 | Jennifer Gee: "Housewives, Men's Villages, and Sexual Respectability: Gender and the Interrogation of Asian Women at the Angel Island Immigration Station" (e-reserve); oral histories from Tomoko Makabe: |

Picture Brides (e-reserve); Immigration case files (e-reserve).

- Week 5
Mar. 2 The Illicit Asian American Gaze: Outside of "Official Visual History"
Films: Robert Nakamura: "Something Strong Within: Home Movies from America's Concentration Camps" (1994) (screened in class)
- Week 6
Mar. 10 Documenting Gender/Domesticity in the Photographs of the Camps
Caroline Chung Simpson: "'That Faint and Elusive Insinuation': Internment & the Dawn of the Postwar" (e-reserve); Judith Fryer Davidov: "The Color of My Skin, the Shape of My Eyes: Photographs of the Japanese-American Internment by Dorothea Lange, Ansel Adams, and Toyo Miyatake" (e-reserve); Ansel Adams *Born Free and Equal* (handout)
- Week 7
Mar. 17 WRA Research Assignment (in pairs)
- Week 8
Mar. 24 Have a Nice Spring Break!
- Week 9
Mar. 31 Student Presentations on the WRA Photography Archive
Wendy Kozol: "Relocating Citizenship in Photographs of Japanese Americans During World War II" (e-reserve)
- Week 10
April 7 No class meeting
- Week 11
April 14 The Postwar Beauty and Visibility of Asian (American) Women
Shirley J. Lim: "Contested Beauty" & "Oriental Wave: Foreign-Born Asian Beauty" in *A Feeling of Belonging: Asian American Women's Public Culture, 1930-1960*

Section Two: Dragon Lady Embodiments in Popular American Culture
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- Week 12
April 21 Tokyo Rose/Dragon Ladies
Caroline Chung Simpson. "How Rose Becomes Red: The Case of Tokyo Rose & the Postwar Beginnings of Cold War Culture" (e-reserve); Transcript of "Zero Hour" broadcasts; Looney Tunes: "Tokyo Woes" (screened in class)
- Week 13
April 28 Representations of Yoko Ono in American Culture
Midori Yoshimoto: "The Message is the Medium: The Community Art of Yoko Ono" (e-reserve); Francine Prose: "Yoko Ono" (e-reserve);

Film: Yoko Ono: "Cut Piece" & "Box of Smile" (shown in class)

Section Three: Contemporary Representations of Self

Week 14 The Refracted Self: Producing Asian American Identity Ad Infinitum
May 5 Performing History/Performing the Body
Denise Uyehara. *Maps of Self, Maps of Body* (2003) & Nikki S. Lee: *Parts*
(2005)
Film: Grace Lee: "The Grace Lee Project" (2006) (screening TBA)

Course requirements: Participation and attendance at weekly meetings. Three in-class presentations. Two reaction papers (3-5 pages). One 20 page research term paper.

Term Papers due May 10 by 5pm in Women's Studies Lounge
(no late papers)

