

History 299-01
Term: Spring 2007
Room: Library Room 206
Class Time: MW 12:20-1:35
Office Hours: M11-12, T3-4, W5-6

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Boston's Asian American Communities

Boston has established long-standing ties with Asia through the old China trade and Chinatown since the 19th century, and there is now an influx of immigrants from East, Southeast and South Asia in recent decades. Although Asian Americans are the fastest growing community in Massachusetts, they are also among the least understood. This seminar will explore the changing experiences of Asian immigrants and Asian Americans in Greater Boston. Through historical and ethnographic research on local Asian American communities, students will gain a better understanding of global migration patterns, race relations and civil rights, women and gender, media portrayals, public health, and other issues relating to social justice and community engagement. Students will be asked to utilize texts, audio-visual materials, local research or fieldwork, and interviews in exploring community voices over time.

A second-year seminar is intended to enable students to develop critical skills of reading, writing, and oral presentations. We will devote each week to a combination of lectures and discussions as well as presentations by students. Students are required to write two 6 to 8 page papers, about national and local issues respectively. You are expected to complete the assigned readings before coming to class and participate actively in class discussion. Repeated unexcused absences will lower your grade average. No late papers will be allowed, except with family or medical emergency, or a legitimate excuse before the assignment is due.

Required Texts: (available at the bookstore)

Helen Zia, Asian American Dreams

Eric Liu, The Accidental Asian

Other articles online for download listed in the schedule of classes

Course Assignments:

- 1) Attendance, class participation and presentations (20% of grade)
- 2) First paper (6 to 8 pages), on Asian American history and culture in the United States. (40% of grade), based mainly on the textbooks and e-resources.
- 3) Second paper (6 to 8 pages), on Asian American experience and issues in Massachusetts and Greater Boston (40 % of grade), based mainly on outside sources and field research.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

- 1/17 Introduction to the course:
Key themes: race, immigration, community, culture, history, identity.
- 1/22 Images and Perceptions of Asian Americans
Zia, chapter 1
Liu, chapter 1
Film: excerpts of My America
- 1/24 The First Wave of Asian Migration
Zia, chapter 2, pp. 21-35.
Film: excerpts of Ancestors in the Americas: Sailors, Coolies, and Settlers
- 1/29 Chinese Exclusion and Chinatowns
Liu, chapter 4
Zia, chapter 2, pp. 35-39.
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/chinex.htm> (Chinese Exclusion Act)
Website reports:
<http://www.pbs.org/ancestorsintheamericas/> (Ancestors in the Americas)
<http://www.pbs.org/becomingamerican/> (Becoming Chinese American)
<http://www.aiisf.org/> (Angel Island Immigration Station)
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award99/cubhtml/cichome.html> (Chinese in California)
<http://www.chsa.org/> (Chinese Historical Society of America)
www.moca-nyc.org (Museum of the Chinese in America)
- 1/31 History of Boston Chinatown
<http://www.msp.umb.edu/texts/qchinese.html> (Chinese in Massachusetts)
Supplementary readings to be distributed:
“Boston’s Chinatown since 1872,” “Two Early Accounts in Boston’s Chinatown”
<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/occasional/ShehongChen.pdf>
(Reconstructing the Chinese American Experience in Lowell)
Film: excerpt of The Chinatown Banquet
- 2/5 The Internment of Japanese Americans in WWII
Zia, chapter 2, 39-44
<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5154> (Executive Order 9066)
Film: From Other Shore
- 2/7 Executive Order 9066 and the Japanese Internment
Website reports:
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov1999/rabbitinthemoon/index.html> (Rabbit in the Moon)
<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/conscience/> (Conscience and the Constitution)
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/index.html> (A More Perfect Union)
<http://jarda.cdlib.org/> (Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive)
<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/dynaweb/ead/calher/jvac/> (War Relocation Photographs)

- 2/12 Post-1965 Immigration and New Racial Tensions
Zia, chapter 2, 44-54, chapter 3.
Film: Who Killed Vincent Chin
- 2/14 Asian American Stereotypes and Identities
Zia, chapters 4 and 5.
Liu, chapter 2
- 2/19 No class
- 2/21 Asian American Movements and Interracial Conflicts
Zia, chapters 6 to 8
Liu, chapters 3 and 5
Film: excerpts of Another America
- 2/26 The Model Minority Debate
Liu, chapter 6
Zia, chapter 11
- 2/28 Paper presentations
Chinese New Year dinner
- 3/3 or 3/5 Field trip to Chinatown
- 3/7 First paper due
- Spring break
- 3/26 Contemporary Asian American culture and identities
Zia, chapters 9 to 12
Liu, chapter 7
- 3/28 Asian Americans in Massachusetts today
http://www.iaas.umb.edu/research/census/community_profiles/profile_MA_2000_Final.pdf
- 4/2 Asian Americans in Metro Boston: Growth, Diversity, and Complexity
http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/general/AA_Metro_Boston.pdf
- 4/4 Asian American Community Profiles in Massachusetts
Website reports:
<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/general/ChAminMA.pdf>
(Chinese Americans in Massachusetts)
http://www.iaas.umb.edu/research/census/community_profiles/
Boston, Dorchester, Lowell, Quincy, Cambridge, Worcester, Brookline, Malden,
Newton, Lynn, Somerville,, Waltham, Framingham, Lexington, Randolph,

Brockton, Attleboro, Fall River, New Bedford, Providence

4/9 Urban Redevelopment and Struggles of Communities
<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/occasional/AndrewLeong.pdf>

(The Struggle Over Parcel C)

Film: excerpts of Chinatown Banquet

4/11 Housing Issues for Communities of Color
<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/general/stonesummary.pdf>
(Housing Affordability for Households of Color in Massachusetts)

<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/general/stonereport.pdf>

(Optional: full report)

Website reports:: Local Community Organizations (New England)

http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~pluralsm/98wrb/resourc_.htm

[Asian American Civic Association](#)

[Asian American Movement Ezine](#)

[Asian American Resource Workshop](#)

[Asian Big Sister Program](#)

[Asian Community Development Corporation](#)

[Asian Pacific American Agenda Coalition](#)

[Asian Sisters in Action](#)

[Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center](#)

[Boston Chinese Radio](#)

[Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association](#)

[Chinese Progressive Association](#)

[Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth \(CAPAY\)](#)

[Filipino Intercollegiate Networking Dialogue](#)

[India Association of Greater Boston](#)

[Indian American Forum for Political Ed.](#)

[Light of Cambodian Children](#)

[Mass. Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, Inc. \(MIRA\)](#)

[Pakistan Association of Greater Boston](#)

[Project Impact](#)

[South Asian Women for Action \(SAWA\)](#)

[South Cove Community Health Center](#)

[Vietnamese American Initiative for Development](#)

4/14 or 4/16 No class

Possible field trip to Dorchester or Quincy or Lowell

4/18 Political Issues for Asian American Communities
<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/general/PoliticalAAContrib.pdf>

(Political Contributions by Asian Americans)

http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/IAAS_Voter_Reg.pdf

(Enabling the Asian American Electorate)

4/23 Labor and Public Health Issues for Asian Americans

<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/occasional/MarleneKim.pdf>

(Do Asian Men Face Wage Discrimination?)

http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/AA_Elderly_Women_Study.pdf

(A Survey of Health Services and Identification for Asian American Elderly Women)

4/25 Asian American Student Empowerment

<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/occasional/PeterKiang.pdf>

(Organizing for Asian Pacific American Student Empowerment)

4/30 Psychosocial Issues for Refugee Communities

<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/occasional/LeakhenaNou.pdf>

(A Qualitative Examination of Psychosocial Adjustment of Khmer Refugees in Three Massachusetts Communities)

5/2 Survey of Diversity

<http://www.iaas.umb.edu/publications/general/McCDivPoll.pdf>

Paper presentations

5/7 Final paper Due