Women's Studies 248
“Asian American Women Writers”
Monday/Thursday 9:50-11:00

Professor Elena Tajima Creef
Office Hours: Wed. 1-3
Ext. 2199

Course Description:
This course surveys the historical development of Asian American women’s literature. Among the questions central to our examination: How is Asian American writing positioned within the larger field of American literature (as well as within the sub-fields of other ethnic minority literatures)? Is there such a thing as a “canon” in Asian American literature? How has feminism impacted the writings of Asian American women? The first half of this course will survey early writings in their social and historical contexts. During the second half, we will look at the work of contemporary writers.

Required Texts
Amerasia Journal: Velina Hasu Houston, ed. No Passing Zone
Winnifred Eaton (Onoto Watanna). Me: A Book of Remembrance (1915)
Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston. Farewell to Manzanar (1973)
Nora Okja Keller Fox Girl (2002)
Monica Sone. Nisei Daughter (1953)
Jade Snow Wong. Fifth Chinese Daughter (1950)
Lois-Ann Yamanaka. Saturday Nights at the Pahala Theatre (Bamboo Ridge Press, 1995)
Mitsuye Yamada. Camp Notes and Other Poems (1992)

Early Autobiographical Writings of Asian American Women

Week 1  Early Asian American Women’s Writing: The Eaton Sisters
Jan. 27 Introductions.
Film: clips from Allie Light & Irving Saraf: Mitsuye & Nellie: Two Asian American Poets (1981)
Jan. 30 Sui Sin Far (Edith Eaton): “Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of an Eurasian”
(1914) (e-reserve)

Week 2  Early Asian American Women’s Writing: The Eaton Sisters
Feb. 3 Onoto Watanna (Winnifred Eaton): Me: A Book of Remembrance (1915)
Feb. 6 Onoto Watanna (Winnifred Eaton): Me: A Book of Remembrance (1915)
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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>A Chinese American Model Minority Success Story?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td>Jade Snow Wong: <em>Fifth Chinese Daughter</em> (1950)</td>
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<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td>Lecture: Chandra Talpade Mohanty: “Feminism without Borders” 7pm Collins Cinema</td>
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<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>Jade Snow Wong: <em>Fifth Chinese Daughter</em> (1950); also read Karen Su’s “Jade Snow Wong’s Badge of Distinction in the 1990s” <a href="http://istsocrates.berkeley.edu/~critmass/v2n1/su1.html">http://istsocrates.berkeley.edu/~critmass/v2n1/su1.html</a></td>
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<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Postwar Japanese American Women’s Autobiography</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td>Presidents Day: No class</td>
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<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td>Monica Sone: <em>Nisei Daughter</em> (1953) and Mitsuye Yamada <em>Camp Notes</em> (1992)</td>
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<td>Feb. 20</td>
<td>Monica Sone: <em>Nisei Daughter</em> (1953)</td>
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Postwar Japanese American Women’s Autobiography</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 24</td>
<td>Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston: <em>Farewell to Manzanar</em> (1973)</td>
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<td>Feb. 27</td>
<td>Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston: <em>Farewell to Manzanar</em> (1973); James D. Houston: “Another Kind of Western” (with Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston) (e-reserve)</td>
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**Representations of Asian American Women’s Experience in Literature and Film**

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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Screening Asian American Literature: From Short Story to Film</th>
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<td>Mar. 3</td>
<td>Read: King Kok-Cheung, ed. <em>Seventeen Syllables</em>: Introduction, Seventeen Syllables, Yoneko’s Earthquake, Background to the Stories, Elaine Kim’s “Hisae Yamamoto: A Woman’s View” (all in Cheung’s <em>Seventeen Syllables: Hisaye Yamamoto</em>)</td>
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<td>Mar. 6</td>
<td>Film: Emiko Omorii: <em>Hot Summer Winds</em> (1991)</td>
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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>War Bride Experience in Theater, Poetry, and Film</th>
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<td>Mar. 10</td>
<td>Velina Hasu Houston: plays: <em>Tea, Awa Ga Kimaobita</em>; poems: “Green Tea Girl in Orange Pekoe Country” &amp; “Amerasian Girl” (e-reserve)</td>
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<td>Mar. 13</td>
<td>Film: Tim DePaepe: <em>Quiet Passages</em> (1990)</td>
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Week 8  Have a Nice Spring Break!
Mar. 17  no class
Mar. 20  no class

Week 9  The Multiracial Experience in Asian American Writing & Culture
Mar. 24  Readings from *Amerasia Journal* special issue “No Passing Zone”
Mar. 27  Readings from *Amerasia Journal* special issue “No Passing Zone”

Growing up Asian and Female in America

Week 10  The Literary Eruptions of “Local” Writers in Hawaii
Mar. 31  Lois Ann Yamanaka: *Saturday Nights at the Pahala Theater* (1993)
April 3  Lois Ann Yamanaka: *Saturday Nights at the Pahala Theater* (1993)

Week 11  Korean Girls in “America Town”
April 7  Nora Okja Keller: *Fox Girl* (2002)
April 9  Virtual chat with author Nora Okja Keller (time/room TBA)

Week 12  The Violence of Memory & Self-Discovery
April 14 No class
April 16  Film: 7pm screening of Rea Tajiri: *Strawberry Fields* (2000)
            Room TBA
April 17  Discussion of *Strawberry Fields* (2000)

Week 13  Contemporary Voices of GenerAsian X: Angry Little Asian Girls? Zines and Web Sites
April 21  Patriot’s Day: No class meeting
April 24  Student Presentations
Week 14
April 28  Contemporary Voices of GenerAsian X
May 1    Student Presentations

Week 15
May 5    Guest speaker: Writer Holly Uyemoto (Wellesley '00): *Year of the Dog*

Course Requirements
You will be expected to participate in class discussions and will be required to give one formal presentation on contemporary writers at the end of the semester.

Writing: two short paper (5-7 pages) and one long (10-12 page) research paper.

Note: Final research paper due May 10