

Asian American Studies: Field/Canon/Racial Formations
FIVE PAGE PAPER ASSIGNMENT



Top Images: San Francisco State University TWLF Strike picket line (AAPA Newspaper 1969), Carlos Bulosan, Estelle Ishigo
Bottom Images: Kip Fulbeck's Hapa Project, Scene from Black Eyed Peas video: "Bebot: Generation One" (2006)

You have several options for your paper.
Please select one of the options listed on pages three and four.

- Your paper must be five pages typed, double spaced with bibliography.
- Your paper must adhere to MLA formatting guidelines.
 - MLA (Modern Language Association) format:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>
- Review Strunk and White's Elements of Style (on Blackboard).

Due Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2016
Emergency Due Date: Monday, March 28, 2016

You must use the following to support your ideas in your paper:

1. At least three pieces from Wu and Song's Asian American Studies Reader*

- Introduction (Wu and Song)
- Omatsu, "The 'Four Prisons' and the Movements of Liberation"
- Okihiro, "When and Where I Enter"
- Takaki, "The Sugar Kingdom: The Making of Plantation Hawai'i"
- Chan, "Hostility and Conflict"
- Munson, "Japanese on the West Coast"
- Executive Order 9066
- Espiritu, "Changing Lives: World War II and the Postwar Years"
- San Juan, "In Search of Filipino Writing: Reclaiming Whose 'America'?"
- Kwong, "The Chinese and The American Labor Unions" (recommended)

2. At least two from the following:

- Nathan Glazer, "The Emergence of an American Ethnic Pattern"*
- Ronald Takaki, "Reflections on Racial Patterns in America"*
- Takaki, "A Different Mirror" (recommended)*
- Richard Schaefer, "Asian Americans: Growth and Diversity" (recommended)*
- Schaefer, "Chinese Americans and Japanese Americans" (recommended)*
- Schaefer, "Understanding Race and Ethnicity" (recommended)*
- "Songs of Gold Mountain" (recommended -- from The Big Aiiieeeee!)*
- "Japanese American Students at Oberlin during WWII"*
- Asian Americans: Movement and the Moment (edited by Louie and Omatsu)**
- The Big Aiiieeeee!: An Anthology of Chinese and Japanese American Literature (edited by Chin, et al.)**
- The Forbidden Book: The Philippine American War in Political Cartoons (edited by de la Cruz, et al.)**
- Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940 (edited by Lai, et al.)**
- Lone Heart Mountain (Estelle Ishigo)**
- Mixed: Portraits of Multiracial Kids (Kip Fulbeck)**
- On Becoming Filipino (writings of Carlos Bulosan, edited and introduced by E. San Juan, Jr.)**
- Part Asian, 100% Hapa (Kip Fulbeck)**
- Roots: An Asian American Reader (edited by Tachiki, et al.)**
- *My America... or Honk if You Love Buddha* (DVD)**
- *Reel Bad Arabs* (DVD)**
- Filipino filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik's *Perfumed Nightmare (Mababangong Bangungot)* (DVD)**
- *Tim Wise on White Privilege: Racism, White Denial & the Costs of Inequality* (DVD)**
- Bulosan, America Is in the Heart
- *Carved in Silence* (screened in class)
- *Days of Waiting* (screened in class)
- *Edward Said on Orientalism* (screened in class – transcript on Blackboard)
- *On Strike! Ethnic Studies, 1969-1999* (screened in class)

*On Blackboard

**On Reserve

FOUR OPTIONS FOR FIVE PAGE PAPER

1. FIELD FORMATION *

Return to Glenn Omatsu's essay titled "The 'Four Prisons' and the Movements of Liberation" in the Asian American Studies Reader. He examines how the fields of Asian American and Ethnic Studies emerged from mass movements for social change in the 1960s and 1970s. Leaning upon literary critic Raymond Williams, Omatsu inventories "key words" that capture the ideological perspectives of two different moments in Asian America: 1960s (mass movements for social transformation) and the 1990s ("winter" of Civil Rights).

I'd like you to explore the ways in which the methodological approaches of pioneering scholars in the field of Asian American Studies reflect the vision of Asian American and Ethnic Studies at their inception (review key words listed in Omatsu's essay). Discuss the methodological approaches of two scholars from the Asian American Studies Reader: Ronald Takaki, Gary Okihiro, Sucheng Chan, Yen Le Espiritu, E. San Juan, Jr., and Peter Kwong.

2. CANON FORMATION *

2A.) We've spent time reading Carlos Bulosan's America Is in the Heart, which was published in 1946. It was later republished by the University of Washington Press in 1973.

We discussed how the dilemma of classification is interconnected with our dilemma of historical amnesia. (See short thirty minute documentary: Politics of U.S. Occupation: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1O5R7NXck_Q)

How would you categorize Bulosan's text, which opens a space for us to reflect upon US-Philippine history, U.S. labor history, and literary history? Select a category from the list below. Provide concrete examples from Bulosan's text to bolster your reading.

- Literature of Revolt/Resistance (from a World-System Point of View)
- American Popular Front Literature
- Postwar American Literature
- Asian American Literature
- Bildungsroman
- Proletarian Literature

2B.) Review the concept of Orientalism (see Okihiro's essay, your notes on Said's documentary, and the introductory pieces from Charlie Chan is Dead). In what ways do the selected stories from Charlie Chan is Dead push against the concept of Orientalism? Select two stories to examine:

- Hisaye Yamamoto, "The Brown House"
- Wakako Yamauchi, "That Was All"
- Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, "Melpomene Tragedy"
- Chang Rae-Lee, "Ahjuhma"

*Use "Tips for Active Reading" as a guide for providing textual examples.

2C.) Glenn Omatsu discusses the importance of remembering the moral vision of the Asian American Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. According to Omatsu, the life and work of Filipino labor organizer Philip Vera Cruz speaks to the moral vision of the Asian American Movement: compassion, solidarity, and commitment. How does Bulosan's America Is in the Heart dramatize this moral vision for social change?

3. RACIAL FORMATIONS: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTEDNESS OF RACE *

This prompt is divided into two parts (Definition and Application):

1.) **[Definition]** Based on our readings, how would you explain the concept of race as a social construct? I strongly encourage you to read Richard Schaefer's "Understanding Race and Ethnicity" (on Blackboard).

2.) **[Application]** Select one of the following:

- a.) Examine the Japanese American internment as a case study on the social constructedness of race.
- b.) How does the Chinese immigration experience on Angel Island illustrate the notion of race as a social construct?
- c.) Juxtapose poems from Angel Island with the art of Estelle Ishigo. How do these works of art reflect upon the relationship between national belonging (citizenship) and the social constructedness of race? (Provide a close reading of the poetry from Angel Island and the art of Estelle Ishigo.)
- d.) How does the Filipino American experience in Bulosan's America Is in the Heart illustrate the notion of race as a social construct?
- e.) Examine the formation of the field of Asian American Studies. Explain how Asian American Studies scholars have rearticulated Edward Said's theory of orientalism to interrogate the social constructedness of race.
- f.) Review Richard Schaefer's essay "Asian Americans: Growth and Diversity." How does the diversity *within* Asian America enable us to imagine ways of transgressing racial boundaries?

*Use "Tips for Active Reading" as a guide for providing textual examples.

For Review: Paper Requirements

- Your paper must be five full pages typed, double spaced with bibliography.
- Paper must adhere to MLA formatting guidelines.
- Review Strunk and White's Elements of Style (on Blackboard).
- Review Grading Rubric.
- Make sure to review your bibliography, which must have at least five sources. Review requirements on page two.

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