

Asian Americans of Mixed Heritage
MAIN 404
MW 2-3.15pm.

Jennifer Chan

Office Hours: M 3:30-5:30

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V15.0800.006 A/P/A

V89.0300.004 Psychology

Description: In this course, we will explore what it means to be of mixed Asian heritage in 21st century America. The recent prominence of mixed-heritage Asian Pacific Americans in the public sphere gestures to the changing demographics of race in America, reminding us that race has never been fixed, but is instead socially constructed. To address mixed-heritage identity involves both the specific recognition of particular processes of identity formation, *and* a radical re-thinking of race for the 21st century. Some of the questions addressed by the class include: What is “mixed heritage” and what are the historic and social factors by which it is produced? What implications do mixed-heritage APA’s have for Asian Pacific American politics of solidarity? How are mixed-heritage APA’s fetishized by the media, and in turn, how do we subvert these stereotypes? And lastly, what are the processes by which we can articulate and shape our own mixed-heritage identities?

We will use a range of interdisciplinary materials to address both these questions and more. The theoretical underpinnings revolve around the processes of racialization in the U.S. From these theories, we will expand our exploration along historic, social, and artistic lines. Alongside the theoretical and historic texts, we will look at literature and performance as well as student’s own personal narratives and fieldwork. Students are encouraged to bring in materials in the form of anecdotes, texts, images, questions, websites, etc. to share with the class.

Required Texts

Available at the Asian American Writer’s Workshop, 16 West 32nd St. Ste.

10A, www.aaww.org, (212) 494-0061:

- *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed Heritage Asian Americans*, edited by Teresa Williams-Leon and Cynthia L. Nakashima.
- *The Multiracial Experience*, edited by Maria P.P. Root
- *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, by Michael Omi and Howard Winant

Available at Advanced Copy Center, 552 La Guardia Place

- Course Reader

Recommended Texts

- Chan, Sucheng, *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History*.
- Okihiro, Gary *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture*.
- Parker, David and Miri Song, ed. *Rethinking “Mixed Race.”*
- Said, Edward, *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.

Required Film Screenings

You will be required to view at least one film in the semester outside of class. It will be available at the Avery Fisher Center for Music and Media at Bobst library.

Class Requirements:

In-class participation, through discussion and attentive listening.

Three mini-assignments throughout class - see syllabus.

Mid-term paper: 5-7 pages

Final: Research Paper 7-10 pages

Personal Scrapbook project - details to follow

There will also be unscheduled, unannounced reading quizzes

Late papers will be accepted on a case-by-case basis only, and will be graded accordingly.

Grades are calculated on a 100 point scale:

In class Participation 15%

Mid Term 25%

Final Paper 35%

Mini-Assignments, reading quizzes, and scrapbook 25%

Absences

Students may miss a maximum of 3 classes. No other absences will be allowed.

Lateness

Please don't come late to class. Habitual lateness will be reflected in your grade.

Key:

SUM *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed Heritage Asian Americans*

ME *The Multiracial Experience*

READER: Articles are listed by authors last name. If there are multiple articles from one text, the text is noted here, along with author's name and article title.

Week 1 Introduction

January 23 Introduction

Week 2 Theories of Racial Formation

January 28

reading

ME Root, "Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People" p. 3-14
SUM Introduction, p. 3-10
READER: Foucault xv-xxiv

due

Assignment 1

January 30

reading

Omi and Winant p. 9-13, 53-94.

Week 3 The Discursive Function of Mixed race Asians

February 4

reading

SUM Nakashima, Cynthia "Servants of Culture: The Symbolic Role of Mixed-Race Asian in American Discourse" p. 35-48.
READER: In *Rethinking Mixed Race*, Furedi; *TimeAsia* "Eurasian Invasion"

February 6

reading

READER: Said; Stonequist.

Week 4 Histories of Mixing Race

Feb. 11

reading

READER: Okihiro; Lopez

Feb. 14

reading

SUM Spickard p. 13-24,
ME Fernandez, p. 15-34
READER: Tchen

Week 5 Sites of Historic Mixing

Feb 18

President's Day - no class

Feb. 20

reading

Guest: Elizabeth Birchall on Otono Watanna
ME Williams "Race as Process: What are You Encounters"
READER: Cohen Far (read all three texts). TBA - Material on Otono Watanna.

Week 6 What are you? Race as process.	
Feb. 25 <i>reading</i>	READER: <i>No Passing Zone</i> Houston “Between Two Cultures,” Root “Multiracial Asians: Models of Ethnic Identity”; <i>Half-and-Half</i> Senna
Feb 27 <i>reading</i>	READER: <i>No Passing Zone</i> Spickard “What Must I Be: Asian Americans and the Question of Multiethnic Identity”
<i>due</i>	Assignment 2
Week 7 Narrativizing hapa-ness	
March 4 <i>reading</i>	READER: Anzaldua; <i>Rethinking Mixed Race</i> Spickard “The Subject is Mixed Race”; <i>Intersecting Circles</i> Nunez, “Christa.”
March 6 <i>reading</i>	READER: Aoki
<i>due</i>	MIDTERM
Spring Break March 11-15	
Week 8 Sites of Contemporary Mixing	
March 18 <i>reading</i>	SUM Chock-Rosa, p. 49–56 READER: <i>Intersecting Circles</i> Hara, “Downtown Hono”; Davenport, “War Dolls Hotel.”
March 20 <i>reading</i>	READER: <i>No Passing Zone</i> Houston, “To the Colonizer Goes the Spoils”; <i>Intersecting Circles</i> Griffin, “Minh.”
Week 9 Visualizing Hapa-ness	
March 25 <i>reading</i>	SUM Tashiro ME Streeter READER: Piper “Passing for White, Passing for Black” (page 75-90). Watch <i>The Matrix</i> at Bobst or elsewhere.
March 27 <i>reading</i>	READER: Piper, p.90-112; <i>No Passing Zone</i> Williams “Critical Interrogation of Passing”
<i>due</i>	Proposals for final paper and scrapbooks

Week 11 Sexuality and Gender	
April 1 <i>reading</i>	SUM Williams, "The Convergence of Passing Zones," READER: Eng; <i>Oriental Whatever</i> , Dariotis "Happy Hapa Hostess."
April 3 <i>reading</i>	ME Allman; Kich
Week 12 Families	
April 8 <i>reading</i>	READER: Hongo
April 10 <i>reading</i>	Guest: Joe Kelly from Families with Children from China ME "Transracial Adoptions" p. 63-78
Week 13 Hapa's in the Media	
April 15 <i>reading</i>	READER: <i>Oriental Whatever</i> Hornbuckle and Premsirat
<i>due</i>	Assignment 3
April 17 <i>reading</i>	Guest - Jessica Chen on filming the hapa experience. tba
Week 14 International Perspective	
April 22 <i>reading</i>	SUM Shigematsu p.207-16
April 24 <i>reading</i>	tba
Week 15 Demographics or Where are we going now?	
April 29 <i>reading</i>	READER: <i>No Passing Zone</i> Nash "Will the Census go Multiracial?"; <i>Rethinking Mixed Race</i> "Triples"
May 1 <i>reading</i>	Selected 'zines, visit selected websites tba
Week 16	
May 6	Scrapbooks due to be presented in class
May 15	Final papers due.