



# BRIDGES

## University of Wisconsin-Madison Asian American Studies Program Newsletter

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Asian American Studies Program  
(AASP)

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**BRIDGES** is the newsletter of the  
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Asian American Studies Program.

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### From the Director Leslie Bow

#### We're Back

In the event that anyone was wondering, Asian American Studies is back at Wisconsin with a vengeance. We continue our uphill battle towards stability, and our resurgence this year has been pivotal—and, hopefully, not merely an aberration.

The growth of our concentration is a sign of positive word-of-mouth recognition of the work we've been doing in the classroom. Suffice it to say, last year—a single academic year—we exceeded the number of certificates awarded over the previous 5 years. Next year promises to continue the trend as we currently have over twenty more students in the pipeline. Our outreach to freshman in the form of First-Year Interest Groups or "FIGS" in Fall 06 may also contribute to this rise. In Fall 06, two of our lower division Asian American Studies courses will be designated as FIGS, three thematically linked courses designed to create intellectual convergences and social networks for entering students. Our courses will be included within two FIGS: "Subjects and Citizens in Global Cultures" and "Hmong in America: Health and Healing in Two Cultures." The sudden increase in our declared concentrators is due in no small part to the inspirational teaching of Cindy I-Fen Cheng, assistant professor in History and Asian American Studies, the newest addition to our faculty. See more about Cindy and her first year at Wisconsin inside. Professor Cheng's new courses on race and mass media and Asian American history and culture form the cornerstones of our planned curricular expansion and revision. Underway are new courses in Asian American Popular Culture, Cultural Studies, and Memoir, as well as Special Topics courses in Comparative Asian American Studies that will allow our affiliate faculty to explore interests in Asian culture or comparative race studies.



It is my pleasure to announce that two of our core faculty members were awarded tenure this year. Victor Bascara will be Associate Professor of English and Asian American Studies next year; his book, Model Minority Imperialism is forthcoming (see more inside). Grace Hong will be Associate Professor of English and Asian American Studies; her book, The Ruptures of American Capital: Women of Color Feminism and the Culture of Immigrant Labor will be out this year (see more inside). In addition, our affiliate faculty member, Lisa Nakamura, was tenured in Communication Arts. Her book, Visual Cultures of the Internet, along with Grace and Victor's, is forthcoming from the University of Minnesota Press. The impact of tenuring such stellar young faculty is great; Wisconsin now emerges to take (retake?) its place among nationally-recognized programs in Asian American Studies. Congratulations to all three scholars—and, as importantly, congratulations to the Program and its historical firsts. This semester, we have also had encouraging involvement in hiring initiatives across campus—and while I had hoped to report the imminent arrival of .75 more faculty with budgeted lines in the Program, I will have to content myself with the promise of such fractional (and hopefully not fractious) people and the sign that, as a discipline, Asian American Studies is perhaps worth more than a .25 or .5 percentage of intellectual interest.

(Continues to next page)

As many of you know, our reliance on traditional departmental structures to attract jointly-appointed faculty requires educating our colleagues here about Asian American Studies; many job candidates, some coming right out of graduate school, serve on the frontlines of this educational process and view critical race studies as central to their own work.

I'm also happy to announce Jan Miyasaki's promotion to Senior Lecturer in Asian American Studies. One of the most exciting aspects of Jan's teaching of Asian American Studies 101 arises out of her expertise in the law; as a community activist and a practicing lawyer, she carries considerable knowledge about the legal system and its impact on communities of color into the classroom. Her promotion represents an overdue recognition of her importance to our program. We say *au revoir* to Atsushi Tajima as our project assistant, but not good-bye as he continues to seek teaching opportunities in Journalism and Mass Communication in the area—hopefully in our own backyard. For more on Atsushi's accomplishments—and the diversity of his interests—read on (page 3). Quite honestly, I'm not sure how we'll do without him especially as even Xerox machines give me a technophobic rash.

This year we welcomed back the Association of Asian American Graduate Students (AAGS) after a period of dormancy, thanks to a dedicated core of graduate students including Linda Park and Mytoan Nguyen. The AAGS folks took time out from their overloaded graduate schedules (which included things such as writing avant-garde poetry and curing viral-related blindness) to put on an incredible

potluck this semester. More significantly AAGS has been working on outreach with undergraduate students, community-building, and social networking. Our Asian American Studies faculty also networked with and mentored members of the Asian Pacific American Students Council (APAC) at a number of events, including one held outside Lake Geneva at Camp Wonderland. Given the name, we were hoping for pony rides and cotton candy, but no such luck. You can imagine how the students must have felt when they got our workshops on APA issues instead.



**AAAGS Panel in April 2006**

As Director, I have been networking with other established and emerging programs in Asian American

Studies across the Midwest. In

January I attended the Committee for Institutional Cooperation (CIC) meeting in Chicago where representatives from across the Big Ten met to discuss the institutionalization of Asian American Studies in the region. The discipline is alive and well here despite the challenge of geography; institutionalization ranges from the juggernaut of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign's program, which now rivals those on the west coast, to those "programs" represented by the lone Asian Americanist on campus bearing the burden of representing all things racial and gendered. In the works: a website and a cross-university Consortium in Asian American Studies for the Big Ten.

Last summer, we inaugurated the Amy Ling Legacy Fund for Asian American Studies under the auspices of the UW Foundation. I'm proud to report that thanks to two major contributions, we are well on the way towards a much needed, self-sustaining endowment supporting the work of Asian American Studies. Thanks go to Gelston Hinds for his stewardship of funds that will form the basis of this endowment, and to the many donors who contributed to it years ago: your gifts have found a permanent home. Special thanks go to Sharon Lee, our 1997 History alum and former administrative assistant for the Program, now a graduate student at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her gift represents another historical first for the Program.

It's always a pleasure to share good news. This year there's been a lot of it. Of course, the mere reporting of events does not convey the behind-the-scenes work that goes into the single line on a newsletter, so broad thanks go out to those in our campus community (and beyond it) who have supported Asian American Studies in both intangible and very, very tangible ways. Special appreciation this year goes to our administrative staff person, Katie Oriedo, our frontlines person in the office whose people skills successfully advance our PR mission, not to mention our everyday survival. Through this year, we have also been continuing to support programming of broad interest to Asian American students and the community—not as exciting as pony rides and cotton candy, but close. Please read on.

**Leslie Bow  
Director**

**Asian American Studies Program**

### **Asian American Studies Program Co-sponsored Events 2005-06**

#### **FELIX: A Series of New Writing, Beyond Boundaries: The Poetry of William Waltz and Linh Dinh (Sept. 22, 2005)**

Linh Dinh is a poet, translator and editor. He is the author of two collections of stories, *Fake House* (2000) and *Blood and Soap* (2004), and three books of poems, *All Around What Empties Out* (2003), *American Tatts* (2005) and *Borderless Bodies* (2005).

(Co-sponsored with the Department of Creative Writing, the Department of Special Collections, and the Friends of the UW Libraries, with generous support from the UW Lectures Committee)

#### **"Weird English" with Prof. Evelyn Ch'ien**

Evelyn Ch'ien is Assistant Professor in the English Department at the University of Minnesota.

**(Feb. 16, 2006)**

(Co-sponsored with the Anonymous Fund and the Department of English)

#### **Demystifying Graduate School for Undergraduates from an Asian American Perspective: Challenges and Rewards (Apr. 27, 2006)**

Linda Park and Mytoan Nguyen organized the panel, which had representation from a host of disciplines including Sociology, English, Counseling Psychology, Education, Engineering, and Pharmacy, among others.

(Co-sponsored with Association of Asian American Graduate Students)

## Asian American Studies Program Faculty Advisory Committee

### Victor Bascara

Assistant Professor  
Department of English and Asian American Studies Program

### Leslie Bow

Associate Professor  
Department of English and Asian American Studies Program

### Cindy I-Fen Cheng

Assistant Professor  
Department of History  
Asian American Studies Program

### Peggy Choy

Lecturer  
Dance Program & Center for Southeast Asian Studies

### Grace Kyungwon Hong

Assistant Professor  
Department of English and Asian American Studies Program

### Nicole Huang

Associate Professor  
Department of East Asian Languages and Literature

### Monita Manalo

Lecturer  
Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia

### Ella Mae Matsumura

Associate Professor  
School of Business

### Jan Miyasaki

Lecturer  
Asian American Studies Program

### Lisa Nakamura

Assistant Professor  
Department of Communication Arts

### Pamela Oliver

Professor  
Department of Sociology

### Hemant Shah

Professor  
School of Journalism and Mass Communication

### Michael C. Thornton

Professor  
Department of Afro-American Studies

### Lillian Tong

Instructional Program Manager  
Center for Biology Education

### Lynet Uttal

Associate Professor  
School of Human Ecology

### Asian Pacific American Students Council (APAC)

Two representatives

## Good Bye to Dr. Atsushi Tajima

Atsushi Tajima, AASP's project assistant for the past three years, will be leaving us at the end of the semester. Anyone who has been around the AAS offices during the time he was the PA needs no reminder of how much effort and enthusiasm he has put into the job. Atsushi is always ready to lend a hand on any project. And when Katie was ill, he put in many extra hours so the office was up and running. He has flawlessly organized dozens of AASP programs and events. And his computer skills are legendary.

Atsushi's talents are not limited to supporting AASP and the faculty, however. Last summer, Atsushi earned his doctorate on how race and whiteness are handled in Japanese popular culture. He has also published a number of research articles in leading academic journals on topics as news coverage of the Iraq war, English in aviation safety (did you know he is an avid airplane enthusiast and a pilot?) and staging the 1998 Nagano Olympic Games. During the 2005-06 academic year, he has been teaching a mass communication class at UW-Whitewater.

Atsushi has also mentored undergraduate student researchers, taught in the PEOPLE program and popped a "wheelie" on his moped all the way down Observatory Drive (did you know he has raced motorcycle professionally?). The program has been lucky to have Atsushi for nearly three years. We'll miss his dedication to the program and his hard work. But above all, we'll miss his kindness, sincerity, and humor.

- Professor Hemant Shah

### Interview with Atsushi -By Emily Vang Tell us about your background.

My first degree in Japan was in engineering and I worked for the Japanese automobile industry. But I didn't quite feel I was suited for science or engineering. My interest was more on the humanities. So I decided to change the way I was. Back then, I was vaguely interested in what kinds of people are really out there across the globe. Luckily, I had an opportunity to stay with the Inuit people in the Canadian Arctic and the Yupik people in southwestern Alaska for nearly two years. That was when my interest in race and ethnicity came in. Then, I did my second undergrad study majoring in mass communication at the University of Alaska. When I wanted to pursue the subject, UW-Madison was the first place giving me admission. I've been very happy to be here working with Asian American Studies because of my interest in cross-racial and ethnic communication.

### How did you become interested in journalism and mass communication?

Actually, I am not narrowly interested in journalism; rather, I'm broadly interested in communication and the media. I had another very funny reason to decide to study mass communication. When I started my undergrad as a foreign student, my English was really nothing. I didn't even know words like "however" and "paragraph." So, I thought it would be very cool to study mass communication simply because it seemed the most challenging major for an ESL student.

But later on, I became more and more fascinated by communication and the media.

What I ultimately wanted to know is how our knowledge is constructed. For example, we all know our earth is a bluish, round-shaped planet orbiting around the sun. But there have been only 100 people or so throughout the human history who have actually seen the earth—astronauts. The rest of us all get this knowledge, which we think of as fact, through the media. The same goes for much other knowledge including how we perceive other people in distant locations. This is what I did in my dissertation and will be pursuing in my future.

### What would you advice for following students?

In my case, using "myself" really helped. For example, my industrial, professional, aviation, ESL, and diasporic experiences all led to my research projects. In other words, you can use your life history, which can be much richer than what you realize. Also, places like UW-Madison are amazing institutions, where amazing amounts of resources beyond what you imagine are available to you. Also, such resources are organically connected. For example, our Asian American Studies faculty is made up with people with various unique backgrounds, interests, and disciplines. Then, they are organically connected because of their interest in Asian Americans. There are numerous such webs you can find here. This is what makes this institution a well-rounded university. Finally and most importantly, don't give it up. I know all of us often feel the desire to quit. But having this sense of achievement is indeed great.



Dr. Atsushi Tajima



## Faculty Activities Update, 2005-06



**Victor Bascara**

Victor Bascara is Assistant Professor in the Department of English and the Asian American Studies Program.

Professor Bascara will be an Associate Professor in the Fall of 2006.

His book, Model Minority Imperialism (University of Minnesota Press), comes out this year. He also has a forthcoming essay "'Panama Money': An Essay on Reading the Transition to U.S. Imperialism" that will appear in Imagining Our Americas: Nation, Empire, and Region (Radical History Review edited volume, published, forthcoming Duke University Press).

He will present his research at the Multi-Ethnic Studies in Europe and the Americas (MESEA) meeting in Pamplona, Spain this summer and at the American Studies Association meeting in Oakland this fall. He is also one of the conveners of "Transitions and Transformations in the U.S. Imperial State: The Search for New Synthesis," a conference to be held at Madison in November that brings together an international group of prominent scholars on U.S. imperialism.

In 2005-06, he taught "Asian American Cultural Politics" and "Asian Americans and War" through AASP.



**Leslie Bow**

Leslie Bow is Associate Professor in the Department of English and the Director of the Asian American Studies Program.

Professor Bow published "Exporting Feminism: Jade Snow Wong's Global Tour" in Culture, Identity, Commodity: Diasporic Chinese Literatures in English, ed. Tseen Khoo and Kam Louie, and "'For Every Gesture of Loyalty, There Doesn't Have to Be a Betrayal': Asian American Criticism and the Politics of Locality" in Feminist Communication Theory: Selections in Context, ed. Lana F. Rakow and Laura A. Wackwitz last year.

She gave numerous presentations on and off campus, including one at Northern Illinois University for the Women's Studies' Program, "Asian American Women and Public Culture," this April and another at Pennsylvania State University for the American Women Writers Series, "Trans-racial/Transgender: Analogies of Difference" in January. She most recently did quadruple duty at the last Asian American Studies Association conference in Atlanta where she delivered a paper, "Anxieties of the Partially Colored: the Foreigner and Minority in Choong Soon Kim's An Asian Anthropologist in the South," chaired and organized the roundtable, "Asian American Studies

Meets New Southern Studies," chaired the panel, "Reel to Reel: Asian American Film," and served on the Conference Program Committee. She also gave three campus presentations: a keynote for the Asian American Summit, Asian Pacific American Council in Camp Wonderland, Lake Geneva; spoke about our concentration at the Asian Pacific Council 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Faculty-Student Banquet, and did a panel presentation for "Cultural Pluralism and Educational Policy," in Educational Policy Studies 460 for Professor Michael Olneck in the Fall. She represented the University of Wisconsin at the Committee for Institutional Cooperation (CIC) in Chicago last January.

This summer, she will deliver a talk for the Council for Asian Pacific Exchange (CAPE) at the East-West Center/University of Hawaii in Honolulu. A member of the Modern Language Association's Executive Committee for the Division on Asian American Literature, she will chair the forthcoming panel, "Politics of Feeling: Affect and Asian American Literature," at the Modern Language Association in Philadelphia in December.

Professor Bow recently joined the editorial board of the journal, American Literature.



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### Model-Minority Imperialism: Understanding the Legacy of U.S. Imperialism through Asian American Culture

**Victor Bascara**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, soon after the conclusion of the Spanish-American War, the United States was an imperialistic nation, maintaining (often with the assistance of military force) a far-flung and growing empire. After a long period of collective national amnesia regarding American colonialism in the Philippines and elsewhere, scholars have resurrected the power of "empire" as a way of revealing American history and culture. Focusing on the terms of Asian American assimilation and the rise of the model-minority myth, Victor Bascara examines the resurgence of empire as a tool for acknowledging—and understanding—the legacy of American imperialism.

Model-Minority Imperialism links geopolitical dramas of twentieth-century empire building with domestic controversies of U.S. racial order by examining the cultural politics of Asian Americans as they are revealed in fiction, film, and theatrical productions. Tracing U.S. economic and political hegemony back to the beginning of the twentieth century through works by Jessica Hagedorn, R. Zamora Linmark, and Sui Sin Far; discourses of race, economics, and empire found in the speeches of William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan; as well as L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz and other texts, Bascara's innovative readings uncover the repressed story of U.S. imperialism and unearth the demand that the present empire reckon with its past.

Bascara deploys the analytical approaches of both postcolonial studies and Asian American studies, two fields that developed in parallel but have only begun to converge, to reveal how the vocabulary of empire reasserted itself through some of the very people who inspired the U.S. imperialist mission. (From Publisher's Press Release)


**Cindy I-Fen Cheng**

Cindy I-Fen Cheng is Assistant Professor in the Department of History and the Asian American Studies Program.

Professor Cheng is very happy to report that she has completed her first year teaching here at UW Madison. She is very grateful to all the wonderful students that she met this year and for all the support that the Asian American Studies Program and History Department staff and faculty have provided her.

She has also been so pleased to see so many students applying to do a certification in Asian American Studies. She developed three new undergraduate courses, two on Asian American History and one on Race and Media Culture in the U.S. All three courses will be offered in the coming academic year. She is also offering a graduate seminar this coming fall on Asian American History and Culture.

Her article entitled, "Out of Chinatowns and into the Suburbs: Chinese Americans and the Politics of Cultural Citizenship in Early Cold War America," is set to appear in *American Quarterly*.

This summer, Professor Cheng will be returning to Los Angeles to complete her research at the Huntington Library.


**Peggy Choy**

(Photo: Carl Hefner)

Peggy Choy is a Lecturer in the Dance Program.

Peggy Choy performed her duet, "She-Turtle," with Soomi Kim, in January 2006 at the American Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) conference at City Center in New York. Her new piece, Summit! was performed in the Dance Program's Moving Heaven & Earth concert, April 20-22.

Choy received a UW-Milwaukee Dance Department fellowship for 2006 for the completion of her MFA degree.

Choy is producing/directing the upcoming 2006-07, "Women of the Scarred Earth" Outreach and Performance Project that has received generous funding from the Anonymous Fund, Baldwin, and Brittingham funds, the Morgridge Center, the School of Music and the Asian American Studies Program.

Choy regularly teaches Asian American Studies 153: Asian American Movement. This unique dance course features traditional and modern Asian movements and dance forms in the context of Asian cultures and philosophy and Asian-American history.


**Grace Kyungwon Hong**

Grace Kyungwon Hong is Assistant Professor in the Department of English and the Asian American Studies Program.

Professor Hong will be an Associate Professor in the Fall of 2006.

Her book, *The Ruptures of American Capital: Women of Color Feminism and The Culture of Immigrant Labor*, is forthcoming from University of Minnesota Press.

Her recent articles include: "A Shared Queerness": Colonialism, Transnationalism, and Sexuality in Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*; "Meridians, forthcoming, Fall 2006, and "Most Overrated Western Virtue": The Politics of Knowledge in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*; *In Immigration and Migration, Social Change, and Cultural Transformation* (working title), ed., Emory Elliott, forthcoming.

She presented "Sacred and Profane: Ana Castillo's *Ironic Reversals*" at the American Studies Association (ASA) national conference, Washington, DC., November 2005, and she was a speaker for Plenary Panel entitled "The Critical Study of Race and Ethnicity in a Neoliberal Corporate University, at the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS) Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, March 2006.

### **The Ruptures of American Capital: Women of Color Feminism and the Culture of Immigrant Labor**

**Grace Kyungwon Hong**

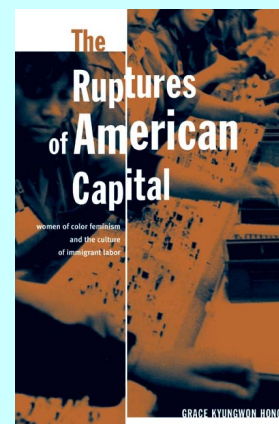
Universality is a dangerous concept, according to Grace Kyungwon Hong, one that has contributed to the national rise and privilege of the individual above all. However, African American, Asian American, and Chicano people experience the same stretch of city sidewalk with varying degrees of safety, visibility, and surveillance.

*The Ruptures of American Capital* examines two key social formations—women of color feminism and racialized immigrant women's culture—in order to argue that race and gender are persistent contradictions within the history of U.S. capital that should be understood not as monolithic but as marked by its crises.

According to Hong, women of color feminism and racialized immigrant women's culture are not identity categories but social and epistemological formations emerging from contradictions of late capitalism. She shows how women of color feminism identified ways in which the ostensible universality of nationalist forms of capital, such as the right to own property, were, in fact, repressive. Concomitant with a critical shift in capital from its national to its global phase, there emerged a newly universalized fetishization of "difference."

While capital in its global phase attempts to cast difference itself as ahistorical and commodified, *The Ruptures of American Capital* demonstrates that racialized immigrant women's culture has brought to light both contested modes of incorporation into consumer culture and the occlusion of labor from the consumerist subject. Interweaving discussion of U.S. political economy and culture with formal literary observations (including readings of Angela Davis, Toni Morrison, and Booker T. Washington) Hong does no less than set the stage for solidarity among women of color with a vocabulary that challenges possessive individualism used by both the state and twentieth-century anti-racist movements for social change.

(From Publisher's Press Release)



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**Nicole Huang**

Nicole Huang is Associate Professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature.

Professor Huang is specializing in twentieth-century Chinese literature and visual culture. She is currently working on two book manuscripts set in 1970s China. The first is titled Children Of The Courtyard: Visual Culture And Daily Practice In 1970s Chinese Cities, in which she reassesses the last stage of Chinese revolutionary mass culture with an emphasis on childhood experiences in communal courtyards. Her second book project focuses on everyday use of the photographic medium during the same period, combining both archival and field research.

At the meantime, she is also working on a number of articles on a variety of topics, one of which is titled "The Transnational Butcher's Wife," a theoretical essay that uses the travels of a well-known fictional motif across national and cultural borders to highlight some of the national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries underlying our present paradigm of literary studies.

Professor Huang gave birth to a baby girl named Zoe on April 20, 2006.

**Monita Manalo**

Monita Manalo is a Lecturer in the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia.

Currently Dr. Manalo serves on the Fulbright Evaluation Committee, UW-Madison.

She presented a research paper, "The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in Filipino Language Instruction: A Preliminary Report," at the Association of Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Council for the Teaching of Southeast Asian Languages (COTSEAL), April, 2006.

Dr Manalo will be on sabbatical leave from teaching during the school year 2007-08.

**Ella Mae Matsumura**

Ella Mae Matsumura is Associate Professor in the School of Business, Accounting and Information Systems.

Professor Matsumura has published "Corporate Governance Reform and CEO Compensation: Intended and Unintended Consequences," in Journal of Business Ethics (with Jae Yong Shin), and "'An Empirical Analysis of an Incentive Plan with Relative Performance Measures: Evidence from a Postal Service,'" in The Accounting Review (with Jae Yong Shin).

Professor Matsumura has completed second three-year term as an Associate Editor for Accounting Horizons, an American Accounting Association journal designed to bridge practice and academia. On May 1, 2006, she became co-editor of Accounting Horizons for 2006-2009.

Her other professional services include Notable Contributions to Accounting Literature Award Screening Committee (evaluated nominations or articles, books, or monographs to determine which should be forwarded to the Award Selection Committee); Chair, Lifetime Achievement in Management Accounting Award Committee (committee evaluated nominees and selected winner; presented award in January 2006); and Publications Committee, Management Accounting Section (evaluated papers for the Section journal's Best Paper Award; will evaluate candidates for the next editor of the Section journal in Spring 2006).

Professor Matsumura's university services include: Executive Director, Beyer Center for Managerial Accounting and Control (School of Business); Member of School of Business Diversity Committee; Mentor in University Faculty Mentoring Program; Executive Committee, Manufacturing Systems Engineering Program; and Executive Committee, Center for Quick Response Manufacturing

**Lisa Nakamura**

Lisa Nakamura is Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Arts.

Professor Nakamura will be an Associate Professor in the Fall of 2006.

Her book Visual Cultures of the Internet is forthcoming with the University of Minnesota Press in their Electronic Mediations series.

Her current research, "Facial Recognition: Surveillance Society, Racialization, and the Biotechnological Turn," is a proposed book chapter in an anthology on new media to be edited by Mark Williams. This essay will also be developed into a central chapter into a single-authored book project tentatively entitled Networked Cinematics. Also her "Race, Gender, and the Internet: A Critical Theory of New Media Audiences," is a solicited book chapter for an anthology to be published jointly by the Annenberg School of Communication-West (University of Southern California) and the Annenberg School of Communication-East (University of Pennsylvania) entitled Communication Technology and Social Policy in the Digital Age. Her "Mixedfolks.com: Hybrid Identity, Racial Passing, and the Internet," is also to be a book chapter for a proposed anthology entitled Mixed Race in Hollywood Film and Television, edited by Mary Beltran and Camille Fojas.

She presented "Ways of Clicking: Teaching the Concept of Digital Racial Formation and Methods for Reading Networked Images of the Body," at the Association of Internet Researchers and "Facial Recognition: Surveillance Society, Racialization, and the Biotechnological Turn," at the Modern Language Association.

Professor Namamura was also invited to present, "What Does It Mean to Come Late to the Party?: Race, Gender, and New Media Audiences" at Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania and "Intersectionality, New Media, and Identity: Internet Popular Culture and Computer Mediated Communication," at University of Maryland.



**Hemant Shah**

Hemant Shah is Professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Professor Shah published an article titled, "Reconsidering Geometries of Development," in *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, 3(4): 395-416 (with Karin Wilkins at University of Texas Austin). The article critiques the "old" paradigm of communication and development studies for its overemphasis on nation-states as units of planning and analysis and for its overly simplistic geopolitical divisions of developed and developing worlds.

He also published a review essay of David Gauntlett, *Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002) and Rebecca Ann Lind (Ed.), *Race, Gender, Media: Considering Diversity Across Audiences, Content, and Producers* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2004) in *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, 5(2), 429-432.

Professor Shah gave two invited talks in early part of 2006. They were "Race and Modernization" at the University of Colorado, January 30; and "Anti-racism and academic research on modernization," Georgia State University, February 11.

**Michael C. Thornton**

Michael C. Thornton is Professor in the Department of Afro-American Studies and Faculty Director of the Morgridge Center for Public Service.

Professor Thornton became the first Faculty Director of the Morgridge Center for Public Service in 2005. His initial goals for the Center are to increase student of color and male participation in our activities.

Professor Thornton's recent publications include: "Black and Asian American Newspaper Coverage of Multiracial America." Forthcoming in an issue entitled, "The Landscape of the Multiracial Experience" of *Journal of Social Issues* and "Multiracial Experiences." *Encyclopedia of Education and Human Development*, Section: "Equity and Cultural Issues in Education." Stephen Farenga and Daniel Ness (eds.), E. Sharpe Publishers. pp. 333-335.

Professor Thornton also presented "Black Relations with Other People of Color." McNair Scholars Program, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, 2005

**Lillian Tong**

Lillian Tong is Undergraduate Education Coordinator and Director of Faculty Programs for Center for Biology Education.

Dr. Tong's duty is to improve undergraduate biological sciences education, and one aspect of it involves equity and diversity issues in the sciences. She has also been active in encouraging the leadership of Asian American women on campus. As a member of the Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute (WISELI) leadership team, she encourages more discussion about ethnicity and leadership by organizing meetings and various other activities.

Dr. Tong is also a member of the Diversity team of the Center for Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL), which has been developing materials for inclusive teaching in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) disciplines. The UW-Madison version of CIRTL, Delta, offers a course on Instructional Materials Development in Science which she co-teaches. In this course, they have been using case scenarios to promote discussion about gender, race, and ethnicity bias and stereotypes.

**Lynet Uttal**

Lynet Uttal is Associate Professor in the School of Human Ecology.

Professor Uttal continues to direct the Connecting Latino Families and Child-care Provider Partnership Project that provides monthly workshops on bicultural childrearing, social support for new immigrant families, and encourages individual empowerment for community development. At the same time that parents meet together, their children meet in Club Herencia Cultural and develop their Spanish

speaking abilities and learn about the different Latino cultures they represent. In addition to strengthening individual families, these cross-cultural relationships contribute to developing a pan-Latino community. This project received a second grant from the Oscar and Elsa Mayer Family Foundation. She also organized the South Madison Family Pathways Series for African American parents. This project was funded by the Evjue Foundation and a Myra Schoeder Beckner Grant. Both projects target parents with children 1-8 years old as a preventative measure to strengthen family communication before the children are teenagers.

Through these projects, she is developing a methodological technique for collecting local data to build the knowledge base of contemporary parenting practices of racial

ethnic families while simultaneously delivering family and community empowerment programs.

This year, Professor Uttal co-authored "Action-oriented Research: Strategies for an Engaged University." She continues to co-facilitate the "Seeking Educational Excellence and Diversity for the Experienced and Doing" (S.E.E.D.E.D.) program that she founded with Seema Kapani three years ago. This program provides a monthly think-tank for faculty and academic staff who are working on diversity initiatives. She also received a TRIO award for her undergraduate mentoring of a student of color who recognized Prof. Uttal for her support towards earning her bachelor's degree.

## 2005-06 Asian American Studies Certificate Awardees

The Asian American Studies Program congratulates the following students for the successful completion of the Asian American Studies Certificate this year.

<b>Han-Dong Kim</b>	<b>International Relations</b>
<b>MaiGer Moua</b>	<b>History</b>
<b>Steph Nasseff</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>Scott Smith</b>	<b>Biology</b>
<b>Mai Der Yang</b>	<b>Legal Studies &amp; Political Science</b>

### *Congratulations!*

We posed some questions to our two certificate awardees, MaiGer Moua and Steph Nasseff, both graduating May. Here is what they had to say:

**What made you decide to seek certificate?**

**MaiGer:** After taking my first Asian American Studies course, which being AA101, my freshmen year I considered doing a concentration in Asian American Studies but never developed enough interest or enthusiasm to actually follow through. Then in the fall of 2005 I



**MaiGer Moua**

decided to take another Asian American Studies course and I'm very glad that I didn't give up on Asian Am. My professor for the class, Cindy Cheng, encouraged us to do a concentration whether it would be Asian American Studies or another program because she believed in the value of that and the depth that it brings to our studies. So from that as well as developing a genuine interest in Asian American Studies I decided to do the certification.

**Steph:** I first enrolled in an Asian American Studies class during the fall of my junior year. I took AAS 26060 with Professor Victor Bascara. He did a wonderful job of introducing me to Asian American history, politics, and culture. After AAS 260, I decided to take another course in the program, this time one that focused explicitly on Asian American literature. And finally, I decided that I wanted a certificate, as Asian American Studies courses proved to be among my most enriching academic experiences.

**What is the most valuable thing that you took away from your classes in Asian American Studies?**

**MaiGer:** The most valuable thing I learned from my classes is that Asian American Studies is not a simple, neat field but one that is always changing with the times and demographics of the United States.

**Steph:** I was very intrigued to learn about a history and a subculture I had never had the opportunity to study before. Even more captivating to me, though, was reading Asian American novels and poems (I am an English major, after all!) that dealt with political and social struggles. I realized that US forms of marginalization had lasting effects on Asian American families, economics, and social welfare.

**How might our concentration in Asian American Studies enhance the way you think about the career path/major you've chosen? What are your future plans?**

**MaiGer:** The courses that I have taken thus far have helped shape my understanding of Asians in America, the similarities and differences amongst different Asian American groups, and the need to

continue to challenge certain ideological frameworks and how we study as well as understand "Asian Americans." At the moment I am interested in pursuing a graduate study in history with an emphasis on Hmong in America. What I have learned in my classes will have a lasting effect on how I approach certain issues pertaining to the Hmong and Asian



**Steph Nasseff**

West publishing firm in the Twin Cities. I'm eager to explore the opportunities available to me in the editing field.

**What advice or recommendations would you give to younger students who are interested in Asian American Studies?**

**MaiGer:** I encourage all Asian American students and other students to take advantage of this program because it is one of the few opportunities on campus where we actually get to learn about Asian Americans. In addition, the program is not only about providing us with knowledge but encouraging us to learn with a critical mind and develop a historical context to help us understand the emergence of and forces surrounding Asian Americans and Asian American Studies.

**Steph:** To students considering an AAS certificate, I say go for it. You'll find rewarding classes taught by devoted and passionate professors.



### *Amy Ling Legacy Fund for Asian American Studies*

The Asian American Studies Program has initiated a fundraising campaign in recognition of its founding director, Professor Amy Ling. If you would like to honor Professor Ling's memory and the work she began at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, please consider a donation to the Amy Ling Legacy Fund for Asian American Studies. Checks can be made out to:

**Amy Ling Legacy Fund for Asian American Studies**  
**University of Wisconsin Foundation**  
**US Bank Lockbox**  
**PO Box 78807**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53278-0807**

Contributions are tax deductible and will build an endowment fund to support the educational mission of the Asian American Studies Program.



## From the Classroom

### Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) 501: Hmong Families

By Atsushi Tajima

For years, social worker Mai Zong Vue has been working for the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development as a program developer. Her goal is to assist refugees, including many Hmong, off the public assistance by finding them jobs.



**Mai Zong Vue**

In her work, people have repeatedly asked the same, basic, question: "Who are the Hmong people?" She thus found herself doing numerous presentations about Hmong families and their dynamics. This year she was able to impart her experience and knowledge in a more formal and structured way in the form of the University of Wisconsin, Madison course, HDFS 501: Hmong Families, sponsored by the School of Human Ecology.

Vue thinks the lack of basic knowledge about the Hmong is still a big problem. "Wisconsin is home to the third-largest Hmong population in U.S. The population is so huge that the demand for information and knowledge is also huge," she said. "But people just repeatedly ask the same, very basic questions: Who are the Hmong? Where do they come from? What is it like in their families? Why do they have so many kids?"

At the same time, she often feels that those questions are also important for young Hmong raised in the United States. "Many of them were born in either the refugee camps or in the United States, so they do not have knowledge of their

own family structures. Even simple questions like, 'Where are we from?' and 'What is our experience like?' may still be important." Of course, she thinks that they may know part of the answers, but they may not know the entire picture. She expects to provide such knowledge in a comprehensive and structured way in her course. Vue feels that

having that knowledge is essential for their ability to "find a balance between the Hmong and American cultures."

Her Hmong students acknowledge Vue's attempt. "A lot of stuff I kind of knew already," said Pahoua

Xiong, a sophomore from Madison. "But studying small details of weddings and funerals help me to understand more about our family structure." Another stu-



**Say Thao**

dent feels that the class gives him an integrated picture about his Hmong culture. "This class clarifies a lot of things that I know and I don't know," said Say Thao, a senior from Madison. "For example, I grew up mostly in the United States. So I know pieces of my own culture and history. By taking this class, everything comes together."

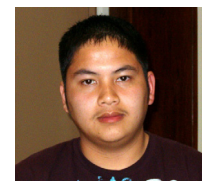
As its name indicates, the Department of Workforce Development provides employment-focused programs. However, as her course title, "Hmong Families" indicates, Vue stresses the importance of family support programs. "Employment programs often resulted in both parents working outside home. No one was there to take care of kids, which led to a lot of family dysfunction," she said. "I am there to remind them that they have to provide not only employment service programs but also family support programs." She further acknowledges the importance of educating Americans about the family and cultural values of Hmong. For example, she notes, that when "Hmong individuals are arrested for even minor reasons, they feel very embarrassed because of their cultural values [and feel an] especially

different sense of dignity. So we also need to educate non-Hmong people in the community to understand these cultural values."

As a refugee herself, Vue came to the United States from the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp in Thailand. After graduating from high school, she went to Lakeland College in Sheboygan, WI and received her BA.

She came to Madison to work full time for the Department of Workforce Development, became a part-time graduate student at the UW-Madison, and received Master's in Social Work in 1997. Much of her works lies in policy studies in conjunction with a human focus and social issues. She has also been an active community leader among Hmong women. She served on Hmong National Development in Washington, D.C. as a board member from 1993-97 and as the board president for two terms. She also served on the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children in New York as a board member. The Commission reviews how refugee women and children are served. She is also a co-founder of Refugee Women's Network in Georgia, 1997. The Network identifies the needs of refugee women and trains them as community leaders.

Vue's students consistently appreciate the fact that this is the first time the university has offered a class in this subject. "My motivation in taking this class is to help it become successful, because the Hmong population on campus is such a large population and definitely a very active population," notes Yee Xiong, a junior from Milwaukee. "So as a Hmong student here, when something like this class is offered, we should take the opportunity to take the class, and to show the university that this is something we care about."



**Yee Xiong**

The Asian American Studies Program will offer Hmong American Studies as a Special Topics course, Asian American Studies 240 (Section 2), for the fall semester of 2006.



## 2006 Asian American Film Series

The Asian American Film Series, "Y'All Gonna Learn Chinese," was held March 30 to April 2. The Series was part of the 2006 Wisconsin Film Festival. All seven of the Asian American Film Series were well attended, with some shows completely sold out and with people sitting in the aisles. With funding from the UW Anonymous Fund, Asian American Studies Program was able to help bring a number of latest Asian American films, including 10 short films, which were combined as "Asian American Screen Test." The films are exploring the diversity of Asian American film. Special thanks go to Meg Hamel, Interim Wisconsin Film Festival Director.

### Y'All Gonna Learn Chinese

#### Amu

India, USA, 2005, 102 min, Color, 35mm,  
Wisconsin Premiere  
Directed By: Shonali Bose



What at first seems like a standard back-to-roots story becomes something much more in Shonali Bose's debut feature. Kajju, a recent college graduate from Los Angeles, has returned to Delhi for the first time since she was three years old. At first mocked for her American clothes, her video camera, and her constant questions, Kajju's search takes a dark turn as she looks for clues to her childhood in India. An adopted child, how did her parents die? Why did she have to leave Delhi? And what do these questions have to do with the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1984, and the days of riots and bloodshed that followed? Writer-director Bose confronts a recent tragedy in India's past with an unflinching eye, taking a strong stance against letting the past go to the point of injustice. "Bose is a fearless filmmaker who certainly knows how to tell an engrossing tale." – Kirk Honeycutt, Hollywood Reporter. - Travis Gerdes

#### The Grace Lee Project

USA, 2005, 68 min, Color, BetaSP  
Directed By: Grace Lee

Filmmaker  
Grace Lee grew up thinking she was special: there weren't many other Korean American girls in Missouri. As she went out



into the world, she found that her name was more common, and that many people knew a Grace Lee. Oddly, they were all described as polite overachievers, usually Christian, always nice: fitting a stereotype of Asian Americans. Off Grace went on a search to find other women named Grace Lee who defy that description, and to question cultural assimilation and stereotypes of Asian



American virtue along the way. "Packed with skillfully interwoven personal stories, this film will resonate with anyone who's ever Googled their own name, hoping to find a fascinating doppelganger. And let's face it, isn't that just about all of us?" Jenny George, Bust Magazine. - Meg Hamel

#### Journey From the Fall (Vuot Sóng)

USA, 2005, 135 min, Color, 35mm,  
Midwest Premiere  
Directed By: Ham Tran

A complex, haunting film from Vietnam-



ese American filmmaker Ham Tran, Journey From The Fall chronicles a family divided after the 1975 fall of Saigon. There are two stories here, that of the father, Long, who is sent to a tor-

turous re-education camp, and the journey that mom, grandma, and son make when they escape by boat to California. Tran makes use of shifts in time and flashbacks to piece together a gorgeously photographed film. It asks the question so central to the experiences of immigrants: how much of your homeland should you give up to fully embrace your new life? Many Asian American cast and crew came together to present an original and authentic look at a war rarely described for American audiences from the Vietnamese perspective. 2006 Sundance Film Festival. - Meg Hamel

#### Mardi Gras: Made in China

USA, 2005, 71 min, Color, BetaSP  
Directed By: David Redmon

In a squalid Chinese factory, Ga Hong Mei spends eleven hours a day yanking strings of hot beads out of a dangerous machine. She struggles to fill enough bags to prevent her wages from getting docked. On the other side of the world, New Orleans native "Ms. Pearl" squeals with delight as she catches her zillionth tangle of glistening bead necklaces from a Mardi Gras float. Mardi Gras: Made in China portrays the immense disconnect between the factory and the consumer that arises in a global economy. The cultural and economical differences are stunning, as is the Chinese workers' reaction to the sticker price of the beads and the astonishing way people "win" the beads. In tracing the path of the disposable commodity of Mardi Gras beads, filmmaker David Redmon tells a story about globalization in which CEOs aren't really the bad guys, we are. - Heather Shimon





## No Sleep Til Shanghai



USA, 2005, 70 min, Color, BetaSP,  
Midwest Premiere  
Directed By: Todd Angkasuwan

Jin Au-Yeung, born in Miami and raised on hip-hop, broke new ground and gained fame by being the first Asian American rapper to sign with a major recording label. His quickness and charm sharpened from winning free-style battles makes this documentary an extraordinarily appealing look at the way music can punch through boundaries. To promote his aptly named album "The Rest is History" (featuring songs recorded with Kanye West, Wyclef, and others), Jin and his team embark on a tour of Tokyo, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore,

and Shanghai. On one level, No Sleep Til Shanghai is a funny and funky diary of a fast-paced, red-eye trip to bring hip-hop to fans in Asia. The bigger picture, though, is more complicated: since the tour, Jin has changed his name (to "The Emcee"), dropped the label, and reinvented his career. What answers does that give to the questions of race and fame?

- Meg Hamel

## Red Doors

USA, 2005, 90 min, Color, 35mm,  
Midwest Premiere  
Directed By: Georgia Lee

On the surface, the Wongs are a family that has it all. The father, Ed (Tzi Ma), is about to retire from a job that has left his family well off, the mother (Freda Foh Shen) has her family to care for and a wedding to plan, and each of the three



daughters is bright, attractive and successful. But the Wongs are also a family quietly falling apart at the seams. Samantha (Jacqueline Kim), a business woman, doubts her choice of career and fiancée. Julie (Elaine Kao), a medical student, is struggling with her blossoming relationship with movie star Mia Scarlett (Mia Riverton). Katie (Kathy Shao-Lin Lee) expresses her feelings for a high school classmate with increasingly more explosive practical jokes. Silence has become a way of life for Ed; after numerous attempts at suicide, he finally stumbles upon a new way to leave his life behind, and in the process, throws the family into further turmoil. In Red Doors, every character has a journey to make. On the way, they discover what makes them who they are as individuals, and find their place again in the family. Writer and director Georgia Lee was part of the 2005 Sundance short film jury.

- Kerman Eckes

## Shorts Program: Asian American Screen Test

### Screen Test

Dir.: Linda Lee, Canada, 2004, 8 min

Screen Test is a wry day-in-the-life of an Asian-Canadian actor



and the convoluted process of "becoming Asian" during a casting session. This film exposes the exoticization of actors of colour from the performer's point-of-view. By exaggerating her own Asian-ness, she performs in "yellow face," subverting the process through exploiting and mocking the ignorance of those who get to define and direct the "other."

### My German Boyfriend

Dir.: Wayne Yung, Canada, 2004, 25 min  
A gay Chinese-Canadian encounters ethnic stereotypes as he seeks his ideal boyfriend in Berlin. A comedy about mistaken cultural identities, a diary of immigrant isolation, and a love letter to a boyfriend who might have been.

### Shaolin Sisters

Dir.: Mishann Lau, Canada, 2004, 6 min  
Shaolin Sisters is a kick-ass kung fu short about two sisters and the trouble they get into when they find



a tube of lipstick in their laundry. An appropriation of classic kung fu flicks from a queer feminist perspective.

### Trying to Keep Concentrate

Dir.: Ruthann Lee, Canada, 2004, 8 min  
Featuring footage from an in-store surveillance camera and interviews with the store's owner, this documentary presents personal and systematic views of Korean immigrant experiences in Canada.

### Muni to the Marriage

Dir.: Stuart Gaffney, USA, 2004, 5 min  
Riding to San Francisco's City Hall to take part in marriage history with his partner of 17 years, the filmmaker reflects on the difficulties experienced by his Chinese-American mother and white father more than 50 years ago, who were only able to marry when California's law against interracial marriage was overturned.

### Kata Practice

Dir.: Siu Ta, Canada, 2004, 5 min  
David, a 6-year-old junior green belt, practices for his final fight. As he concentrates on each technique, he soon confronts a challenge that goes beyond the physical.



### 3 Meals

Dir.: Colin Goh, Yen Yen Woo, Singapore, 2005, 19 min  
San, a Singaporean woman under pressure from her mother to "find a good man," hosts three disastrous meals two with would-be suitors, and the last with her mother herself.

### Fuck Off

Dir.: Persephone Tan, USA, 2004, 6 min  
People have a natural tendency to stare, especially if you look or act differently. Uncomfortable glances? Shaking heads? Sneers? Fuck Off is dedicated to those who can't accept the fact that not everybody is the same.

### Be Very Quiet

Dir.: Mona Nahm, Thailand, USA, 2004, 26 min  
As a child, Thana witnessed the rape and murder of his prostitute mother. Years later, he spots a man who resembles the killer and embarks on a path of vengeance.

### Chinese Beauty

Dir.: Debbie Lum, USA, 2005, 10 min  
A woman jogger chases down love, literally.

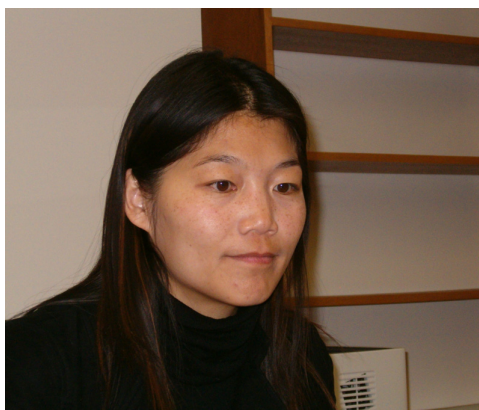




## Cindy I-Fen Cheng Joins Asian American Studies Program Faculty

**T**he Program is happy to welcome Cindy I-Fen Cheng, Assistant Professor of History and Asian American Studies, to our faculty. Cindy comes to us from the University of California, Irvine where she received a Ph.D. in History. Born in Taiwan, she moved to the United States when she was eight when her family settled in Los Angeles. She has taught in a variety of disciplines including Women's Studies, Asian American Studies, history, ethnic studies, and critical race studies. Prior to coming to UW-Madison, she spent a year as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Southern California. She was also Academic Coordinator for the Program in Women's Studies and Department of Asian American Studies at UC Irvine.

Her work in progress, "Contesting Chinese/American Identity in the Age of Cold War Politics," examines the racialization of the Chinese in the U.S. during the postwar period and analyzes a wide range of genres including personal narratives, oral history, visual media culture, and government documents. Her work illuminates the role race plays in American national narratives both domestically and in terms of foreign policy. She brings to the Program considerable expertise in Cold War culture, suburbanization, comparative racial formations, and American history.



taken any courses that dealt with race or any classes critical of it. I just thought of that was phenomenal, and I immediately got curious.

The material really grabbed me. Then I found out that they offered a minor. It was a concentration or certificate like the one we have at UW, exactly the same format. I immediately started taking Asian American

Studies classes. At the time, UCLA's concentration was not as well developed as the one we

have here at UW. Here at the UW, we offer wider array of classes partly because the field has developed.

During my college years, Los Angeles was very important because this was the time that anti-immigration laws were being passed and affirmative action was being debated. Everything that was passed by the liberal state of the 60s and 70s was being overturned when I was an undergrad. It was also during the years of the Rodney King beating and the LA uprising.

When I was a junior, all of Ethnic Studies programs came together for a strike. African American, Chicano, and Asian American Studies became majors. It was a vibrant time to be a part of all this change. After all the strikes and protest, I actually became the part of the first class to graduate with the option of an Asian American Studies major.

Then, after finishing my undergrad, I worked for a year and a half for a non-profit. It was a program that helped at-risk youth to get their GEDs or job training. I first started as their administrative assistant, and then became their education coordinator. I also taught all kinds of subjects from elementary-level reading to math.

A couple of years later, I wanted to go back to school and study something I really, really enjoyed. I decided to give history a try. I went to UC Irvine to study U.S. history with a focus on Asian American history. I also did feminist and critical studies. After I completed my degree, I did a post-doc at USC, and I am here at UW.

### Can you share your and your family's life story with us?

I remember the date: Jan. 23, 1980. My mom took my two brothers and me from Taiwan to the United States, then my dad joined us a month later. I grew up in a small suburb about 30 miles east of L.A. At that time, we were one of the few Asian families in our neighborhood. Rolling Heights is now known to be a large Asian enclave community--predominantly Korean and Chinese. But at that time, there were very few Asian families.

We settled there for a very interesting reason. When we were in Pasadena, we were not allowed to go to school there. Only certain groups could go to school, and we needed green cards to attend public school even though we were legal residents. Wilson High School in Rolling Heights was one of the few high schools that allowed us to go to school there. That is the reason why a lot of Asians and Latinos are there today.

People often think different cultural and ethnic groups come together over issues of cultural identification. But I think there are a lot of institutional and structural reasons for that. When I was in school there, my brother and I and one other girl were the only three Asians. But now the Asian student population is 60%. I saw a radical change from a predominantly white neighborhood to a predominantly Asian neighborhood. While we were first living there, we were the target of a lot of racist acts, like painting stuff on our car or throwing eggs. My story about coming to the U.S. is similar to many immigrant stories.

### How do you perceive the difference in between CA and WI?

Be frank, I think being a minority in general in California is much easier. I think I never understood how difficult it is to be a person of color until I moved here. I never had in-your-face racist remarks until I

### Interview with Cindy

By Atsushi Tajima

#### Tell us about yourself and your background.

I did my undergrad at UCLA. I think I had the typical working class mentality, where you want to do well in school. I wanted to be a doctor and was pre-med at UCLA. I never thought too much about what I was going to do, I just thought I'd be a doctor.

One semester, I was searching for classes other than science classes and accidentally flipped open my schedule to the page where Asian American Studies courses were listed. I did not look for it. The first thing I actually saw was a course on Asian American women. I'd never

moved here. Being a minority here is so different. In California, people have a different perception about diversity. There is no dominant majority; perhaps, different racial and ethnic groups are 30%, 30%, and 30%. There is no one visible majority; it is easier to move around, you just don't have to feel like you are a minority. Also, lately, the new Taiwanese immigrants are coming in with more wealth and challenging the class system. There is less of a need to feel belonging.

Coming to Madison has been a big lesson to me in knowing what means to be a minority. Everywhere you go, you may be the only person of color. I think people understand multiculturalism to be about tolerance and a celebration of people of color; we don't deal with real racial and ethnic politics beyond multiculturalism. However, this needs to be changed. We will be experiencing demographic changes in next ten years or so. Even UW will look very different and we need to be in this process. I think critical race consciousness needs to be there.

#### **Tell us about your research.**

Obviously, I am committed to turning my dissertation project, which deals with comparative racial formation, into a book. As for my second project, I've been seriously influenced by the Hmong students here. So my second book project will be on the settlement patterns of the Hmong, particularly in WI, and I may be doing a comparison with MN.

I am particularly fascinated by this particular geographic location, Madison. If you look at the history and the role Madison and UW played, this was the central place in terms of the anti-war protest during the Vietnam-era. I know this was the first campus to stage an anti-war protest. The History Department, Harvey Goldberg--they played a significant role in educating students about why the war was fought, why southeast Asians were here, and the economic imperatives of the Cold War. All of those gave students a basis for acting against war in Vietnam.

I want to begin looking at why they hated the war, the aftermath and the discourse around humanitarianism, the guilt surrounding the war, and connect this with the refugee population here. I want to connect the two: the anti-war movement and refugee resettlement.

I want to get away from resettlement and focus more on what resettlement means

for the Hmong. I think they represent an interesting transnational diasporic community. The formation here is not necessarily ethnic enclave. This is about a group that travels to reform a national network. Their case is unique, not like China or Laos: their nation is in the "U.S."

#### **How have your Hmong students and the people of Wisconsin influenced you so far?**

I have been obviously influenced by living in Madison: my Hmong students have really redefined how I understand this relation. I'd like to interview the Hmong about the discourse of home, what belonging means to them.

I genuinely believe that my Hmong students in my Asian American Studies courses are the most special here. They are often-times first generation college students from big refugee families. They had to overcome many obstacles, including racial and economic barriers. At the same time, it is amazing to see that the UW has been generous about giving scholarships. Their existence is adding a very unique way to look at diversity here.

#### **What do you think you can add to the Program, UW, and the community?**

I will always to continue to offer a curriculum that is innovative and challenging, one that will always be new in terms of thinking about race relations. I will always be a professor who is committed to curriculum development and understanding the ways that race governs and structures society, why that matters, and how race works together with gender, class, and other social issues. Even beyond my connection to the university, as a resident of Madison, I would also like to volunteer as a tutor for young Hmong students either after school or at the refugee center.

#### **What kinds of classes are you teaching and developing?**

Right now, I am developing two elementary-level Asian American history courses. The first is "Movement and Dislocation" focusing on the socio-economic, political, and personal factors that go into why

people move. It will have both transnational as well as U.S. contexts. The second is "Settlement and the Discourse of Belonging." It is not just about uprooting factors, but also about one's incorporation into the U.S., what it means to belong from legal, social, and economic perspectives.

I have a more fun course titled "Race and Media Culture in the US." I also offer a graduate course, "Asian American History and Culture." It is an interdisciplinary class that will look at historical narratives, literary criticism, fiction, and images of Asian Americans.

#### **Anything to share with students pursuing the Asian American Studies certificate?**

People have traditional majors. A concentration is the

icing on the cake, and it is one of the best things that undergrad students can do. Instead of a bunch of random courses, why not take a cluster of courses around a similar theme and get institutional recognition for it? It offers a chance to understand where you belong and to take advantage of those opportunities. American society is increasingly diverse and multicultural. So people have to understand racial differences, gender differences, economic differences, structural differences and so on. Our concentration is one very good way to enhance your understanding about those things.

#### **What is your reaction to Wisconsin?**

I was told that this is the mildest winter here, but I had a traumatic encounter with the "blizzard." My students teased me, but also they helped me adapt.

I feel extremely fortunate to be in this amazing environment and institution. I do not want to take anything for granted. It is a privilege to be a part of the Asian American Studies Program and its legacy.



## Upcoming Asian American Studies Courses

### FALL 2006

#### 101 Introduction to Asian American Studies

**Instructor: Jan Miyasaki, 3 cr.**

This course introduces major themes in Asian American Studies from the beginning of Asian immigration to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century to the present. We will examine why Asians come to America and what happened to them in America in relation to issues of immigration, civil rights, race relations, ethnic identity, gender and family relations, class and community.

#### 153 Asian American Movement

(Crosslisted with Dance)

**Instructor: Peggy Choy, 3 cr.**

This course introduces several Asian movement traditions and dance forms which have been brought into the United States where the forms have been taught, passed-on and transfigured. All forms studied focus on the transformation of internal life-force energy ("ki" or "chi") into movement. Meditation and movement techniques will be taught in the context of Asian cultures and philosophy, Asian American history, and a creative/imaginative process of movement choreography. A primary focus is the exploration and expression of ethnic and cultural identity with attention to the diversity of Asian American experiences in the context of racial and ethnic contestation in America. Students will learn movements from several of the following forms: the Chinese forms of *t'ai chi chuan*, *wushu*, the contemporary dance technique of Zen Dance/*Son Mu*, Korean dance and music, and introduction to a form of *Butoh* (originally from Japan).

#### 220 Ethnic Movements in the United States

(Crosslisted with Sociology)

**Instructor: Pamela Oliver, 4 cr.**

This course uses a social movements and group conflict approach to explore the experiences of African American, American Indian, Hispanic/Latino (especially Mexican American), and Asian American people in the US. Part of the course is a history of the formation of the United States as a racial state and an overview of the history and politics of each of the groups. The course also emphasizes racial controversy: projects require you to research and analyze the opinions of people on both sides of con-

troversial issues. Our goal is to understand current issues and conflicts by locating them in their historical and political/economic context. We will pay close attention to the resource mobilization and political opportunity questions: who controls the situation, what resources and capacities do aggrieved groups have to affect the situation?

#### 240 Topics in Asian American Studies: Movement and Dislocation( Sec. 1)

(Crosslisted with History)

**Instructor: Cindy I-Fen Cheng, 3 cr.**

This course traces the making of U.S. national identity and underscores how this formation is contingent upon how Asians in the U.S. are understood and remembered. It unfolds how the social, economic, and political development of the U.S. is deeply connected and influenced by the world at large. These linkages become comprehensible and are subsequently read through the movement of people, services, goods, ideas, and capital between the U.S. and various Asian countries. Asian American history further reveals how the make-up of the U.S. national identity is contingent upon the construction and interplay among identity categories such as race, nationality, gender, class, and sexuality – all of which are at work to make known and divide legitimate subjects of this nation-state from the illegitimate. The goal of this class is to unpack these complex series of processes involved in the construction of the U.S. national identity. As writings and media clips from various academic disciplines such as Anthropology, Sociology, English, and History contribute to and shape our understanding of Asian American history, we will critically examine these various texts to consider the narrative practices adopted in each discipline to tell story of Asian American history.

#### 240 Topics in Asian American Studies: Among American Studies (Sec. 2)

**Instructor & Course Description: TBA**

#### 260 Topics in Asian American Studies: Asian Diaspora and Global Media (Sec. 2)

**Instructor & Course Description: TBA**

#### 260 Topics in Asian American Studies: Asian American Interstitiality (Sec. 1)

**Instructor: Leslie Bow, 3 cr.**

In taking interstitiality or "betweenness" as an ordering paradigm, this course will analyze Asian American representation as it lies between black and white, between normative categories of gender and sexuality, across class divisions, and within the borders that define nationality and culture. Our lens will encompass traditional ways of exploring Asian American transnationality by focusing on how cultural differences between Asia and the U.S. become articulated in literature, film, and personal narrative. We will also connect this idea of the Asian American as cultural hybrid with alternative conceptions of both hybridity and interstitiality: how can Asian American culture be located a productive site for thinking about what might be transracial, transclass, or transgender? Looking at court cases, history, and popular culture, we will explore how Asian American racialization is influenced by assumptions about other minority groups in the U.S. and normative whiteness, about sexual freedom and gender roles, and about class mobility and social status. How does the perception of Asian Americans as "middlemen" affect their placement in the U.S.? What purpose does this perception serve? This course is concerned with how classifications come into being, how groups are defined, and how identities and identifications are formed. This course is being offered as a First-Year Interest Group or FIG and is linked with courses in English and East Asian Studies.

#### 662 Mass Media and Minorities

(Crosslisted with Journalism and Mass Comm.)

**Instructor: Hemant Shah, 4 cr.**

This course considers the cultural history and experiences of racial and ethnic minorities, explores the way these groups are portrayed in mainstream mass media, and analyzes how and why minority groups have created systems of mass media self-representation to counter the mainstream mass media. We will focus on mass media channels: print, Web, radio, television and film; and on two communication forms: news and entertainment. Our primary geographical focus is on the United States, but we may consider other multicultural societies as time and current events warrant.





## Asian American Studies Certificate Program

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
303 Ingraham Hall (608) 263-2976

The Asian American Studies certificate program provides students with an opportunity to develop a sustained intellectual focus on Asian American racial formation, communities, and culture. Interdisciplinary in nature, the certificate can be obtained by completing 15 credits of coursework in the humanities, social sciences, and education.

The certificate program is open to any undergraduate student regardless of major or college who has an interest in Asian American Studies and is in good academic standing at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Interested students should contact the Asian American Studies Program (303 Ingraham Hall) and meet with the Director to discuss their study plans and understand the administrative process for obtaining the certificate.

### Requirements:

To earn a Certificate in Asian American Studies, a student must earn a minimum GPA of 2.75 in 15 credits of coursework:

#### ⇒ 3 credits of foundation

ASIAN AM 101 Introduction to Asian American Studies

#### ⇒ 9 credits of "core" courses devoted exclusively to Asian American issues

ASIAN AM 153 Asian American Movement

ASIAN AM 240 Topics in Asian American Studies

- Movement and Dislocation
- Hmong American Studies

ASIAN AM 252 Gender and Sexuality in Asian American Literature and Culture

ASIAN AM 260 Topics in Asian American Culture

- Asian American Cultural Politics
- Asian American History
- Asian American Popular Culture
- Asian American Interstitiality
- Asian Diaspora and Global Media

ASIAN AM 270 Asian American Literature

ASIAN AM 420 Asian Americans and Media

ASIAN AM 470 Asian Americans in U.S. Schools

ASIAN AM 540 Special Topics

ASIAN AM 560 Topics in Humanities

ASIAN AM 595 Asian American Women Writers

ASIAN AM 699 Independent Study: Directed Readings in Asian American Studies

#### ⇒ 3 credits of "comparative" courses

ASIAN AM 220 Ethnic Movements in the United States

ASIAN AM 443 Mutual Perceptions of Racial Minorities

ASIAN AM 662 Mass Media and Minorities

History 244 Introduction to Southeast Asia: Vietnam to the Philippines

HDFS 474 Racial Ethnic Families in the U.S. (*HDSF: Human Development and Family Studies*)

E ASIAN 520 Popular Culture and Film in Twentieth Century China

Regularly offered courses from Afro-American Studies, American Indian Studies, Chicano Studies, East Asian Studies, Southeast Asian Studies, South Asian Studies, or Languages and Cultures of Asia may count toward the fulfillment of the comparative requirement with the Director's approval. Student must file a DARS exception form with L&S upon approval.

There is no language requirement for the certificate.

**Asian American Studies Program**

University of Wisconsin-Madison  
303 Ingraham hall  
1155 Observatory Drive  
Madison, WI 53706

ADDRESS CORRECTION  
REQUESTED

**Asian American Studies Program**

**University of Wisconsin-Madison**

**Mission Statement**

The Asian American Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin, Madison is an interdisciplinary program committed to teaching and scholarship about Asians in the U.S., and to programming cultural events promoting Asian American issues and creative arts. It seeks to educate about the processes of racialization, systems of representation, economic structures, and domestic and foreign policies that impact immigrant populations. In addition to a core faculty, the Program draws upon the interests and expertise of affiliated faculty and academic staff across disciplines and academic units.

The Asian American Studies Program offers an array of courses devoted to the historical, political, literary, sociological, psychological, artistic, and educational concerns of Asian Americans. The Program sponsors lectures, readings, and performances that enhance the work it does in the classroom, including an annual Asian American Film Festival. It maintains a collection of book and video resources to benefit education about Asian American communities. The Program's scholarly mission extends to both the University community and well beyond it.

**Visit our website: <http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/aasp/>**