

Circuits of American Empire and Imperialism

History 901

Spring 2023

Seminar Time: Mondays 8:50am – 10:45am
Location: Humanities 5245

Professor: Cindy I-Fen Cheng [she, her, hers]
Office: Humanities 5022
Office Hours: Mondays 11am – 1pm and by appointment
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Course Description and Objectives

This seminar explores the circuits that govern movement and displacement within and across the United States empire. We will examine how the reaches of people, goods, and ideas are essential components of U.S. colonization and imperial expansions and how they also dictate modes of resistance, decolonization efforts, and coalitional politics. Finally, we will investigate how movement and displacement generate transnational and diasporic identities that reconfigure conceptions of the national while expanding and sometimes unsettling the sense of belonging and rootedness.

Course Requirements and Grading

Attendance and Participation	150 points	15%
Response paper (2-3pages; 50 points each, 12 total)	600 points	60%
Final Critical Thinking Paper (10-15pages)	250 points	25%
Total	1000 points	100%

Required Texts

- Mae M. Ngai, "The Promises and Perils of Transnational History," *Perspectives on History*, December 2012.
- Adria Imada, *Aloha America: Hula Circuits through the U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).
- Hsingya Huang, Philip J. Deloria, Laura M. Furlan, and John Gamber, "Special Forum: Charting Transnational Native American Studies," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4:1 (2012).
- Tiya Miles, *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).
- Mia Bay, *Traveling Black: A Story of Race and Resistance* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2021).
- Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008).
- Mae Ngai, *The Chinese Question: The Gold Rushes and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2021).
- Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).
- Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).
- Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Politics Freedom* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).
- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
- Audra Simpson, "On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, 'Voice' and Colonial Citizenship," *Junctures* 9 (2007): 67-80.
- Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "R-Words: Refusing Research," in *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities*, eds. Django Paris and Maisha T. Winn (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2013), 223-247.
- Dian Million, "Felt Theory," *American Quarterly* 60:2 (2008): 267-272.
- Lisa Yoneyama, *Cold War Ruins: Transpacific Critique of American Justice and Japanese War Crimes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

Course Schedule

WEEK 1 Course Introduction

M 1.30

Reading:

- Mae M. Ngai, "The Promises and Perils of Transnational History," *Perspectives on History*, December 2012.

WEEK 2 Circuits of Empire

M 2.6 Response Paper #1 DUE

Readings:

- Adria Imada, *Aloha America: Hula Circuits through the U.S. Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).
- Hsingya Huang, Philip J. Deloria, Laura M. Furlan, and John Gamber, "Special Forum: Charting Transnational Native American Studies," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 4:1 (2012).

WEEK 3 Entanglements of Slavery and Colonization

M 2.13 Response Paper #2 DUE

Reading:

- Tiya Miles, *Ties That Bind: The Story of an Afro-Cherokee Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).

WEEK 4 Detours of Internal Colonialism

M 2.20 Response Paper #3 DUE

Reading:

- Mia Bay, *Traveling Black: A Story of Race and Resistance* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2021).

WEEK 5 Roots and Routes

M 2.27 Response Paper #4 DUE

Reading:

- Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008).

WEEK 6 Labor, Empire, and Imperial Expansion

M 3.6 Response Paper #5 DUE

Reading:

- Mae Ngai, *The Chinese Question: The Gold Rushes and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2021).

WEEK 7 Spring Break

M 3.13 😊

WEEK 8 Settler Colonialist or Immigrant?

M 3.20 Response Paper #6 DUE

Reading:

- Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

WEEK 9 Transnational Subject Formations

M 3.27 Response Paper #7 DUE

Reading:

- Inderpal Grewal, *Transnational America: Feminisms, Diasporas, Neoliberalisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

WEEK 10 Locating the Queer Diasporic Subject

M 4.3 Response Paper #8 DUE

Reading:

- Gayatri Gopinath, *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

WEEK 11 Rewriting Racialized Scripts

M 4.10 Response Paper #9 DUE

Reading:

- Mireya Loza, *Defiant Braceros: How Migrant Workers Fought for Racial, Sexual, and Politics Freedom* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016).

WEEK 12 Cartographies of Struggle

M 4.17 Response Paper #10 DUE

Reading:

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

WEEK 13 The Politics of Refusal

M 4.24 Response Paper #11 DUE

Readings:

- Audra Simpson, "On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, 'Voice' and Colonial Citizenship," *Junctures* 9 (2007): 67-80.
- Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "R-Words: Refusing Research," in *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities*, eds. Django Paris and Maisha T. Winn (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2013), 223-247.
- Dian Million, "Felt Theory," *American Quarterly* 60:2 (2008): 267-272.

WEEK 14 Transborder Redress Culture

M 5.1 Response Paper #12 DUE

Reading:

- Lisa Yoneyama, *Cold War Ruins: Transpacific Critique of American Justice and Japanese War Crimes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

Critical Thinking Paper – DUE Monday, May 8, 2023