

Queer Immigration in American Culture

Undergraduate Seminar: Course on queer im/migrant literature and transnational feminism

Dr. Keish Kim

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-2:00pm by appointment

https://calendly.com/k_kime/30min

Mon/Wed 10:00-11:20 AM

Conklin Hall 302



Jess X. Snow. "Migration is Natural" (2017)

Course Description

Immigration has long been portrayed in the U.S. as a concern on the U.S.-Mexico border in the 20th and 21st centuries. National narratives of the southern border depict large groups of people climbing over barbed wires or waiting in ports of entry. Immigrant subjects are rarely able to share their stories, particularly women and LGBTQ+ people. This course explores queer and feminist im/migration literature and history. Throughout the semester, we will examine novels, memoirs, poems, and films by queer and feminist im/migrants alongside historical documents to understand the role of race, gender, sexuality, and nationality. The goal of this course is to contextualize migrant experiences across intersections of power. As a class, we will ask and answer questions such as: how the nation constructs who is a desirable citizen and why? How do gender and sexuality shape narratives of migration? And whose migration stories are remembered? Our shared purpose is to understand how power operates within local/global inequalities of race, gender, sexuality, citizenship, and disability. The class will focus on how ordinary people resist violent structures of power.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will gain an introductory understanding of immigration policies in the U.S.;
2. Students will develop close reading skills by engaging with primary sources (textual, legal, visual, cultural, personal);
3. Students will examine citizenship across race, gender, sexuality, and/or ability;

4. Students will analyze immigration politics beyond the U.S.-Mexico Border;
5. Students will identify significance of counter-narratives on immigration.

Required Texts

Mukherjee, *Jasmine*

Liu, *Monstress* Issue 1. (2015)

Hernández, *A Cup of Water Under My Bed: A Memoir* (2014)

*Reading list and course elements may change slightly during the semester.

Short Films

Jess X. Snow, “Afterearth” 2017

Oh Yung, “Care for You” 2019

Luna X. Moya, “What the Pier Gave Us” 2021

Guest Speakers

Stephanie Soultree Camba: Queer, Marshallese-Filipinx Artist

TBA

Student Resources

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University. Please familiarize yourself with the University’s definition of plagiarism by reviewing the Rutgers University Policy on Academic Integrity, here: <https://studentaffairs.newark.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/2020-08/Academic%20Integrity%20Policy.pdf> Faculty members have a professional obligation to report all instances of plagiarism in their classes. Failure to do so promotes inequity among the student body, given that honest students have not had the advantage of using external sources in preparing their work.

If I find that you have used other people’s ideas (e.g., Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment. You will get a failing grade (0 points). You are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy, available at <https://studentaffairs.newark.rutgers.edu/support-services/community-standards/code-conduct-academic-integrity>. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any use of the ideas or words of another person without proper acknowledgment of credit will result in penalties up to and possibly including a course grade of F. Likewise for cheating on exams and quizzes. Note that the uncited use of uncopyrighted material such as Wikipedia entries still constitutes plagiarism.

Disability and Universal Access:

This course mainly deals with scholarly and theoretical writings and discussion. In addition, I also incorporate audio-visual materials. It is my intention to support the full participation of all students in these intellectual and multisensory learning processes. Diverse levels of intellectual engagements and diverse modes of sensory engagements benefit and deepen everyone's understanding. Ensuring access for all students is taken very seriously in this course.

Access and accommodation require paying attention to physical and social environments, intellectual, emotional, and psychological aspects. In most cases, we all are collectively responsible to create a supportive learning environment. I want everyone to learn as much as one is willing to learn and I am open to meet with you individually to discuss the best way to support your learning. You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs.

If you believe that you need specific kinds of accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), visit the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219, by phone at 973-353-5666 or by email at ODS@newark.rutgers.edu. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible. For more information, <https://studentaffairs.newark.rutgers.edu/health-wellness/disability-services/request-accommodations>

You are also welcome to contact me to discuss your academic needs, as many accommodations are possible without documentation.

In-Person Classroom Health and Safety Policy: Rutgers is not currently mandating mask-wearing in the classroom. I will be wearing a mask, and others should feel free to do so as well. Please take the steps you need to feel comfortable in an in-person setting. Should the university's masking requirements change, we will update our practices as well. Here is the link to the current University policy: <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/>

Assignments & Grading

Course Grading System

A	100-93	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	F	below 70
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76		
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

Requirements

1. Preparation and Attendance (10%), Participation (10%)

Reading all assigned materials in advance, attending class, and participating are crucial in this course. Attendance is mandatory. Absence due to religious holidays, health issues, and unavoidable circumstances will be excused if you inform me by email before the class. You are

also required to check the course page at least once a week for updates, additional materials, and any announcements. I will post important information, announcements, and any changes in the syllabus on the main Announcement page.

Discussion plays a central role in this course. Active and constructive discussion is only possible when you are prepared to talk about the assigned materials, to present your views thoughtfully, to listen to other students' opinions carefully, and to respect feelings and disagreements of others. Expressing your opinions and receiving feedback from the group provide opportunities to evaluate and deepen your own thinking and communication. Speaking up is not the only way to participate in class. You may participate through different means, for instance, taking detailed notes and turning them into me during or after class. Emailing me with your thoughts and reflections on relevant material.)

Grading Guide: The participation will be self-assessed in the mid-semester and final assessment will be given based on the following rubric at the end of the semester.

0 never participated or engaged

1-2 rarely participated or engaged

3-4 occasionally participated and actively listened

5 frequently participated, actively listened and engaged

In-Class Writing Assignments:

This class will incorporate creative writing exercises in class. These assignments will be turned in at the end of the class and count towards participation.

2. Reading Responses: (30%)

Each student will submit three 400-600 (double spaced) written responses to assigned readings over the course of the semester. These responses should be in a book review format that evaluates the major argument, evidence, theories, and methodology of the works in discussion. The response should also express reactions, questions, and general comments about the text and its contribution to larger discussion themes in the seminar or in the field.

3. In-Class Quizzes (10%)

You will have three in-class pop-quizzes pertaining to your readings.

4. Group Presentation (5%) and Individual Reflection (5%)

Students will work as a group to identify local, national, international organization working at the intersections of feminism, im/migration, LGBTQ justice, racial justice, and/or disability justice. The group will present the history and mission statement of the organization and showcase significant campaign (past or ongoing) by incorporating main themes of the course.

Some example organizations include:

Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI)

TransLatin@ Coalition

National Immigrant Youth Alliance (NIYA)

Haitian Bridge

Cambio Passo Milano

5. Final Project: (30%)

Final project is an observations project and is creative in nature. The project requires you to construct a book, blog, series of tiktok video that gathers, reflect on, and analyze cultural artifacts regarding citizenship, immigration, borders, and notions of belonging: We will be asking as a class, how others imagine immigrants, and how immigrants imagine themselves?

Throughout the semester you will spend time observing, noticing, and cataloguing these artifacts (language, images, signs, posters, hashtags, newspaper articles, song lyrics, music videos, etc.) across race, gender, class, sexuality, and/or (dis)ability. This assignment expects you to notice and examine what may have previously gone unnoticed.

Your observation project should have an introduction, 3 artifacts, and a conclusion.

Introduction: The introduction (300-500 words) should both introduce and reflect on your project.

Artifacts: You will have THREE artifacts. Each artifact should correspond to a different area from the syllabus. Be thoughtful and deliberate about what you select. Ask questions like “What moves you?,” “What surprises you?,” “What makes you think?,” while choosing the artifacts.

You will meet with me at least ONCE to run through your ideas for this project.

Each artifact should be followed by a short analysis (600-800 words) and should make use of/quotes from/refer to **TWO** readings per artifact. Relevance is key in selecting quotes for each analysis. Ask these questions when selecting your quote:

Conclusion: The conclusion will strictly be a written assignment (400-700 words). This is where you analyze the personal and political ramification of the project. It should discuss the importance of putting together the course materials in conversation with everyday happenings. What has your experience been collecting these artifacts? How has creating this collection helped you link course materials to the world around you? Your project should show evidence of thoughtful reflections on the themes and ideas discussed throughout the course and should develop your own personal insights and understandings of particular issues related to citizenship, belonging, immigration, and border politics.

You will peer-review your conclusion as an in-class assignment. The peer-review will account 25% of your grade.

Class Schedule

Week 1—Introduction

Jan 18

What are some images and narratives that make up the conception of migration?

What is the relationship between immigration policy and gender?

This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color, eds. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (1981)

“The Bridge Poem” by Donna Kate Rushin
Combahee River Collective Statement

Week 2— Gendered and Criminalized Bodies

Jan 23

Primary Source: 1875 Page Act (in class)
Mae Ngai *Impossible Subjects*, Notes on Language and Terminology (Canvas)
Walia, “What is Border Imperialism” (Selections)

Jan 25

Read *Jasmine* by Bharati Mukherjee Chapter 1-8
Gloria Anzaldúa, Borderlands/La Frontera. Selections (in class)

Week 3— Criminalization of Migration

Jan 30

Mukherjee, *Jasmine* Chapter 9-17
Kimberlé Crenshaw “Mapping the Margins” (1991) Selections (in Class)

Feb 1st

1st Reading Response Due

Primary Source:
Georgia House Bill 87 Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011

Readings:
Mukherjee, *Jasmine* Chapters 18-26

Week 4—Interlocking Systems of Oppression

Feb. 6

Primary Source: Dawes Act of 1887
Listen to Camba, “Stolen Lands”
Diaz, *Postcolonial Love Poem* (2020) (Selections)

Feb 8

Guest Lecture: Stephanie Soultree Camba

Readings:
Haunani-Kay Trask, *From A Native Daughter* (1993) (selection)

Week 5—Queer Migrations

Feb 13

Review Salgado images in class

Readings:

Luibhéid, ““Treated neither with Respect nor with Dignity” Contextualizing Queer and Trans Migrant “Illegalization,” Detention, and Deportation”

Chan, *Togetherness* (2022) (Selections)

Feb 15

Reddy, “Asian Diasporas, Neoliberalism, and Family: Reviewing the Case for Homosexual Asylum in the Context of Family Rights” (2005)

Week 6—Disability and War I

Feb 20

Primary Source:

United States Refugee Act of 1980

Mansha Mirza, “Refugee Camps, Asylum Detention, and the Geopolitics of Transnational Migration: Disability and Its Intersection with Humanitarian Confinement,” *Disability Incarcerated*

Feb 22

Readings:

UN Migration post-arrival survey 2021

Edwidge Danticat (Selection)

Week 7—Disability and War II /Colonialism

Feb 27

Karmadavis Pérez. Selection of performances (view in class)

Readings:

Liu, *Monstress* (2015)

March 1

2nd Reading Response Due

Readings:

Nirmala Erevelles “Reflecting on Gender, Race, and Disability in Wartime” (2011)

Week 8— Black Citizenship and Belonging

March 6

Primary Source: Fugitive Slave Act of 1793

Readings:

Alan Pelaez Lopez, *Intergalactic Travel* (Selections)

McKanders, “Immigration Enforcement and the Fugitive Slave Acts: Exploring Their Similarities” (2012)

March 8

Sawyer Seminar Black Citizenship

Class meets at Express Newark, 54 Halsey Street Room 213, 2nd Floor, Newark, NJ 07102

<https://sawyerseminar.rutgers.edu/event/black-citizenship/>

Reading:

Rankine, “What if”

Rankine, *Citizen*, “Some years there exists a wanting...”

June Jordan, “Poem about My Rights”

****Extra Credit Opportunity****

Attend “Black Citizenship and Religion” (3:00-4:30 pm)

Express Newark, 54 Halsey Street Room 213, 2nd Floor, Newark, NJ 07102

Week 9— No Class Spring Recess

Week 10—

Mar 20

Hernández, Daisy A Cup of Water Under My Bed: A Memoir (2014) pgs. xi-69 (Condemned-Part one)

Mar 22

Hernández, Daisy A Cup of Water Under My Bed: A Memoir (2014) pgs. 73-116 (Part two)

Week 11— Counter-Narrative Practices

Mar 27

Readings:

Hernández, Daisy A Cup of Water Under My Bed: A Memoir (2014) pgs.119-181 (Part three-Después)

Watch: Undocumented and Awkward (in class)

Mar 29

3rd Reading Response Due

Guest Speaker (Tentative)

Guiñansaca, *Nostalgia and Borders* (2016)

Somewhere We are Human (2022) (Selections)

Week 12— Transnational Feminism, Queer Futures

April 3

Readings:

M. Jacqui Alexander. “Remembering *This Bridge Called My Back*, Remembering Ourselves”

April 5

Readings:

Mia Mingus, “Moving Toward the Ugly: A Politic Beyond Desirability”

Week 13— Queer Re-Telling

April 10th

Readings:

Levins Moralex, Driskill, Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, “Sweet Dark Places: Letters to Gloria Anzaldúa on Disability, Creativity, and the Coatlicue State” (2012)

April 12th

Voung, *Night Sky With Exit Wounds* (2016) (Selections)

Watch: Oh Yung, “Care for You” 2019 (in class)

Week 14— Environmental Justice

April 17th

Watch: Jess X. Snow, “Afterearth” 2017 (in class)

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner. “Dear Matafele Peinem” (2014 UN Climate Summit)

Readings:

Climate Refugee Stories : <https://www.climaterefugeestories.com/stories/climate-refugees-post/>

April 19th

Aguon, *No Country for Eight-Spot Butterflies* (2022) (Selections)

The Red Deal 2021, (Selections)

Week 15— Feminist Kinship

In Class Peer Editing Week. Bring your draft conclusions to class

April 24th

Readings:

Combahee River Collective Statement (1977)

Grewal et al. (1988) *Charting the Journey* (selections)

April 26th

Bello, Kemi. (Selections)

Kafai, *Crip Kinship* (2021) (selections)

May 1st Last Class:

Final Group Presentations