

Citation Label

Comparative Ethnic Studies Archives, UC Berkeley

Archive Call Number: CES ARC 2015/1

Box No. 2 Folder No. 7 Date 4/24/17

ASIAN STUDIES PROPOSAL

I. GENERAL PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

The Asian experience in America is unique. The lives of the Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and other Asian people have similarities and differences, but generally fall under the category of the Yellow Experience. The phenomena of a colorful people living in a white society deserves study, understanding, and sensitive analysis. It deserves this study because these colorful people need it, in order to understand themselves and the society in which they live. But perhaps an even more pressing need is for Americans and other peoples of the world to understand American society itself, from as many perspectives as possible.

The effects of American and Western civilization on the non-Western world have been profound. From the earliest contacts of European explorers with the Chinese and Southeast Asians to the present-day Western military, economic, and political activities and spheres in Asia, the "white" man has been involved with the "yellow" man.

From the study of these two related experiences--Asians in America and Westerners in Asia--we can perhaps arrive at some understanding about the "yellow-white" relationship at its social and psychological roots and manifestations.

Education: An Understanding of Self

We view education at two levels, distinct only at conceptual, but not at the real level. Education should lead to an understanding of self at the individual, biographical level; and understanding of self at the social, historical level. Only at the intersection of these two levels -- individual and social, biographical and historical -- only with an understanding of the relationships between these entities, can education be complete.

The Asian in America has to understand America and his role and place in America. This involves history and his own biography. The Asian in America must come to understand Asia, and how that experience has affected his own roots. This, too, involves history and his own biography.

The just of a person's biography is the present. Relationship with his community and other communities must be understood. Learning about the Asian communities will lead to better understanding of self. Work in the community is essential in establishing bonds with that community. The community could be a "ghetto" in the traditional, economical and political sense; or a ghetto in the cultural and psychological sense. A "two-way" relationship should be established. Community people can come to lectures, and provide resources. Students and faculty can provide services and skills for the community. Our course offering centers around the community, and the role of the Asian-American in that community.

II. THE ASIAN IN AMERICA

A. Social Psychology: Dynamics of Racism

"We have come to find that the principle of color that attains to race results in exclusion: that, on the other hand, any system can accommodate itself to individuals. But pertinent even to individuals, we find that substantial psychological damage accrues to him in terms of his life style--that is, rejection of his own culture in favor of the dominant culture.

The natural alliance of peoples of color results from the exploitation according to and exclusively because of sheer visibility. In this sense, it is simplest put that we know when we are being lied to. Such a perspective as we are attempting to develop could not necessarily emerge from a view of American culture only. We take heart and example from the continued existence of our

culture abroad, who prove to us the viability of our heritages the world over."

To explore the social psychological dynamics of being yellow in a white society. Method: experiential, accounts, testing, group discussions, reference groups, interpersonal relations. Specifics for Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, ghetto, middle class, wealthy.

B. The Asian and His Community

Chinatowns: Development, problems, characteristics

Japanese Community: Where? Characteristics, etc.

Filipinos: Uniqueness, characteristics, etc.

Identification with community; alienation from the same.

Living in White society: Implications on community identity

C. Relationships Among Asian Communities

A study of the inter-community tensions and harmony: distances, effects of national origins, the rural-urban and middle class ghetto relations, and the historical effects American society....e.g. relocations, politics, economics.

D. America: An Asian Perspective

Political Economy of America

Anti-Asian laws: History and Meaning

The "White Man": What it means????

Our Piece of the Pie: Its value...acculturation, accomodation, and affluence.

E. Community Workshop: Relevant Education

"A major problem of the ghetto is the failure of its youth who are fortunate enough to learn a skill, to return the benefits of that skill to the com-

munity. This problem is neglected by the existing educational system, which prepares the individual for the assumption of an economically productive position within society. The skilled individual who can and does return to aid the community is the exception, not the rule. The Third World individual who does return is an even greater rarity because the University which already produces too few of these individuals has few Third World people initially and lacks the relevant courses catering to the specific needs of the community.

F. Language: Contemporary Linguistic Skills

The problem of language: dual life and language as presented by immigrant life and handicaps presents the need for Cantonese as well as the desirability of other Asian languages as spoken in the United States.

G. Creative Workshops

Using traditional and non-traditional media --drama, literature, mass communications, art, music, photography, etc. in workshops that would develop an Asian-American perspective through unique and various art-forms.

III. THE ASIAN EXPERIENCE

The roots of the Asian-American lie in Asia. A knowledge of history is essential; most pertinent is history involving Western man. Our course offerings in this part of the department would thus center around the nature of the Asian person, and his relationship with Western man. We include the study of "Overseas Asians" in this focus, because most Overseas Asians remain in Asia outside of their national origins. Also, Overseas Asian (except Asian-Americans) are distant from America. Community work there is difficult: history and current literature are the best we can do.

A. The Roots of Asian Man: Social Conditions for Emigration

Social Structure-- Family, Occupations, Politics, and Religion

Economic Condition-- labor opportunities, poverty, mobility, class
conflict

Western Effects-- War, trade, etc.

B. Westernization of Asia: Imperialism, Colonization, Modernization and
Effects

Europe: 15th thru 20th Century

America: 19th thru 20 Century

The study of cities--Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Singapore--as
case studies in westernization...a study of customs, values and social
perceptions.

C. Overseas Asian Communities

Asians in various contexts: Europe, Africa, Middle East, and Asia in
comparison with Asians in America.

D. Asian Revolutionary Ideology: Communism

A core course on ideology, organization of communism in the Asian
countries...e.g. China and the thought of Mao.

E. Revolutions and Social Movements

Student Movements in Asia

Conditions for revolution in Asia

Effects of the West in Revolution and Unrest in Asia.