



Director's Welcome



DR. ANNA PEGLER-GORDON
APA STUDIES DIRECTOR

The field of APA Studies has been heavily focused on the western United States since its founding at the University of San Francisco and the University of California, Berkeley in the 1960s. This is not surprising as, during the 1800s, most Asian immigrants traveled to the west. However, with the creation of the "East of California" Caucus in 1991, there have been efforts to "decenter" the field of Asian American Studies away from an exclusive focus on California.

Over the past 25 years, many of these efforts have focused on the large communities of Asian Americans in the eastern United States, specifically New York. My own work focuses in this area, as I am finishing up a book on the experiences of Asians at Ellis Island.

Increasingly, however, scholars have been paying attention to the experiences of Asians in the Midwest. This is great news, especially for those of us who live in Michigan! Wayne State University Press has published *Asian Americans in Michigan* (2015), edited by former MSU faculty member, Victor Jew. This volume joins MSU Press publications on *Asian Indians in Michigan* (2002) and *Hmong Americans in*

Michigan (2014). APA Studies faculty members have worked and are conducting new work in this area. Steve Gold has researched and written about Asian refugees and immigrant entrepreneurs in Lansing and Dearborn. Andrea Louie and Desiree Qin are working on new projects about the experiences of Chinese international students at MSU. And many APA Studies faculty, including Terese Guinsatao Monberg and Naoko Wake, gathered in Evanston, Illinois, for the Association for Asian American Studies Annual Meeting this spring. There is a great cohort of active APA graduate students who have recently organized the MSU APA Graduate Students Association. And Asian American History undergraduate students are also contributing to the history of Asian Americans, collecting, recording and transcribing oral histories of Asian American Michiganders that will be stored in the MSU Archives.

Since its founding almost fifty years ago, the field of APA Studies has not just added to our understanding of the United States, but has challenged and transformed our understanding of the complexity of race, ethnicity, culture, identity, migration, exclusion and advancement. In the same way, new studies of Asian Americans in Michigan and across the Midwest help us to tell new and different stories about the APA experience. If you are interested in telling your story, please let us know!

Graduate Spotlight—Mikayla Robinson

The APA Studies Program is proud to introduce Ms. Mikayla Robinson, a recent graduate of the APA Studies Minor. We asked Mikayla to answer a few questions so we can get to know her a bit more.

What major and specializations did you graduate with?

MR: Bachelor of Arts in Political Theory and Constitutional Democracy; Second major in Social Relations and Policy; Minor in Korean and Asian Pacific American Studies

What are your plans now that you have graduated?

MR: I will be attending Boston College this fall to pursue a Master's in History. I hope to continue focusing my studies on immigration and APA studies. After completing my Master's I hope to pursue a Ph.D. in History.

What are the benefits for having an APA Studies minor?

MR: There are several benefits I gained from completing my APA minor. First, I learned more about the APA community, their history and the issues they face. I learned so much and by learning about the

(cont. on page 2)



Recent MSU graduate Mikayla is shown with her parents.

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Fred T. Korematsu Panel

On Friday, January 30, 2015, the APA Studies Program in collaboration with the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights hosted a panel in honor and recognition of Civil Rights activist, Fred T. Korematsu. The event was a celebration of “Korematsu [who] was one of the many American citizens of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated during World War II. He is famous for his defying the government’s order to report to an assembly center. Fred T. Korematsu appealed his case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled against him in 1944. Years later his conviction was vacated by the U.S. District court of Northern California. Fred’s courage and activism was recognized by his receipt of the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Clinton in 1998. Fred T. Korematsu is the first Asian American honored by a state for a day in his name.”

The event featured a panel of diverse APA leaders who shared their thoughts about Fred’s impact on the APA community and the nation to a diverse audience of students, faculty and staff. These leaders included Frances Kai-Hwa Wang (NBC Asian American blogger), Mary Kamidoi (former internee at Rohwer Camp, Arkansas), Ron Aramaki (Dept. of American Culture, U of Michigan) and Roland Hwang (Dept. of American Culture, U of Michigan). Also featured on the panel was Matthew Wesaw (Director, Michigan Department of Civil Rights).

Students in SSC 293: Introduction to APA Studies were in attendance and had some profound reflections of the event. One student, Ashley, wrote, “I was so grateful to hear from Mary Kamidoi—who experienced the internment camps herself—as



(photo on left from left to right: Frances Kai-Hwa Wang, Mary Kamidoi, Ron Aramaki, Matthew Wesaw, and Roland Hwang (photo on right captures the well-attended event)



well as the experiences of individuals in the film shown. Ms. Kamidoi’s recollections reminded me of my own grandmother—and made me realize she was alive while this was happening. Oftentimes, horrible events like this, especially ones that aren’t even really taught in public schools, take on this otherworldly aura. It becomes a large story disconnected from concrete experiences and impacts on real people’s lives. The account of the otherwise-disconnected historical event from a person that lived through it humanized and took away the sterilized historicity from my personal perception of Japanese Internment.”

The event took place at the MOSAIC Multicultural Unity Center.

An APA Studies Minor requires only 5 courses to complete (i.e. 15-23 credits). These courses range from a selection of APA core courses along with Asian/APA heritage and race & ethnicity courses. SSC 293 is the only course that all APA Minor students must take.

- Increase your cultural awareness!
- Small class settings allows you to get to know faculty & staff!
- Empower yourself by understanding the contributions, struggles, stereotypes, resistance of an APA history!
- Options for APA Studies minor credits include: study abroad, domestic study away courses, and independent study to conduct a research project are available!

Graduate Spotlight– Mikayla Robinson (cont.)

APA community, I had a better understanding of the United States’ history and the issues that we still face. Additionally, I continued to pursue a multidisciplinary approach, which helped me throughout my undergraduate career. Through a multidisciplinary approach, I was able to examine issues in a new light and from different perspectives. I not only was able to incorporate my learning into my other coursework, but it was through these courses that I became an activist and helped claim my own APA identity.

What are you most proud of?

MR: I am most proud of my senior seminar research paper titled “Becoming Philip Jaisohn: Early Korean Immigration and Soh Jae-pil”. My research focused on Korean immigration, incorporating my interests in the APA community and immigration. More importantly, my research allowed me the opportunity to create dialogue within my family surrounding these topics. I was able to discuss with my mother and grandmother their own immigration experiences, a topic often not openly talked about.

What have learned from your MSU experience?

MR: My MSU experience has taught me to pursue your interests and never give up on your goals. It has also taught me that you can have new goals. In my undergraduate career I created new goals; I added new minors and changed my plans for after graduation. I continually pursued my interests and have never regretted going after these interests.

“...this class changed my life. I wish I knew what to say to drive people to enroll in this life changing experience regardless of their race. Let’s just say, if you YOLO: you’ll never be bored, you’ll be challenged and inspired”

- Brenda

Register Today!

SSC 293: “Intro. to Asian Pacific American Studies Program”

SSC 293 “Intro. to APA Studies” is offered Spring 2016 and meets once a week on Wednesdays (9-10-12noon). It is a 3 credit course and is open to all MSU students.

APA Studies Programming for 2015-2016

“Activism, Politics, and Social Media: Raising Asian American Voices”

During the coming year, the presidential primaries will get under way, accompanied by widespread community activism, political campaigning and media coverage. During these busy political times, however, Asian American voices are often overlooked or silenced. Historically, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have one of the lowest voter turnout rates among all demographic groups, at just 30% of eligible voters.

The APA Studies Program will host a diverse range of programs around the theme of “Activism, Politics and Social Media” designed to help incorporate more Asian American voices into the important political discussions of the coming year. The programming will include a series of individual events starting in fall 2015, a summit centered on the Michigan primary on March 8, 2016, and an “Asian American Reflections on the Election” in mid-November 2016. These programs will raise issues important to Asian Americans in Michigan and across the nation. The APA Studies Program also intends that these programs will make connections beyond our usual audiences of undergraduate students, graduates, faculty and staff at Michigan State University. We hope to appeal to alumni and community members across the Lansing area. The program also plans non-partisan activities such as voter registration drives to help increase the attention to and the political power of Asian American Voices.

This programming will look at key questions, such as:

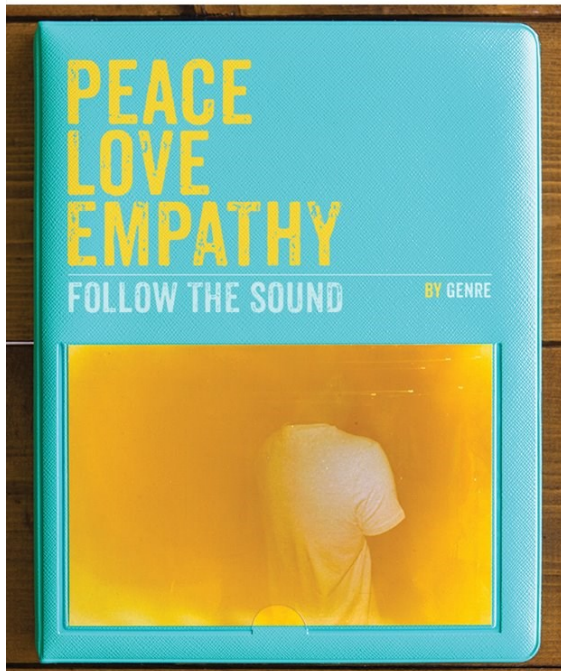
- What are some of the key issues for Asian Americans in the upcoming elections?
- What are some of the important ways in which Asian American politicians are changing the face of electoral politics in Michigan and beyond?
- How does social media work to empower Asian Americans, allowing marginalized voices to be heard? And how does social media also work to denigrate Asian Americans through viral stereotyping? Does social media operate in distinctive new ways for Asian Americans or it does simply extend existing forms of marginalization and resistance?
- How are activism, politics and social media interconnected?
- And how can we include more Asian American voices in these discussions?

Do you know of any speakers or events taking place at MSU that fit within this programming vision? The APA Studies Program would like to collaborate with other departments or organizations to create further awareness. If you want to get involved, please contact us at apaspec@msu.edu or call (517) 353-9140.

Wednesday, September 30th (7:00 PM) Art Exhibit Opening
368 Farm Lane, Room S206 South Kedzie

Exhibit will be open Fall Semester 2015

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION



...featuring photography of John Ra.

John Ra (better known as *Gen Re*) was the Asian Pacific American Studies Program’s first Undergraduate Program Assistant from August 2006-July 2011. John was the creative inspiration for many of our APA Studies promotional items and also created the Asian Pacific American Student Organization’s (APASO) logo. We are thrilled that we are able to work with him once again, this time featuring him for his personal artistic work. In October, John will head to Boston to work as UX designer for a startup business.



AT THE MSU ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM ROOM
SOUTH KEDZIE S206. EXHIBITION OPEN DURING '15 FALL SEMESTER.
[EXHIBITION OPENING EVENT: 7PM - 9PM ON SEPT. 30TH, 2015]



The exhibit will be open during the 2015 Fall semester. To view more work by Genre, visit: <http://genre.me/>

Publications and Awards

APA Studies professors and staff have been very active over the last year, earning accolades and reshaping the field of Asian American Studies. Due to limited space, here is a partial listing of some of their accomplishments.

Dr. Sheng-mei Ma publication: *The Last Isle: Contemporary Film, Culture and Trauma in Global Taiwan*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2015. <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9781783483402/The-Last-Isle-Contemporary-Film-Culture-and-Trauma-in-Global-Taiwan>

Refereed Articles: "Asiatic Aspie: Millennial (ab)Use of Asperger's Syndrome." *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (forthcoming in print in 2016, published by Sage Journals OnlineFirst). <http://ics.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/07/16/1367877915595982.full.pdf?ikey=IAss9RX69k098rt&keytype=finite> and "The Forked Tongue of Chinese-English Translation at MSU (Mandarin-Speaking University?), circa 2015." *Journal of Intercultural Inquiry* (www.jiiscientia.co.uk/) (forthcoming in Autumn 2015).

* * *

Dr. Steven Gold Encyclopedia Article: Gold, Steven, "Ethnic Enclaves," pp. 1-18, in *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Robert Scott and Stephan Kosslyn (eds.), Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2015.

Book Review: *Gold, Steven, Making a Life in Multiethnic Miami: Immigration and the Rise of a Global City* by Elizabeth M. Aranda, Sallie Hughes, and Elena Sabogal. Boulder and London: Rienner Publishers Latinos Exploring Diversity and Change, 2014, Social Forces Advance Access published January 22, 2015.

Fall 2014 Sabbatical: Visiting Scholar, Erasmus Mundus Joint European Master in International Migration and Social Cohesion (MISOCO), University of Amsterdam and University of Osnabruck, October-November 2014.

Dr. Naoko Wake is the recipient of the Humanities and Art Research Program (HARP) grant for her monograph-in-progress *Bombing Americans: Gender and Trans-Pacific Remembering after World War II*, as well as MSU's Excellence in Diversity Award in 2015. She was also featured in C-SPAN's "American Citizens in Hiroshima and Nagasaki" program.

Naoko (photo on the right) was also recently awarded tenure and promoted to Associate Professor.

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Dr. Johnson Cheu's poem "Stargazing" was published in the Atticus review at <http://atticusreview.org/>

* * *

Dr. Desiree Qin

Chang, T. F.*, Han, E. J.*, Lee, J. S. & Qin, D. B. (2015) Korean American adolescent ethnic identity pride and psychological adjustment: Moderating effects of parental support and school environment. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aap0000016>.

Qin, D. B., Saltarelli, A.,* Rana, M.,* Bates, L., Lee, J.A.,* & Johnson, D. (2014). "My culture helps me make good decisions": Cultural appropriation and adaptation of Sudanese refugee emerging adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. Published online before print September 16, 2014, doi: 10.1177/0743558414547097.

Qin, D. B. & Han, E. J.* (2014). Tiger Parents or Sheep Parents?: Struggles of Parental Involvement in Working-Class Chinese Immigrant Families. *Teachers College Record*, 116, 1-32.

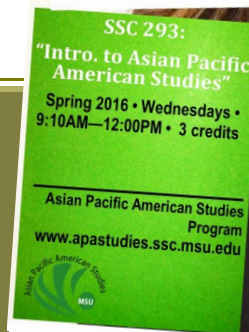


Congratulations to Shina Steinberg on her well deserved retirement! Shina has long served the APA community and the broader MSU community, especially undergraduate students. She began her career 30 years ago in what is now known as the Office of Cultural Academic Transitions (OCAT). She worked as the coordinator for APA students and APASO (the Asian Pacific American Student Organization). Later, she played a key role in helping to establish the APA Studies Program and served as its first coordinator for the program's first two years. Through her work as an academic adviser in many units across campus, Shina has mentored diverse groups of undergraduate students and supported those transferring from Lansing Community College to MSU. Although Shina is enjoying retirement, we will continue to benefit from her experience as she continues to serve on the APA Studies Program Advisory Board.

"Through this class, I found my own voice. I discovered courage and confidence through the encouragement of the professors and classmates. This is the kind of class that you come to MSU hoping for. This class is so much more than the APA experience, and everyone can benefit from that. Doesn't matter what back-ground you come from, this class--I guarantee--will be exactly what you're looking for."

- Rachel

Register Today!



Asian Pacific American Studies Office

368 Farm Lane, Room S206 (South Kedzie)

OPEN HOURS: By appointment

Contact apaspec@msu.edu or (517) 353-9140 with questions.

www.apastudies.ssc.msu.edu