Syllabus

English 417 (09)/ AC 498 (04)
Senior Seminar - Winter 03
Decolonizing the Pacific: Contemporary Literature and Culture
Najita

Class Meeting: T, R 1-2:30
Location: 3405 Mason
Telephone: 764-6345 or 764-6330
Office Hours: Thursday 4-6 pm
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Course Description:

The contemporary Pacific is a geography produced out of overlapping and multiple colonizations: exploration has mapped and claimed the islands on behalf of EuroAmerican nation-states; militarization, nuclear testing and tourism go hand-in-hand to produce a neocolonial structures of power and domination; and multinational corporations have gained entrance into liberalized Asia-Pacific economies through the now-familiar mode of globalization. The first third of the course will be devoted to exploring the ways in which EuroAmerican writers have helped to produce the myths of the South Seas which have promoted this particular Pacific geography. To this end, we will read 19th-century and early 20th-century authors such as Twain, Melville, and London to see how early images of Pacific Islanders contributed to the imagining of the Pacific in this particular way.

Amidst this bleak geopolitical terrain, Pacific writers have been writing back. The contemporary outpouring of literary and cultural productions from the Pacific Islands might be described as examples of cultural decolonization. In the writings of authors from Hawai’i, Western and American Samoa, Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia a central aspect of cultural decolonization has included an interrogation of previous literary, anthropological, and historical representations of Pacific peoples. In this course we will examine how texts by Keri Hulme, Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera, Albert Wendt, John Dominis Holt, Gary Pak, Rodney Morales, Epeli Hau’ofa, Sia Figiel, and Satendra Nandan engage with these prior representations by EuroAmericans as well as contemporary moments of popular resistance to colonization. In familiarizing ourselves with the historically significant moments of contact with Europeans, we will also look at how the aesthetic politics of these writers may enact a cultural decolonization even as many of these places remain colonized and neo-colonized locations. Some of the central formal questions with which we will be concerned include the formal politics of the novel (how does the novel produce a developmental and normalizing narrative of subjectivity), the question of realistic representation (how resistance and popular histories are depicted in fictional texts), and the question of traumatic history (how to represent that which resists representation). In addition to literary texts by the above authors, we will also be discussing visual culture, the films South Pacific and The Piano. Writing requirements include several short 1-2 page response papers, a presentation, midterm exam, midterm paper, and final paper. As this course is a seminar, your presence and initiative in discussion is of great importance.
Required Reading
Reader available at AccuCopy [R]
Herman Melville. Typee.
Lili‘uokalani. Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen.
Rob Wilson and Arif Dirlik, eds. Asia/Pacific as Space of Cultural Production. [A/P]
Haunani Trask. From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai’i.
John Dominis Holt. Waimea Summer.
Gary Pak. The Watcher of Waipuna and Other Stories.
Patricia Grace. Potiki.
Albert Wendt. Leaves of the Banyan Tree.
Keri Hulme. The Bone People.
Epeli Hau‘ofa. Tales of the Tikong.

All texts aside from the reader may be purchased at Shaman Drum

Grading and Evaluation

Response Papers (4)  20%
Weekly Quizzes  10%
Midterm Paper (5 pp.)  15%
Final Paper (10 pp.)  30%
Presentations  15%
Attendance and Participation  10%

Presentations
Each seminar participant will be responsible over the course of the semester for two presentations on a topic or author from the syllabus. One presentation must be on a theoretical text scheduled for that class meeting. The other must be on a critical article on one of the primary fiction texts. Your presentation should
1. provide brief background and summary of the theoretical and critical text;
2. present your own perspective on the relevance, persuasiveness, problematics, etc. of your chosen text;
3. end with a series of questions the topic raises for discussion.
Providing a handout for course participants is also encouraged. Length for presentation: approximately 15 minutes. I ask that you to meet with me preferably a week prior to your scheduled presentation to establish the topic of your presentation.

Written Assignments:
All written assignments should be of the correct length, TYPED, double-spaced, with conventional 1-in margins on all sides. Acceptable fonts include Courier 10 or Times 12. Citations of secondary sources must follow MLA format.

Late Paper Policy:
Grades for late papers will be reduced a letter grade for each day past the due date. For example, if the paper’s initial grade was a B and it was turned in one day after the deadline, the final grade will be a C. (Note: Saturday and Sunday count as two days.) If you are ill and cannot complete an assignment on time, notify me on or before the due date and provide a doctor’s note when you turn in your paper. In fairness to other students, in-class quizzes may not be made up at a later date. You must be in class in order to receive credit for taking a quiz.
**Getting Help with Written Assignments**

For conceptual issues with developing your topic towards a paper, I encourage you to visit my office hours or make an appointment to discuss your paper with me. For help with clarity or the mechanics of writing, I encourage you to visit the Sweetland Writing Center where you may meet with either peer tutors or writing center faculty. Peer tutors are available on a walk-in basis Sunday-Thursday evenings from 7 to 11 pm and may be found in the computer classroom adjacent to the Angell Hall Computing Site. If you prefer to make an appointment and meet with a writing center faculty member, call or stop in at the center’s Writing Workshop located in 1139 Angell Hall. 764-0429.

**Note on Plagiarism**

The use of work which is not your own without bibliographic citation constitutes plagiarism. This definition extends to work found on the internet. Plagiarism is academic theft and can result in expulsion from the university. If you wish to use the ideas or words of others, be sure to attribute them to their written source through the use of the MLA Style format which can be found in *The MLA Style Manual*, a required text for this course.
Schedule of Reading

T 1/7 Introduction to Course

Geopolitics of the Pacific Region
R 1/9 Epeli Hau’ofa. “Our Sea of Islands.”
Connery. “Pacific Rim Discourse: The U.S. Global Imaginary in the Late Cold War Years.” [A/P]

Exploration, Power/Knowledge and Desire
T 1/14 Melville, Typee
John Carlos Rowe. “Melville’s Typee: U.S. Imperialism at Home and Abroad” [R]

R 1/16 Typee

U.S. Imperialism in Hawai’i
T 1/21 Mark Twain. Letters from Hawaii (excerpts) [R]
London. “Koolau the Leper” and “Chun Ah Chun.”
First Response Paper due

R 1/23 Act of War (viewing), begin reading Lili‘uokalani.

The Overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy
T 1/28 Lili‘uokalani. Hawai‘i’s Story by Hawai‘i’s Queen

R 1/30 Hawai‘i’s Story...
Fuchs. “Lili‘uokalani’s Diaries” [R]

Racializing Hawaiians
T 2/4 John Dominis Holt. Waimea Summer.
Kame‘eleihiwa. Native Land, Foreign Desires (ch. 2) [R]

R 2/6 Waimea Summer
Trask. “K pa’a ‘Aina: Native Hawaiian Nationalism in Hawai‘i” and “Hawaiians and Human Rights” From a Native Daughter.
Sahlins. Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities [R]

Militourism and Nuclear Testing
T 2/11 South Pacific (viewing)

R 2/13 Teaiwa and Figiel. Terenesia: “Amnesia,” “Bad Coconuts”
Teaiwa. “Bikini” article [R]

Land Struggles and the “Local” in Hawai‘i
T 2/18 Gary Pak. The Watcher of Waipuna and Other Stories.
Kauanui. “‘For Get’ Hawaiian Entitlement . . .” [R]

R 2/20 Watcher of Waipuna...
MIDTERM PAPER DUE

T 2/25    SPRING BREAK
R 2/27    SPRING BREAK

Postcolonialism, Magic Realism in the Pacific
T 3/4    Albert Wendt. Leaves of the Banyan Tree
R 3/6

T 3/11    Leaves
R 3/13    Leaves

Land Struggles, Decolonization, and Reclaiming the Oral Tradition in Aotearoa/New Zealand
T 3/18    Patricia Grace. Potiki.
R 3/20    Potiki
Fuchs. “Reading toward the Indigenous Pacific: Patricia Grace’s Potiki, a Case Study” [A/P]
Grey. Polynesian Mythology (excerpts)

Biculturalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Traumatic Past
T 3/25    Hulme. The Bone People
R 3/27    Hulme. The Bone People
Caruth. Two “Introductions” in Trauma: Explorations in Memory. [R]

T 4/1    Hulme. The Bone People
C.K. Stead. “Keri Hulme’s The Bone People, and the Pegasus Award for Maori Literature.” [R]
Hulme and Turcotte. “Reconsidering the bone people” [R]

Pakeha Nationalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand
R 4/3    The Piano (viewing)

T 4/8    The Piano.
Linda Dyson. “The Return of the Repressed” [R]

Globalization and Neocolonialism
R 4/10   Epeli Hau’ofa. Tales of the Tikong
T 4/15    Presentations of Final Papers

FINAL PAPERS DUE Monday, April 21, 12 noon.