DUKE UNIVERSITY
Asian American Studies
TEACH-IN April 8, 2002

Student Speakers:
• Jennifer Oh: Senior experience and Current AA Lit course
• Dipta Basu: Tool for antiracism; non-Asian Americans
• Ana Mate: International Student perspective
• Tony Kwon: Proposal and Phases
• Stephanie Blalock: Eng/Lit major perspective
• Heather Oh: Current AA Lit course offered and reflections
• Rebecca Sun: Closing Student perspective
• Manan Patel: tentative

GUEST SPEAKERS:
• Alexandra Suh, Visiting Assistant Professor of English:
  What and Why?
• Leo Ching, Associate Professor of Asian and African
  Languages and Literature: Relevance to non-Asian Americans
• Sucheta Mazumdar , Associate Professor of History:
  Why is AAS necessary? Missing history
• Walter Mignolo, Director of the Center for Global Studies and
  the Humanities: Why is AAS necessary?
• Julian Sanchez, Director of the Center for Multicultural Affairs:
  Why is it relevant at Duke? Current initiatives
• Orin Starn, Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology:
  Why ethnic studies? Why AAS?
• Beverly Chen, Counseling and Psychological Services:
  Development of the undergraduate experience
• Priscilla Wald, Associate Professor of English
• Derek Chang, Ph.D. candidate, Department of History:
  Closing

"No one will know who we are until WE KNOW who we are"

* * Malcolm X * *
What is Asian American Studies?

Asian American Studies, and Ethnic Studies of which it is a part, focuses on race as its primary unit for analysis. Asian American Studies, through a comparative approach, disrupts the common, binary black-white definition of race that is used so commonly today. In this and many other ways, Asian American Studies illuminates the whole of American History and contemporary American experience. But Asian American Studies must also account for other positions, including those of gender, class and sexuality. Asian American Studies should exist on university campuses regardless of the number of students on that campus. As an analogy, consider: there are few Native American students on most college campuses, but Native American Studies is a critical part of Ethnic Studies and liberal arts. As a fundamental way for understanding American experience, Asian American Studies should be available, if not required, for all students on a campus.

WHY IS ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES IMPORTANT?

The demand for Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies in the 1960s reflected the need to reform American education as a whole. It demands a move from a Eurocentric view of the world, toward a more equitable, inclusive and open-minded perspective, in order to effectively reflect the diversity within modern American society (which had long ignored racial minorities, women and the working class). Asian American Studies should be seen as an institutional obligation that benefits all students, the university and the society as a whole.

"The history of Asian Americans offers all of us an opportunity to carry into the coming century a LARGER MEMORY of America's past."

** Ronald Takaki **
During this time of change as embodied by Curriculum 2000 and next year's all-sophomore West Campus, the establishment of Asian American Studies is necessary to both complement and transform the intellectual and social climate at Duke.

Asian American Studies is a highly interdisciplinary study that crosses borders and introduces new paradigms of thought. It specifically transforms the understanding of American history, social sciences, politics, economics, and literature.

The relevance of Asian American Studies is not limited to South Asian Americans, East Asian Americans, or Middle Eastern Americans. Instead, the study of this microcosm of America -- Asian America -- deepens our understanding of complexities within all communities. It addresses issues that are pertinent to everyone.

Since the Asian American community historically includes members from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, the study of Asian America recognizes, bridges, and integrates the vast economic and social disparities within local, national, and international communities. George Lipsitz, director of the Thurgood Marshall Institute, calls Asian American Studies the "quintessential model for interethnic antiracism in both activism and scholarship," for it challenges traditional models of thought, invokes discussion across ethnic and racial boundaries, and encourages the exploration of differences that define any one group.

Due to recent on-campus controversies that have resulted from age-long problems -- employee disrespect, racial tensions, and sexual violence, to name a few -- our community is in need of such an intellectual tool that will encourage growth and understanding among all Duke community members. Thus, Asian American Studies is not only crucial for Duke, but its establishment is timely for our institution.

As upperclassmen, we expect our University to thrive long after we graduate. Asian American Studies will fulfill this expectation and will reinforce the administration's current commitment to enhance intellectual life. Our peer institutions, Yale, Cornell, Columbia, and UPenn, have already made university wide commitments to this important area of study. Such a commitment is long overdue at Duke.

Jennifer Oh
Trinity '02

Dipta Basu
Trinity '02

Christina J. Hsu
Trinity '03

The writers are members of the Asian American Studies undergraduate working group.
Institutions that have Asian American Studies in the US:

*Amherst College
Arizona State University
*Boston College
*Brown University
CA State Fresno
CA State Fullerton
CA State Long Beach
CA State Northridge
CA State Sacramento
CA State Sonoma
*University of CA Berkeley
University of CA Davis
University of CA Irvine
*University of CA LA
University of CA Riverside
University of CA San Diego
Univ of CA Santa Barbara
Univ of CA Santa Cruz
*University of Chicago
*Colby College
University of Colorado Boulder
*Columbia University
University of Connecticut Storrs
*Cornell University
CUNY, Hunter College
CUNY, Queens College
Hampshire College
University of Hawaii Manoa
Holy Names College
University of Illinois Chicago
*University of Illinois Urbana
Champaign
Indiana University
Loyola Marymount
Loyola University, Chicago
*Macalester College
*University of Maryland, College Park
*University of Maryland, Amherst
University of MA Boston
*University of Michigan Ann Arbor
Michigan State Univ
*University of Maryland, College Park
*University of Maryland, Amherst
University of MA Boston
*University of Michigan Ann Arbor
Michigan State Univ
Mills College
University of Minnesota

"As Long as we don't know Our History and Other's History, there will be no positive interactions or understanding"
** Yuri Kochiyama **

Be a part of campus academic history: Help bring Asian American Studies

Interested in getting more involved?
Contact Chris at cjh5@duke.edu

*Mount Holyoke College
*New York University
State Univ of New York Binghamton
*Northwestern University
Ohio State Univ
*University of Pennsylvannia
*Pitzer College
Sacramento State
San Francisco State
San Jose State
Santa Clara Univ
*Univ of Southern California
*Smith College
*Stanford Univ
Univ of Texas
*Tufts Univ
Univ of Utah
*Univ of Washington
Washington State
*Williams College
*Univ of Wisconsin Madison
*Yale University