Gender Violence, Policing, and the Law
UCLA ASAM Winter 2020
191B
Lee Ann S. Wang

Seminar course.

Brief Description:

This course is an exercise in the unthought, and a study of what it means to unthink narratives of non-violence, how abolitionist feminist politics creates ways of being against nation-state building as a form of gender and sexual violence rather than a non-violent precursor to it, drawing from engagements within queer and feminist of color, black feminist, and indigenous feminist thought, critical race theory, postcolonial theory. Course materials will examine social movement histories and writings that critique neoliberal policy agendas from the early 1990s into our contemporary moment, the normalization of policing and punishment practices as state sponsored solutions to rescue women, and the maintenance and naturalization of whiteness, heteropatriarchy, and colonialism. Readings draw from genealogies of writing that trace the analytical emergence of “woman,” “person,” human,” and the interrogation of victim, crime, and protection in law. Conversations and readings are organized around the following: Violence and Spectacle, Archive and Voice, Intimacy and Punishment, Sex and Work, Pleasure and Performance. Thinking through how such conversations bring us into the formation of Asian American thought and the work of Asian American Studies, course readings interrogate the relationship between knowledge of safety and protection with the reproduction of punishment and violence in racial, gendered, and sexualized configurations of reform, borders, the welfare state, community policing, Western humanitarianism, and liberal entrepreneurialism. The difficult conflations often made between state sponsored solutions, community-based strategies and practices, and mainstream political agendas. In turn, class discussions and assignments aim to bring us towards both individual and collective writings on new imaginings, ways of being, and creating amongst ourselves and for others.

Assignments for this course consist of weekly writing responses and a final paper or project of your choice.