

THE READING ROOM

Asian American Studies Program Reading Room Resources

The Asian American Studies Program (AASP) at the University of Illinois houses a Reading Room. The Reading Room provides various campus, local, state, and national resources relating to Asian American issues, Asian American studies, and Asian American organizations. The Reading Room also has a growing collection of primary documents relating to issues affecting Asian Americans locally and nationally.

Materials are to be used in the Reading Room which is open from 9am-4pm each week day.

Holdings in the AASP Reading Room

Magazines/ Journals

- A. Magazine
- Amerasia
- Filipinas
- Journal of Asian American Studies
- Little India
- Transpacific
- Yolk

Newspapers

- AsiAm
- Asian Week
- Asian Fortune
- India Abroad
- International Examiner
- Pacific Ties

More Resources

- National Resources: Asian American Studies Programs and Asian American Organizations
- State Resources: Asian American Organizations and Services in Illinois
- Local and Campus Resources/ Student Organizations
- Conferences
- Internships
- Scholarships

Primary Documents on a variety of Asian American topics including:

- Activism
- Adoptee issues
- Affirmative Action
- Anti-Asian Violence
- Asian American Experiences
- Asian American Studies
- Bilingual Education
- Culture and Arts
- Diaspora
- Discrimination
- Education
- Immigration
- Internment
- Los Angeles Riots
- Media Images of Asian Americans
- Model Minority
- Politics
- Population Statistics
- Race Relations
- Racism
- Sweatshops
- UIUC Events
- UIUC Student Activism
- Veterans

Video Resources at the University of Illinois

There are a variety of video and film resources at the U of Illinois campus on Asian American experiences. Below is a listing of Asian American videos.

Asian American Videos at UIUC Media Center

All Orientals Look the Same. (1995) This video turns this racial myth on its head, provoking the viewer to confront stereotypes and prejudice about Asian and Pacific Islanders.

Ashes and Embers. (1982) An excursion into the pained psyche of a black Vietnam veteran, brought to life by Ethiopian-born writer-director Haile Gerima. Ned Charles is alienated from society as a whole and especially from other blacks, as seen in his troubled relations with his grandmother and also with his activist girlfriend and her friends.

Asianization of America. (1986) This video describes the increasing role of Asians in American business and in society, examining how this trend is affecting American society.

Back to Bataan Beach (1995) Pushing the genre of post-colonial personal narratives, Foronda deploys Hollywood movie archetypes to tell a post-punk version of "the search for Filipino identity." Bataan plays out internalized cultural questions of Diaspora peoples by superimposing Filipinos and Philippine history onto John Wayne, Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello roles. It teases our desire to laugh at ourselves, while resurrecting issues and problems endemic to the import/export "trade" of cultures, media and human services.

Becoming American. (1983) Hang Sou and his family, preliterate tribal farmers, await resettlement in a refugee camp in Thailand after fleeing their war-consumed native Laos. BECOMING AMERICAN records their odyssey as they travel to and resettle in the United States. As they face nine months of intense culture shock, prejudice and gradual adaptation to their new home in Seattle, the family provides a rare insight into refugee resettlement and cultural diversity issues

The Bhangra Wrap. (1994) This is an energetic documentary of a vibrant youth subculture that fuses hip hop, rap, and Bhangra music. Based mainly in New York and Toronto, Bhangra House is propagated through alternative radio, party DJs, and hip urban clubs where South Asian youth have carved out their own unique sense of style, identity, and voice that is an uncompromised mix of old and new, South Asian and American.

Blue Collar and Buddha. (1987) A provocative profile of a Lao community which faces an openly hostile, racist environment in Rockport, Illinois. Local Euro American citizens, frustrated by economic depression and angry about losing the Vietnam war, confront recent immigrants who are trying to preserve their native culture and Buddhist religion.

Carved in Silence (1988) This is the dramatic story of Angel Island, the "Ellis Island of the West." After the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), potential immigrants suffered detainment and vigorous interrogation for up to three years on this small island within sight of San Francisco. Features scenes recreated in the actual barracks and interviews with detainees.

Cruisin' J-Town. (1975) The '60s political roots of Asian American music are traced in this "classic" film featuring Dan Kuramoto, June Kuramoto and Daniel Valdez of El Teatro Campesino. The popular jazz fusion band Hiroshima marks its birth in pre-redevelopment Little Tokyo in Los Angeles.

Days of Waiting. (1988) This is a poignant documentary about artist Estelle Ishigo, one of the few Caucasians to be interned with 100,000 Japanese Americans in 1942. Refusing to be separated from her Japanese American husband, Ishigo lived with him for four years behind barbed wire in Wyoming's desolate Heart Mountain camp.

Dim Sum-Take Out. (1988) This energetic video, compiled from outtakes of Wang's critically acclaimed feature film, Dim Sum, shatters stereotypes of Asian American women. Humorous and provocative, this is Wang's emotional footnote to Dim Sum. Featuring Joan Chen (The Last Emperor), Lauren Chew (Dim Sum) and Cora Miao (Eat a Bowl of Tea).

Dirty Laundry. (1995) A young Chinese Canadian man ponders the link between his uncle's possible homosexuality and his own personal desires as he takes a long train ride through the mountains of Quebec. The history of Chinese men who immigrated to Canada, with valuable commentary by scholars, and the young man's sexual and emotional attraction to a handsome train attendant are intertwined in this refreshing look at this rarely explored topic.

Do Two Halves Really Make a Whole? (1993) This video features the diverse viewpoints of people with multi racial Asian heritages. African and Japanese-American poet and playwright Velina Hasu Houston lives an "amalgamated existence" and encourages others to take pride in all that they are. Performance artist Dan Kwong constantly struggles with two strong and often conflicting Asian heritages, Japanese and Chinese American; Chinese Japanese Chicano Scots storyteller, actress, and performance artist Brenda Wong Aoki uses her unique ethnic mix to intersect social circles.

A Dollar a Day, Ten Cents a Dance. (1984) Enticed by the promise of jobs and fair wages, 100,000 Filipinos immigrated to the U.S. between 1924 and 1935 to toil on California's farmlands. Because of the exclusion of women's immigration and U.S. anti-miscegenation laws, they survived the loneliness of racial discrimination by creating close-knit bachelor societies and entering into common law marriages where cockfights, poker games, and dance halls served as their entertainment.

Doubles: Japan and America's Intercultural Children. (1995) Despite orders forbidding fraternization between United States soldiers stationed in Japan during WWII with Japanese women, a number of children were born in and out of wedlock, who grew up in both America

and Japan. This documentary looks at the experiences of these children in both countries and the ways they negotiate their identities between two cultures.

Dreaming Filipinos. (1990) Since the Spanish American War in 1898 and the subsequent control of the Philippine education system by the U.S., Filipinos have often perceived America as "superior" to their homeland. This comedic satire explores cultural imperialism and identity by asking the colonial question, "What's wrong with the Filipino?"

The Fall of the I-Hotel. (1993) This film brings to life the battle for housing in San Francisco over the International Hotel. The I-Hotel stood in the heart of Manilatown and was home to more than 10,000 people in the 1950's. The brutal eviction of the I-Hotel's tenants in 1977 ended a decade of spirited resistance. Almost 20 years since its demolition, the International Hotel remains vacant. Many of its surviving elderly residents still seek low-cost replacement housing.

A Family Gathering. (1988) Silence--the stuff of assumptions and confusion--is a legacy inherited by many grandchildren of Japanese Americans interned during WWII. Shortly after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Masuo Yasui, a respected figure of Hood River Valley, Oregon was arrested by the FBI as a "potentially dangerous enemy alien." In "A Family Gathering," Lise Yasui, a granddaughter that Masuo never knew, shows that courageous journeys into the past can bring greater understanding of family and personal history to the present.

Fated to Be Queer. (1992) In this more-than-a-coming-out-video, four charming and articulate Filipino men illuminate some issues and concerns as gay people of color in San Francisco. They share personal perspectives on family, cultural heritage, and racial stereotyping.

The Fear of Disclosure Project. A series of six titles conceived as tools to promote greater AIDS awareness among people from diverse communities and of all sexual orientations, these videos target Pacific Islanders, Asian Americans, African American, Latinos and women—straight, bisexual, lesbian, and gay. The Project creates and distributes videos that explore the act of revealing that one is HIV positive or has AIDS.

1. **Fear of Disclosure.** (1989) The first in this series is a musical video that explores the implications of revealing to a potential lover that one is seropositive to HIV.

2. **(In)Visible Women.** (1991) This inspiring documentary focuses on the heroic and empowered response of three strong women of color. Using community education, poetry, art, activism, and dance, these highly visible women with AIDS subvert notions of female invisibility and complacency in the face of the epidemic.

3. **My Body's My Business.** (1993) Often overlooked in discussions of HIV awareness and education, female sex workers speak out about the choices they make when men refuse safe sex practices.

4. **Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (No Regret).** (1992) Five seropositive Black gay men speak of their individual confrontations with AIDS and of disclosure to family and friends. With warmth and candor, these men affirm the importance of a sex-positive attitude in the face of a devastating disease.

5. **Out in Silence and Not a Simple Story.** (1994) These films tell the stories of two Asian Pacific Americans, one straight and one gay: Robyn Tirrell, a resident of Hawaii, and Vince Crisostomo, a native of Guam and resident of San Francisco. Through film, they disclose their HIV positive status to remedy the lack of information and denial about AIDS in their communities.

Filipino Americans: Discovering their Past for the Future. (1994) An in-depth history of Filipino Americans is captured in this documentary by award-winning producer John Wehman. Through interviews with historians, archival photos and documents, the 400-year chronicle of one of the largest ethnic groups in the United States is explored.

Flow (1995) Quentin Lee combines five short films into his first feature that he describes as "an allegory of the fictive history of gay Asian films." It opens with an introduction to a 22-year-old queer Asian filmmaker who is looking for love while trying to finish his latest work, a character not unlike Lee himself. What follows is a mix of autobiography and fiction, including a parody of a safer sex public announcement, a knife-wielding drag queen, a film noir about a young man that kills his mother on Christmas Day, a surrealistic vampire tale and a story of romance on the college campus. Lee successfully fuses together fact with fantasy, a diversity of genre, and queer and Asian identities in this celebratory work.

Freckled Rice. (1983) This is a nostalgic look at life in Boston's Chinatown in the Kennedy years through the eyes of a 13-year-old boy, Joe Soo, who tries to come to terms with his identity and Chinese American heritage. "Freckled Rice," a warm and poignant drama, raises issues of identity for young people of all ages.

Game of Death (1991) Using unedited footage from Bruce Lee's last (unfinished) film, Fulbeck examines the various roles he posthumously came to represent -- from the filmmaker's own boyhood idol to an Asian American male icon. With hilarious commentary, Game of Death subtly re-directs the original film's energy, confronts and questions our memory of Bruce Lee as a legend, and examines issues of male stereotyping and marketing of Asian culture in the US.

A Great Wall. (1985) This moving and humorous story chronicles the return of Leo Fang and his American-born wife and son to his native China and provides a comical insight into the cultural clashes between traditional Chinese families and Chinese-American families.

History and Memory: Akiko and Takashige. (1991) An avant garde film about filmmaker Rea Tajiri's family's experiences as Japanese American interned in U.S. concentration camps. Exploring the memories of a place she has never visited but of which she has a memory, this experimental video surveys the impact of images on our lives and draws from sources such as Hollywood's Yankee Doodle Dandy and Bad Day at Black Rock and U.S. Defense Department newsreels and relocation propaganda.

Hito Hata: Raise the Banner. (1980) One of the first full length films made by and about Asian Pacific Americans, "Hito Hata" captures the contributions and hardships of Japanese Americans since the early 1900s. Veteran actor/director Mako plays a feisty Issei, one of the elderly single laborers of Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, who worked on the transcontinental railroad and later in life as a community leader. This classic also features Pat Morita and the late Yuki Shimoda.

Home From the Eastern Sea. (1989) The personal stories of three pivotal Asian-American groups--Chinese-Americans, Japanese-Americans, and Filipino-Americans becoming Americans without sacrificing their old-world heritage. Focusing on representative families, this documentary provides the perspective of history and culture through interviews with scholars and community activists.

Japanese American Women: A Sense of Place. (1991) The stereotype of the polite, docile, exotic Asian woman is shattered in this documentary in which a dozen women speak about their experiences as part of the "model minority." This film explores the ambivalent feelings the women have both towards Japan and the United States. The underlying theme is the burden of being different. An uneasy feeling prevails of being neither Japanese nor American, and the documentary ultimately becomes the story of Japanese American women and their search for a sense of place.

The Joy Luck Club. (1993) The film adaptation of Amy Tan's bestselling novel chronicles one Chinese-American woman's journey to understand her roots. Wayne Wang (Eat a Bowl of Tea) directs a large, outstanding cast spread over eight different tales of the lives of Chinese women, most of them set in the past.

Khush Refugees. (1991) Rahul, an immigrant from India, and Dante, an ex-marine from suburban Ohio, try to assimilate into San Francisco's gay culture only to find that in a community of exiles, one is always a refugee.

Korean Americans. (1994) This program examines a major piece of the new American mosaic--a group that is seeking to retain its traditional cultural values while adjusting to life in the U.S. Korean Americans have come into frequent and violent conflict with inner-city African Americans, and have sought, through their own ethnic civic organizations, to overcome the rejection of the community around them.

Mixed Blood. (1992) A personal view of interracial relationships between Asian Americans and non-Asian Americans. Soe combines interviews with over 30 concerned individuals, text, and clips from science fiction films, and classic miscegenation dramas.

Mixed Feelings. (1998) Through interviews with five UC Berkeley students and teachers of mixed ethnic heritage, the producer illuminates the experience of what it is like to grow up part Asian in American society. His peers offer personal anecdotes detailing how their parents met, what it was like growing up, how they initially perceived their own cultural identities, and how they see themselves today.

My Brown Eyes. (1994) A young Korean boy rises early and prepares for his first day of school. Clever and resourceful, he is also dutiful to his parents who work late at night. After preparing their breakfast and his own lunch, he sets off to school. None of his preparations, however, can help with his big handicap—he can't speak English. A poignant and touching story of immigrant life as told from the point of view of a child.

New Year (1987) This videotape uses hand-drawn illustrations and found footage to explore the conflicts of a child caught between her Chinese American background and the stereotypes and expectations created by mainstream American film and television images. After a grade school event, she comes to terms with her ethnicity.

Open Letter (1992) A film about a young woman who writes her thoughts about sexual violence in a racist society through a letter to her lover in this fictional short.

On Cannibalism. (1994) King Kong meets the family photograph in this provocatively ironic video which explores the West's insatiable appetite for native bodies in museums, world's fairs and early films. An excellent personal narrative about race and identity by an Indonesian American videographer of Batak/Palembang descent.

Picturing Oriental Girls: A [Re]Educational Videotape. (1992) Clips from over 25 Hollywood films and television programs, layered with voice-overs and texts, explicate the orientalism and exoticism prevalent in media images of Asian American women.

Sewing Woman. (1982) Narrated by the filmmaker's mother, this film tells a universal story of one woman's journey from an arranged marriage in old China to life as a garment factory worker for over 30 years.

Some Questions for 28 Kisses (1994) "How many times have you seen an Asian man kiss someone on TV?" "Are Asian men socially inept?" "Why are so many newscasting teams white men and Asian women?" With an MTV-generation pace, Fulbeck responds to media sex and interracial dating. This program guarantees lively discussion.

The Story of Vinh. (1991) A compelling examination of the Vietnam War's complex legacy through the eyes of Vinh Dinh, the son of a U.S. serviceman and Vietnamese mother. After leaving a refugee camp in Thailand, Vinh arrives at J.F.K. airport dazed, speaking no English and with minimal education. The myth of the American Dream and the "valedictorian" stereotype of Amerasians is exploded as the film follows Vinh on his journey from Vietnamese to American culture, from youth to manhood, and from false dream to harsh reality.

Surname Viet, Given Name Nam. (1989) A documentary exploring the role of Vietnamese women historically and in contemporary society.

The Trained Chinese Tongue. (1994) The filmmaker follows Chinatown shoppers home after they buy food to cook for dinner, recording their food preparation and their comments and stories about being Chinese in America.

Unfinished Business. (1985) This highly acclaimed film tells the story of three Japanese Americans, Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui, who refused to be interned and were imprisoned for violating Executive Order 9066. It reveals efforts by the three men to reopen their cases and overturn their convictions.

The Wedding Banquet. (1993) This international hit by Ang Lee is a funny and poignant story of a gay, Taiwanese-American man who goes to some lengths to fool his visiting family that he's actually straight. The results are far more complicated and entertaining than anyone could have guessed.

Who's Going to Pay for these Donuts Anyway? (1992) This video presents clear evidence of the profound effect of the internment on generations of Japanese Americans. It chronicles filmmaker Janice Tanaka's fifty year personal search for her father, whom she had not seen since age three. As a young man, the FBI arrested him for opposing the internment and diagnosed him as schizophrenic with paranoid tendencies. Tanaka finally finds him in a half-way house for the chronically mentally ill in L.A.'s skid row.

Yuri Kochiyama: Passion for Justice.(1993) For over forty years, the work of this tireless political activist has touched thousands of lives in diverse communities across the United States. Kochiyama's story begins with her internment as a young woman during World War II and continues to this day.

Videos Available at the AASP

Affirmative Action Debate with Dinesh D'Souza and Frank Wu, University of Illinois, March 8, 1999

Asian American Leadership Awards Ceremony, University of Illinois, April 18, 2000

Asian American Studies Committee Council Meeting, The Future of Ethnic Studies, November 19, 1998

Heart Mountain: Three Years in an Internment Camp (1997) Vivid color 8 mm home movie footage brings home the realness of history in this documentary collage of life at Heart Mountain, a concentration camp in Wyoming where more than 10,000 Pacific Coast Japanese and Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II. Personal remembrances and never-before-seen movie footage and photographs detail the political and the personal situation in which Japanese Americans found themselves in suddenly at the onset of WWII.

Lavina Shankar, A Part Yet Apart: Do South Asians Belong in Asian America? Asian American Studies Committee Lecture Series, October 10, 1998

Meeting at Tule Lake (1994) Among the ten internment camps that imprisoned 120,000 Japanese Americans during WWII, Tule Lake Segregation Center was the site for over 18,000 'disloyals.' Fifty years later, seven former internees discuss their past and how they came to terms with their identity, politically and socially, both during and after the camp experience. The viewer is challenged to reconsider what loyalty and citizenship really mean in a country deeply rooted in a history of racism.

Miss India Georgia. (1997) This documentary follows the lives of four South Indian American teenage girls as they prepare to compete in the Miss India Georgia competition. Notions of beauty, prestige, and South Asian American female identity are recorded and explored.

Sa-I-Gu: From Korean Women's Perspectives. (1993) The LA riots underscored the voicelessness and invisibility of Korean Americans in U.S. society. Over half of the material losses were sustained by Korean Americans. This documentary brings these faces to the foreground, exploring the perspectives of the immigrant women who comprise more than half of Korean American shopkeepers.

Unseen/Unheard Conference, University of Illinois, December 4, 1999

Videos at the Counseling Center (337 McKinley Health Center)

A. Magazine's Guide to Asian American Pride (1997): An inspiring look at the lives of 37 Asian American achievers.

Blue Collar and Buddha (1987) A provocative profile of a Lao community which faces an openly hostile, racist environment in Rockport, Illinois. Local Euro American citizens, frustrated by economic depression and angry about losing the Vietnam war, confront recent immigrants who are trying to preserve their native culture and Buddhist religion.

Cross Cultural Training in Counseling and Psychotherapy: Series I: Asian Americans (1991) This videotape is part of the Cross Cultural Training in Psychotherapy program and comes with the Trainer's Guide. The videotape and the

Training Guide are to be used by trainers with appropriate background and experience in cross cultural psychotherapy with Asian American clients. The videotape presents a series of Asian American college client/ non-Asian therapist interactions in the format of vignettes. A question relevant to cross cultural issues for each vignette is presented on the screen after each vignette, and in training participants may select from several response choices also presented on the screen. Following the videotape presentation, the trainer conducts a directed discussion to identify, clarify, and/or emphasize relevant cultural variables that may be important for the effective treatment of clients from different backgrounds. Discussions should include comments about appropriate therapeutic techniques.

Out in silence/ Not a Simple Story (1994) These poignant films tell the stories of two Asian Pacific Americans, one straight and one gay: Robyn Tirrell, a resident of Hawai'i and Vince Crisostomo, a native of Guam and resident of San Francisco. Both have lost loved ones to AIDS. In two films, they have chosen to disclose their own HIV positive status to remedy the lack of information and denial about AIDS in their communities. With courage, determination and a sense of urgency, they and their families and friends step out of their private lives to publicly challenge the myth that Asian Americans do not get AIDS.

Slaying the Dragon (1988) "Slaying the Dragon is more than an inventory of demeaning images of Asian women. It also cautions against a too willing acceptance of seemingly 'positive' depictions... (It) includes an assortment of women who speak with insight, indignation, and humor about their experiences."

Some Questions for 28 Kisses (1994) "How many times have you seen an Asian man kiss someone on TV?" "Are Asian men socially inept?" "Why are so many newscasting teams white men and Asian women?" With an MTV-generation pace, Fulbeck responds to media sex and interracial dating. This program guarantees lively discussion.

Who Killed Vincent Chin? (1988) This Academy Award nominated film relates the stark facts of Vincent Chin's brutal murder by disgruntled auto workers in Detroit who assume he is Japanese and the cause for their employment frustrations. Chin's murderers receive only a small fine for their actions which propels the Asian American community in an unprecedented civil rights protest.