



## From the Helm



Welcome to Asian American Studies!

As head of the department, it is my privilege to inaugurate *Encounters*,

our first electronic newsletter, which will provide updates on the activities and perspectives of our faculty, staff, and students.

This campus is really lucky to have one of the most vibrant AAS departments in the country. Our faculty have outstanding publications, teach fascinating courses, and literally travel the globe to disseminate their work. A few felicitations are in order:

We congratulate Lisa Cacho for winning the John Hope Franklin Award for the best book of the American Studies Association for 2013 and Junaid Rana for winning the Association of 2013 Asian American Studies Book Award for Social Science. We also congratulate Martin Manalansan on the publication of his edited collection, *Sriracha*. And we celebrate the successful tenure cases of our core faculty Soo Ah Kwon and Fiona Ngo. And after an exhaustive search, we welcome our new office manager, Christine Lyke.

We are excited about developing a doctoral program in ethnic and gender studies. Similarly, Junaid Rana, our associate head,

is hard at work on the proposal for an undergraduate AAS Major.

While we celebrate our accomplishments, we at the same time mourn the loss of two members of our campus community, Mimi Liu and Mengchen Huang. We send our deepest sympathies to their families. This reminds us that we as a department and as a campus community have much work to do to make sure that we have a safe and nurturing environment for women as for men, and for international students as much as the residents of this state and country.

Augusto Espiritu, Department Head

## Lisa Cacho Wins John Hope Franklin Book Prize



On October 1, 2013, NYU Press announced: Lisa Cacho's *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the*

*Unprotected* has been selected by the American Studies Association (ASA) to receive the 2013 John Hope Franklin Publication Prize, which celebrates the best published book in American studies. This book is part of the *Nation of Newcomers* series.

Our congratulations go out to Lisa for this great accomplishment.

## FACULTY UPDATES

**Constancio Arnaldo** is submitting a chapter "I'm thankful for Manny": Manny Pacquiao, Pugilistic Nationalism, and the Filipino Body" for an Asian American popular culture anthology titled, *Crossroads: Asian American Popular Culture*.

**Nancy Abelmann** continues to direct the *Laboratory for the Globalization of Korean Studies*, funded by the Association of Korean Studies. This fall she presented a keynote address at the Catholic University of Chile, spoke at the School of Advanced Research (SAR) in Santa Fe, and gave an invited lecture at the University of Toronto. Over the summer she gave a keynote address, "An Anthropological Study of the Internationalization of U.S. Campuses, Keynote," for NAFSA: Association of International Educators' Online Conference: Today's Chinese Students (drawing on the data from AUPC, the American University Meets the Pacific Century -- a collaborative project with Soo Ah Kwon and Adrienne Lo of AAS, and Tim Liao). She also co-directed a K-12 teacher training workshop, "Ethnography: New Approaches to the American High School" for the Chicago Humanities Festival.

**Christina Chin** along with U of I alumni, Stan Thangaraj, and current graduate student, Constancio Arnaldo, Jr., is a co-editor of an Asian American sports anthology entitled, *Playing Asian America: The Racialized Politics of Sport*. Currently under contract with NYU Press, this anthology critically investigates associations of place, identity, and citizenship to embrace the heterogeneity of Asian American athletes, spectators, and sporting communities. This spring, Christina will be teaching AAS 120: Introduction to Asian American Popular Culture.

**Augusto Espiritu** presented a paper, "America's Insular Empire through Interimperial and Intraimperial Optics," at the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies from his book manuscript in progress, "El legado de España: The Discourse of Hispanism in America's Insular Empire." He did a people to people tour of Cuba in the spring under the auspices of the UCLA Alumni Association, and returned to Cuba in the summer for research. In 2014-15, he will be an Associate Fellow for the Center for Advanced Study.

**Susan Koshy** recently published an article entitled: "Neoliberal Family Matters," *American Literary History* 25.2 (2013):344-80.

**Soo Ah Kwon** announces the recent publication of her book entitled: *Uncivil Youth: Race, Activism, and Affirmative Governmentality*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013. She also is one of this year's IPRH Event Grant Recipients. This grant will be used to fund a lecture by Prof. Sally Engle Merry from New York University.

**Martin Manalansan**, along with Robert Ji-Song Ku and Anita Mannur, is a co-editor of *Eating Asian America: A Food Studies Reader*, NYU Press 2013. For the academic year 2013-2014.

**Fiona Ngô and Mimi Nguyen** are organizers of the upcoming symposium: *Hip Hop and Punk Feminisms* to be held December 5-6, 2013 here on campus. The conference is also a celebration of the special issue that Fiona and Elizabeth Stinson co-edited for Women & Performance called "Punk Anteriors," which also features articles by Fiona and Mimi, and an edited collection by Ruth Nicole Brown (their colleague in GWS) and Chamara Jewel Kwakye called *Wish to Live: The Hip Hop Feminism Pedagogy Reader*.

**Mimi Nguyen** was recently interviewed for *Bitch Magazine* (Summer 2013), *Feminist Wire's "Feminists We Love:"*, and the *Funambulist's Archipelago* podcast series: "Fashion Design 01: Epidermalization of the Public Body: Clothing and Politics" She published "Diasporic Erotic: Love, Loss, and the Copy" in *Camera Obscura* 28:1 in Spring 2013; and co-authored a chapbook called *PUNK* with Golnar Nikpour (Guillotine Press, 2013). She also co-organized *Assemblages & Affinities: Reimagining Interdisciplinarity* (23 September 2013) and was named a *Conrad Humanities Scholar* 2013-2018.

**Junaid Rana's** book, *Terrifying Muslims: Race and labor in the South Asian Diaspora*, Duke University Press 2011, was awarded the 2013 Association of Asian American Studies Book Award in Social Sciences. Junaid also published the following essays: 2013 "Tracing the Muslim Body: Race, U.S. Deportation, and Pakistani Return Migration." *The Sun Never Sets: South Asian Migrants in the Age of U.S. Power*. Eds. Vivek Bald, Miabi Chatterji, Sujani Reddy, and Manu Vimalasary. New York: New York University Press; 2013 "When Pakistanis Became Middle Eastern: Visualizing Racial Targets in the Global War on Terror." *Between the Middle East and the Americas: The Cultural Politics of Diaspora*. Eds. Evelyn Alstutany and Ella Shohat. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press; 2012 "The Desperate U.S.-Pakistan Alliance." *Dispatches from Pakistan*. Eds. Qalandar Memon, Vijay Prashad, and Madiha Tahir. New Delhi: LeftWord Books.

**Caroline Yang** is a visiting fellow in the James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference at Emory University and is working on her book manuscript, *Reconstruction's Labor: The Chinese Worker in American Literature after Slavery*.

## Spotlight: Long Bui New Post Doc



This semester Asian American Studies welcomed a new post doc to our department. Long Bui comes to us from the University of California, San Diego where he earned his Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies. His general research and teaching interests include: race, sexuality, popular media, youth, science and technology, war and memory. When asked the following questions about himself here is how he answered:

**Where did you grow up?**  
I was born in Lubbock, Texas but grew up mostly in Houston.

**What is your cultural and educational background, including early education?**  
I was the oldest child of four children of a single mother. My mom was a Vietnamese refugee who never made it past the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade so she worked as a janitor because she never got a chance to go to school. I attended 15 different schools from K-12 including four separate high schools because we were always looking for cheaper rent and better opportunities. All of this only made me appreciate any educational opportunities I had.

**How did that background shape your choices of research and study?**  
I was the only Asian kid in my neighborhood and schools (other than my siblings) and growing up with poor urban brown and black kids taught a lot about race as well as class, oppression and hierarchy. This made me want to understand more about why inequality still exists through the issues of race.

## Typhoon Haiyan and Relief Aid

On November 7, Typhoon Haiyan, equivalent to a Category 4 or 5 hurricane in the U.S., caused several thousand deaths, destroyed 250,000 homes, displaced 4 million people, and has affected 13 million people altogether in its destructive path over the Philippines. 4 people from Vietnam and 8 from China also died as a result of the storm. Bloomberg.com forecasts that the material damage might be more than \$14 billion. This is a terrible disaster and many have responded to the call for aid. Below are a few agencies, already on the ground, to which you can donate.

[United Nations World Food Programme](#)

[Save the Children](#)

[Unicef USA](#)

[American Red Cross](#)

For religious organizations with work in the Philippines, please see [US AID InterAction](#)

## Were there any particular events or people that influenced your decision and why?

I had planned to pursue law school but my best friend wanted me to get a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies with her. In the end, she didn't get into graduate school and I did but now she's a higher education administrator and I'm in the place she originally wanted to be so life is very interesting indeed. **What influenced your decision to come to the University of Illinois?**



Orange Phantom by Long Bui

I came to UIUC because of the fantastic scholars on the campus and the caliber of their research. I had already known some folks such as the wonderful Prof. Lisa Cacho who graduated from my Ph.D. department, the fabulous Prof. Mimi Nguyen and awesome Prof. Fiona Ngo, my postdoctoral mentor who was also my T.A. from undergraduate.

## What interests do you have outside your work?

I'm a visual artist focused mostly on political cartoons and oil paintings and a poet. I'm also involved with the planning of the Vietnamese International Film Festival to encourage more participation in the arts for immi-

grant communities.

## What are your first impressions of the U of I and Champaign-Urbana? What do you like/dislike?

The local people reminded me instantly of Texas, from the style of dress to way of talking. Having lived close to the Mexican border my whole life, I think the winter here will be a challenge for me but I love challenges!

## What are your goals while you are here?

I hope to advocate more for post-docs here because many people still don't know who we are or what we do for the university. I hope to make good friends as well to last a lifetime.

## Tell me about your research.

My first book examines how people today remember the state and history of South Vietnam, My family is from fallen South Vietnam, the country that fell to communists in 1975 and the former ally of the U.S. I wanted the book to be a kind of tribute to the legacy of South Vietnam and the costs. The second book investigates the ways Asians and Asian Americans are viewed as automations or machines in U.S. popular culture. I wanted to investigate the cultural myth that Asian peoples are emotionless, efficient types to reveal the human struggle at the heart of Asian racial formation.

## What should people know about you?

I am committed to promoting teaching and scholarly work in a way that opens our eyes not only to the factual knowledge found in academic research but also its poetic sensibilities and creative artistry.

## In Memoriam Mimi Liu and Mengchen Huang



**UI student who died was 'sweet, enthusiastic, smart'** was the title of the article published on the *News-Gazette.com* about Mimi Liu, a 20 year old Asian American student from Chicago who lost her life tragically after being struck by a pickup truck the morning of October 9, 2013 in front of the McKinley Health Center.



**Mengchen Huang**, died September 27, 2013 the victim of domestic violence. The 25 year old Art and Design graduate student from China had recently earned a master's degree in art history and was pursuing a doctorate degree.

Our deepest sympathies go out to their families and friends during this time of grief.

## The Other Taste of Nevada



gathered for some good food and camaraderie. Sponsored by American Indian Studies, African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Gender and Women's Studies and Latina/Latino Studies. Guests enjoyed food from Maize and Black Dog while listening to music.

## Two Dynamic Speakers

This semester we were lucky to have two well attended lectures by two dynamic speakers. On September 11th Judy Wu from Ohio State University spoke to a diverse group of 30 faculty and students in Lucy Ellis Lounge on the subject of the 1970 visit of Black Panther leaders Eldridge Cleaver and Elaine Brown to North Korea, the People's Republic of China and North Viet Nam.

On November 4th, Helen Jun from UIC addressed a group of 30+ students and faculty as our Faculty Colloquium speaker on the topic of Asian American racial differences in the post-civil rights period, by examining its relationship to the rise of neoliberalism as a hegemonic ideology since the mid-1960s. Copies of both Judy Wu's book, *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism during the Viet Nam Era* Cornell 2013 and Helen Jun's book, *Race for Citizenship: Black Orientalism and Asian Uplift from Pre-Emancipation to Neoliberal America*, NYU Press 2011 are available through the Illini Union Bookstore.



## Upcoming Events

Hip Hop and Punk Feminisms: Theory, Genealogy, Performance  
December 5-6, 2013