

Kay Kiyokawa, 1943. Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Dodd Research Center

1940s Japanese American Students Reunion

University of Connecticut, Storrs

After six decades Japanese American students who enrolled at UConn in the 1940s held a reunion in Storrs from October 16-18, 2003. The idea for a reunion came up between alumni fishing buddies Shiro Aisawa, Class of '47 and George Masaaki Fukui, Class of '45 and M.S. '48, who both warmly remember a particularly cold and snowy

Thanksgiving they shared in 1944. Fukui has said, "Each time I return to the University of Connecticut it feels like coming home."

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With Shiro Aisawa and George M. Fukui, also coming home were Toshie Hamasaki Kato who brought her spouse Tad; Kay Kiyokawa, Class of '45 who brought his son Craig and daughter in law Leslee; Jim Nakano who brought his spouse Harriet; Satoshi Oishi, Class of '49 who brought his spouse Jeannette, Class of '48; Kazuo Fred Yamaguchi, Class of '49; and Terry Yeya Yatsu, Class of '48.

The reunion was organized by the Asian American Cultural Center and the Asian American Studies Institute, and co-sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, School of Engineering, Dept. of Athletics and Alumni Association. Reunion activities included an interview with the Center for Oral History at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center for each of the returning students, a VIP Tour of Rentschler Field in East Hartford, and a night out in Hartford capped by a tribute to James Moody with Jackie McLean at The Artists Collective.

The highlight of the reunion was a dinner in the returning students' honor held at the Alumni House and attended by community members, former Japanese Americans and World War II class students, faculty, staff and current students at UConn. The President's Office's Ron Schurin, and the Provost of Multicultural & International Affairs Ron Taylor both gave welcoming remarks that reaffirms the continuing tradition of acceptance and inclusion at the university. Current UConn men's baseball head coach Jim Penders also offered his remarks about the 1940s student athletes.

A slide show of photos from the 1940s of the returning students and others who could not attend the reunion, as well as those who had passed away gave an intimate glimpse of student life then. Those vivid and inspiring photos seem to bind the students of the past and the present to a remarkable past and a hopeful future.

George Fukui and Shiro Aisawa especially recognized AASI Director Roger Buckley and AsACC Director Angela Rola for leadership of their

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Director's Comments 2004

Celebration and Outrage

Ordinarily, I speak to one subject at a time in this column. This year will be a departure, as two subjects have my attention: one pleasant, the other decidedly troubling.

First, this academic year marked the ten-year anniversary of both the Asian American Studies Institute and the Asian American Cultural Center. The Institute and Center celebrated their ten years of service to the University community and the State of Connecticut by co-sponsoring a number of events, among them a Korean American symposium and the 60th Reunion of Japanese American students who attended UConn back in the 1940s.

A fund drive was another aspect of our ten-year celebration, and our friends, near and far, responded generously to our request. The appeal took the form of a handsome, multi-page, full color magazine that reminded the viewer of the many activities sponsored by the Institute and Center going back to 1993. The magazine also focused on the important work done by the faculty and staff of the Institute and Center. This is to thank each of you for your valued support, a support that came at a challenging time for Americans, as the nation tries to free itself from a sluggish economy, adjust to the demands of a global economy, and fight an increasingly costly (and misdirected) war on terror. Thank you all.

Second, the entire world was horrified with the recent publication of pictures showing Iraqi prisoners being humiliated and tortured by members of the United States armed forces.

Christopher Hitchens aptly described these jailers as "giggling recreational sadists." But he did not go far enough to shed light on the source of their horrific behavior.

In a nation that constantly prides itself as the greatest country ever, there was a frantic race to explain this hideous behavior. Apologists quickly dismissed the sadism as

"The racism inherent in our society has been manifested in America's wars both here and abroad."

having nothing to do with the glorious history of the armed forces of the United States. Indeed, it was the work of a few rogue soldiers, they argue. Nothing could be further from the truth.

I would argue that the context for this sickening display is something all Americans are intimately familiar with – racism. Soldiers born and raised in a racist country must be expected to carry their racist views wherever they go, and that includes Iraq. Consider the images of Arabs and Muslims generated by Hollywood and television since the end of the Cold War. In dire need to find a new enemy to replace Russians and communists, Hollywood and television invented the bad Arab and Muslim and proceeded to cram their products with images of these surly and dangerous characters. Be honest, now. How many of you have seen the likes of these characters in motion picture films and on television over the last thirty years or so?



Roger N. Buckley

The racism inherent in our society has been manifested in America's wars both here and abroad, wars in which elements of the armed forces of the United States behaved sadistically against its enemy. Consider the wars fought in Asia. Examples include the slaughter of thousands of Filipinos during the Spanish American War and the murder of countless unarmed civilians during the Vietnam War and (as we have recently learned) the Korean War. Closer to home, atrocities were committed against Native Americans (at Wounded Knee, for example) and against Haitians during the U.S. occupation of Haiti, which began during World War One. I have yet to see pictures of hooded Nazi SS troops and officers being led over hill and dale by dog leashes lashed round their necks.

The pictures of humiliated and tortured Iraqis cannot be explained away as the work of a few crazed guards. The context for their behavior is broader than that, the reason deeper. Racism is the culprit and its long, boney fingers are sadly evident in the long history of the armed forces of this country.

Roger N. Buckley

Globalization & Its Discontents

Exposing the Underside

“Globalization is a political system devised over many years by interested parties to serve their ends. Globalization is not an inevitable force of history but the consequence of public policy choices, decisions made by leaders and those with power to benefit the already wealthy and powerful,” said Professor of History, Evelyn Hu-DeHart, on October 23, 2003 at the University of Connecticut.

Hu-DeHart who is also Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America at Brown University was the Asian American Studies Institute’s Guest Lecture Series and Asian American Heritage Observance speaker. Her talk was co-sponsored by the Asian American Cultural Center and UConn’s Human Rights Committee. Prof. Hu-DeHart was Chair of the department of Ethnic Studies at University of Colorado at Boulder. She has also taught at the City Univ. of New York system, NYU, Washington Univ. in St. Louis, Univ. of Arizona and Univ. of Michigan, as well as lectured at universities and research institutes in Mexico, Peru, Cuba, France, Hong Kong, Taiwan and China. She has written two books on the Yaqui Indians, and scores of articles ranging from Chinese immigration to the U.S., Caribbean and Latin America, women and minorities in Higher Education, and the politics of multiculturalism. She also edited *Across the Pacific: Asian Americans and Globalization* for Temple University Press. She is currently engaged in a large research project on the Asian diaspora in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In her public lecture, Hu-DeHart looked at globalization from the perspective of those who are most vulnerable, tracing its impact from the maquiladora industry on the U.S.-Mexico border to sweatshops all around the Pacific Rim, and from the anti-globalization movements in the First World to the Zapatista uprisings in Chiapas, timed to protest the workings of NAFTA, the face of globalization in North America. She shared her observations about some of the negative impact of globalization with an audience of mostly UConn students and high school students from the CT International Baccalaureate Academy in East Hartford. Before her lecture, Prof. Hu-DeHart shared some of her thoughts with the Asian American Studies Institute’s Fe Delos-Santos.

Where are Asian Americans on globalization?

Everywhere! We are the oppressor and the oppressed.... I look at Asian Americans as to how they are positioned throughout the globe. For example, in Pakistan, all over Southeast Asia, all over the Pacific Rim, we have these sweatshops. So, why are the sweatshops in Pakistan, in Bangladesh, all over Asia, all over Central America? Because of cheap labor, particularly cheap female labor.

And Asians are exploiting their own cheap labor. They are not only exploiting cheap labor in their own country in Asia, but right here in the U.S. and in Central America. So Asians are positioned in many different ways in this globalization scheme. I try to explain exactly how are they positioned. And they’re oftentimes positioned not at the top, but at the midlevel. We’re the middlemen ... the vast majority of Asians are what we call the subcontractor.

How is globalization affecting Asian workers in the United States?

The latest is so fascinating! The latest with globalization is not just exploiting unskilled labor — that used to be the classic case, especially with manufacturing jobs. Now, we are exploiting and exporting information jobs. It’s called “infomatics.”



Evelyn Hu-DeHart

We’re exploiting highly skilled jobs, and we’re exploiting customer service jobs, from the U.S. using [internet] technologies. So that when you call customer service, and you think you’re getting an American reserving an airline ticket, or asking about a back order – you’re actually talking to someone in the Philippines! Because they speak English and they’re highly educated! India also. Now we’re exploiting highly skilled, educated white-collar workers, and exporting those jobs, instead of importing those workers. Because after 9/11 this country has said we don’t want any more immigrants here ... and it’s making it okay to be racist again in America, under the pretext of national security.

What does this mean for Asian American Studies?

I think Asian American Studies has got to address these issues and not pretend that they have nothing to do with it, because who Asian is out there these days is very malleable. Who are Asians?

We’ve got about 4% of the population if you add up all the Asian groups in the U.S. We’re well represented on college campuses (8% at UConn) – so that’s the power base. On the other hand, what would unite us? We don’t necessarily have language in common ... then you have Asians from Peru – now where do they fit in? Asian Latinos? What about Filipinos with Latin last names?

A lot of people say that globalization is not only wonderful, but also inevitable. That the rising tide of globalization will lift all boats, and eventually we will all gain. And some of us have modified that to say that it only lifts the yachts!

In Globalization's Wake

Kyung-Hae Lee was one of thousands of farmers marching toward the conference center in Cancun, Mexico where World Trade Organization ministers were meeting. Lee carried a sign reading: "WTO kills farmers." When the farmers reached the fence that kept demonstrators six miles [away], Lee plunged a knife into his heart.

Lee, 56, had devoted his life to defending South Korea's farmers. He had traveled to Europe, America and Japan, to see how small farmers coped with trade liberalization. In February [2003] Lee set up a tent in front of WTO headquarters in Geneva. He explained that soon after the WTO was created, he and "Korean fellow farmers realized that we could not do anything but just watch the waves that destroyed our lovely rural communities. Now...at the front gate of the WTO, I am crying out my words to you, words that have been boiling for a long time in my body."

South Korea is mountainous. With high land values and high wage levels, Korean agriculture is "uncompetitive." The WTO allowed South Korea to keep tariffs on rice until 2004 but required a gradual opening to other food imports. These imports grew 20% between 1998 and 2002, devastating rural communities.

For Lee, the survival of local agriculture was essential to food security and quality of life. He understood the myriad benefits that flow from small farms: the care small farmers take of soil, water, and wildlife; the variety of crops, landscapes, and community uses; and the invitation to all to see nature and farmer together bring forth food.

From *Turning Wheel*, Winter 2003-2004
Indra's Net by Annette Herskovits
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Korean American Centennial Symposium

Celebrating 100 Years of Korean Immigration to the United States

2003 marks one hundred years of Korean immigration to the United States. Across the country, Korean Americans have organized Centennial celebrations. In Connecticut, the Asian American Studies Institute and the Asian American Cultural Center teamed up with key members of the Korean American Society of Connecticut, notably Professor Emeritus of Political Science at UConn, Ilpyong Kim, to host a day-long symposium to examine history, culture, identity, economic impact, and intergenerational issues on September 27, 2003, held at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, and culminating in a cultural performance consisting of a martial arts demonstration and traditional dances.

A Brief Introduction to Korean Americans

Media coverage tends to focus on the tensions between the North Korea and United States governments, and the lingering impact of the Korean War, resulting in a divided Korea, the Communist North separated from the Democratic South by a heavily patrolled border often referred to as the DMZ or Demilitarized Zone.

There is scant mention, if any, of the fact that the relationship between the United States and Korea first began with the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce in 1882. Many American Missionaries, in particular, played an important role in nurturing the political, cultural and religious development of modern Korea.

Korean immigration to the U.S. territories was first recorded in December 1902, when 56 men, 21 women and 25 children left Korea, traveling across the Pacific Ocean on the S.S. Gaelic, and arriving in Honolulu on January 13, 1903. They came to work as immigrant laborers in Hawaii's sugar plantations.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census reports, the population of Koreans in the United States has increased to 1,076,872 with the largest communities in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and parts of Northern Virginia. Korean Americans, like many Asian Americans, entered the U.S. in large numbers following the ease in Immigration restrictions in 1965. And over the years Korean Americans have helped to revivify crumbling inner-city communities with entrepreneurial savvy, and contribute immensely to cultural and artistic production.

Many Korean Americans are prominent members of American society who have excelled in several fields, including medicine, politics, law, higher education, architecture, religion, and athletics. In addition, many Korean Americans hope for a constructive U.S. policy that will encourage peace on the Korean peninsula and prepare the way for reunification.

In Connecticut, Census figures place Korean Americans at about 10% of the total Asian American population. It is estimated that a little more than half of Connecticut's Korean Americans live in Litchfield, Tolland and Middlesex counties. A good number are devout members of their respective churches and participate in community activities organized by the Korean American Society of Connecticut.

Keynote Address

Wayne Patterson, Professor of History at St. Norbert College in DePere, Wisconsin, delivered the Keynote Address. His talk was entitled "What Do the First Immigrants to the United States One Hundred Years Ago Tell Us About American and Japanese Policy Toward Late Choson Korea?"

Dr. Wayne Patterson is one of America's foremost scholars on Korean history and East Asian immigration, with books that include *The Korean Frontier in America: Immigration to Hawaii, 1896-1910* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1988/1994); *The Golden Mountain: The Autobiography of a Korean Immigrant, 1895-1960* (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1996); *The Ilse: First-Generation Korean Immigrants in Hawaii, 1903-1973* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 2000); and *Koreans in Hawaii, 1903-2003: A Pictorial History* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 2003) with Roberta Chang. Patterson's research and teaching interests cover Modern East Asia, Modern China, Communism in China, Modern Japan, Modern Korea, and Asian American History and East Asian Relations. He has lectured throughout the U.S. and in Korea. He earned his Ph.D. from the Univ. of Pennsylvania, and lives in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

His presentation included archival photo slides illustrating the various key players in what appeared to be at the very least, a quasi-legal scheme by Hawaii's sugar plantation owners to use Korean immigrants as strikebreakers against the Japanese workers who were agitating for better working conditions. And with the Chinese Exclusion Act in place at the time, Korea was seen as a new supply of cheap agricultural labor. This state of affairs was made easier by the United States' federal policy of neutrality, under Theodore Roosevelt, and a *laissez faire* economics approach toward Korea.



Mrs. & Dr. Youn-Suk Kim, Ki Hoon Kim, Soo Wha Kim, Kyung Ja Shin, Young Gak Shin

Patterson also asserted that in the same time period, a strong current of anti-Asian sentiments particularly targeting the Japanese in California, had the Japanese government worried about being "excluded at the bottom with the Chinese" and began to take steps to take over Korea's foreign policy by offering to establish a protectorate over Korean workers in America through the Japanese Consulate Offices in Hawaii, the United States mainland and Mexico. At that time, U.S. policy considered Japan as a stabilizing force in the region. By 1905, Japan takes control of Korea, and in 1910, Korea loses its independence. Thus ends Korea's Choson dynasty period.

Program Highlights

The Culture and Identity panel was moderated by UConn Assoc. Prof. of Psychology Michelle Williams, and featured panelists Ph.D. candidate (NYU) Eleana Kim, "Remembering Loss: The Global Movement of Adopted Koreans," Visiting Prof. in African American Studies (BU) Myung Ja Kim, "Becoming American: Korean American Narrative," and M.A. Education (UConn) Lisa Bok, "Balancing Two Cultures."

The Korean Immigrants' Contributions to the U.S. Economy panel was moderated by Central Connecticut State Univ. Prof. of Economics Ki Hoon Kim, and including himself with a human capital analysis, featured panelists Prof. of Economics (Kean Univ.) Youn-Suk Kim and retired publisher and editor of *TradeKorea*, Young Gak Shin.

The Dialogue Between Generations panel was led by Dr. Ilpyong Kim, and featured Yale Daily News Editor Brian Lee, representing the voice of the second generation, and former CEO and President of Hyundai Corp. USA Young Duk Kim, representing in part the voice of the first generation and urging support for recent efforts to build more solidarity among Korean Americans and other Asian Americans. Dr. Ilpyong Kim closed the session with his thoughts on Saigu the widely used term in the community to refer to the 1992 Los Angeles uprising, saying that Korean Americans learned a lot from the riots. He reminded us that the Civil Rights Movement led by Martin Luther King, Jr. also benefited all Asian Americans.



UConn student Susan Kim in traditional dress

Rhapsody in Plain Yellow

Marilyn Chin

The Chinese American poet is the author of *Dwarf Bamboo*, *The Phoenix Gone*, *The Terrace Empty*, and most recently, *Rhapsody in Plain Yellow* published by Norton in 2002. Marilyn Chin's work has received national recognition, including two NEA Writing Fellowships, the PEN/Josephine Miles Award, and four Pushcart Prizes. As a 2003-2004 Radcliffe Institute Fellow, she is working on a new book of poetry that continues her multilayered, multidimensional, intercultural singing and spinning of tales about the trials of immigration, exile, thwarted interracial love, and social justice. She also co-directs the MFA program at San Diego State University.

Marilyn Chin is a fearless and powerful voice for the neglected and the obscured. Her reading on April 22, 2004 in the Konover Auditorium of the Dodd Center, organized by the Institute for Puerto Rican and Latino Studies and English Dept. at UConn, and co-sponsored by the Asian American Studies Institute, Office of Multicultural Affairs, and others, opened Ariel's Wake, a two-day conference on identifying new parameters in the literature of the Americas through literary representations of some of the largest and longest standing diasporan communities – African American, Puerto Rican, Asian American, Arab-American, and Jewish – in the U.S. She introduced her poem "Blues on Yellow" (*Rhapsody in Plain Yellow*, p. 13, reproduced in part) as homage to African American blues.



Marilyn Chin

The canary died in the gold mine, her dreams got lost in the sieve.
 The canary died in the gold mine, her dreams got lost in the sieve.
 Her husband the crow killed under the railroad, the spokes hath shorn his wings.
 O crack an egg on the griddle, yellow will ooze into white.
 O crack an egg on the griddle, yellow will ooze into white.
 Run, run, sweet little Puritan, yellow will ooze into white.
 If you cut my yellow wrists, I'll teach my yellow toes to write.
 If you cut my yellow wrists, I'll teach my yellow toes to write.
 If you cut my yellow fists, I'll teach my yellow feet to fight.
 Do not be afraid to perish, my mother, our boat will sail tonight.
 Your babies will reach the promised land, the stars will be their guide.

"As poets, most of us are unapologetic about our political views," Marilyn Chin said at the scholars' forum on April 23rd. "Part of who I am as a poet, for example, is a gender feminist, and I write for the smallest, most vulnerable Chinese girl. I'm also unapologetic about being a poetry geek. I love beautiful work. But part of my job is to be subversive, to write on the edge, and to critique. I believe in a fusionist aesthetic – poems without borders – it's about absorbing the noise of what it means to be alive!"

Only What We Could Carry

Lawson Inada

"A man with no ordinary blood beating in his veins, but rather the delicious repetitions and syncopations of an energy that's called jazz," said the Asian American Cultural Center's Sheila Kucko of Lawson Inada in her introduction before he read selections from the comprehensive anthology, *Only What We Could Carry: The Japanese American Internment Experience*, published by Heyday Books in conjunction with the California Historical Society (2000) at the UConn Co-Op as the February 5, 2004 guest of the sIAAm! Book Club. He also conducted a Poetry Workshop. Professor Emeritus of English at Southern Oregon State College, the Fresno, California-born, Sansei Inada, and his family were interned during World War II in camps in Fresno, Arkansas and Colorado. He has read his works at the White House, received multiple NEA Poetry Fellowships, and was recently named Guggenheim Fellow.

"[Behind] each of you, there are a lot of people – people who've made it possible for you to be here. So, even though we're here in a smallish group, if you think about it, we represent many, many people. That's part of what I want to talk about today, is how in talking about a particular book we're really talking about a much larger experience.

"I'll start with a little story by way of example. There was a very modest family, before WWII, living in the Seattle area. They had come from Japan. They were farmers, but they had big dreams. They had a son who was quite bright so they sent him away to go to school in New York. When the war happened and the internment period came about, this couple, without their son, became a part of that contingent from the Seattle area that was sent to the camp in Idaho. Their son continued his schooling because he was just far, far away from the West Coast. He became an architect.



Lawson Inada

“And I was thinking about him because the world continues in a way in which things that happen in the past are part of the continuum. And you never know when that past takes on a greater significance.

“So, on September 11, same as you, I’m watching television, and I see the World Trade Center. It was still standing when I first started watching. Then it started to crumble.

“And when I blinked my eyes, I saw the barbed wire and the guard towers of the internment camps. And the reason I saw that was — the architect of the WTC was that young man I was telling you about, Minoru Yamasaki, who was going to school in New York while his parents were incarcerated. So I began to weave in my mind, the internment experience with September 11.”

As voices arose in the canyon of history – soft voices, loud voices, young voices, old voices – and as the voices continued to resound, reverberate, resonate, the walls of the canyon began to gradually dissolve, revealing the grand landscape of the human condition, and the wide sky of wisdom and compassion. We had arrived at the heart of the matter.

The River Flows.

Operation Monsoon

Shona Ramaya

Breaking ranks with many popular South Asian writers, the Calcutta, India-born writer is not interested in promoting the exotic appeal of India or the immigrant experience. Going beyond offering simplified images of rejection and separation, her short story collection published by Graywolf Press (2003), *Operation Monsoon* offers intricate, multilayered stories. The lead story, “Gopal’s Kitchen” deals with the organ market. Ramaya’s stories relate cultural experiences that embody life in a globalized India. And they explore the continually evolving terrain of transnational existence. Her previous works include, *Beloved Mother*, *Queen of the Night*, and *Flute*. She is Executive Editor of *Catamaran Magazine*. Ramaya, who lives in Massachusetts, gave a reading for the sIAAm! Book Club on November 13, 2004, and agreed to a brief interview.



Shona Ramaya

Do you set out writing something with social context in mind or some other process?

To some extent, yes I do have social context in mind. But it’s not like I’m trying to tell people, “Look! How horrible things are, and you need to do something about it.” And the western world must come, and you know, straighten out, sort of save all the dark people or something. It’s not like that.

In my mind, I first came to know about the organ market, organ trade in an Indian magazine called *India Today*, which is India’s version of *Time Magazine*, many years ago. When I read it, I was stunned! That it was going on so blithely, nobody thought about it. And then a friend of mine, his uncle, right at that time, I’d heard that he had sent out scouts to some village in southern India (they live in New Jersey), to get a kidney for him. And he was telling us that he was spending all this money. I was even more horrified! This was somebody I happen to know.

And then I started to get other opinions about how come there is no outcry. And there were these old stories that my grandmothers and certain uncles and aunts used to tell us about the Tantric [practices] – how the rich guy’s son who’s dying would employ this sort of voodoo priest type of person to go and get the soul from the healthier, the poorer family’s son – a sort of transfer of souls ... and that’s when it kind of clicked. I mean it’s the same thing, it’s just modern technology that’s being used – it’s just the rich who are always deciding who is to live and who is to die. And that really was the thing in my head. That’s what I was trying to convey, not so much that you gotta go out there and do something about [the organ trade] ... It was my own sense of shock in my own head trying to make sense of why this was happening.

To make sense of something that may be repugnant, or difficult?

Right! And in the other stories [of the book] the narrators or the main characters, that’s exactly what they are doing. They’re really sort of using what they imagine or what they fantasize their situation to be ... the fantasy of their situation in relation to the reality of the outside world. In some way, it blurs the reality of their situation.

Day of Remembrance

Reminiscing in Swingtime with George Yoshida

Day of Remembrance at UConn is an annual event to reflect on the internment experience of Japanese Americans during World War II as a pivotal moment in the history of the United States. In his opening remarks on February 19, 2004, Director of AASI and Prof. of History, Roger Buckley said, "It was 62 years ago today that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. The result: the wrongful incarceration of some 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry. To paraphrase one inmate of the camps, 'The very heavens were disturbed and the earth underwent an upheaval.' A dark time, indeed, for Japanese Americans – and all other peoples who honor and value civil liberties and human rights."

Yet amid the desolation and the dislocation, former Poston, Arizona camp detainee, George Yoshida found that "popular American music and dance bands in camps provided comfort and distraction to young internees. It was a reassuring cushion against their complete spiritual annihilation. Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. It was never so true in those American camps."

Nine of the 10 camps formed swing bands with names like The Star Dusters, The Jive Bombers, and The D-Elevens. The Heart Mountain, Wyoming camp band was invited several times by outside groups to entertain at dances and benefits for war bonds.

In a multimedia presentation at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, the story of the internment became a sense-surround opportunity for the audience to see, hear, and touch history, with George Yoshida's own soulful American story providing the scene, the soundtrack and the groove.

Yoshida researched and wrote *Reminiscing in Swingtime: Japanese Americans in American Popular Music, 1925-1960*, published by the National Japanese American Historical Society in 1997. He founded the San Francisco-based swing band, J-Town Jazz Ensemble, and played the saxophone in the Poston camp band, The Music Makers. He was subsequently inducted into the U.S. Army and trained with the Military Intelligence Service Language School at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. After attending the Univ. of California at Berkeley, Yoshida taught in and managed the Berkeley Schools for nearly 30 years. And as with countless journeys before, George's wife Helen accompanied him on his visit to UConn, which was co-sponsored by the Asian American Cultural Center.

"YO! Yoshida's the name. Born in the USA just like Bruce Springsteen! Born in the U.S.A. way back in April 1922 ... the same year the US Supreme Court ruled that naturalization is limited only to "free white persons and aliens of African nativity." Asians were excluded, and it was thought that Asians could not assimilate into white, mainstream society.

"I lived on the edge of downtown Seattle. The grammar school I went to was 98% Japanese Americans. Although the Chinese had come earlier, there were

very few Chinese families. Grammar school was the beginning of our acculturation, speaking English, learning how to drink soup without slurping – the beginning of becoming Americans. And although we lived in this somewhat segregated subculture, those were sweet days, free from racial hostility and without economic distinction. We were all very much alike, all very poor.

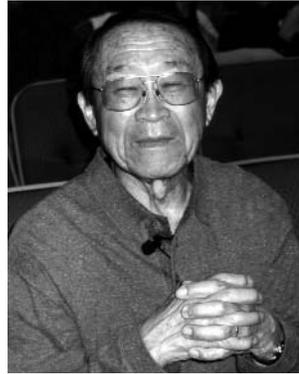
"In 1936 the family moved to East Los Angeles because of the Depression – to "the other side of the river" with children of immigrants from Europe, Jewish kids, Russian kids, a few Mexicans (not as many as there are now today) and Japanese families.

"In those days, Japanese Americans were all "G-Men" — grocers and gardeners. The only professional person in

the neighborhood was the doctor or the dentist or maybe the insurance salesman who wore a suit and went around in a car. The rest of us were G-Men. And this is true with many immigrants, especially for a lot of Mexican Americans and people from Central America. The Latinos are the G-Men of today. After graduation, I went to LA City College.

"Then in 1941 I got seduced by Big Band American Jazz. Duke Ellington and his music, which was really so far out for me. It was wonderful! Even today, because of that first experience, my Big Band in San Francisco plays a tune called Don't Get Around Much Anymore. We still play the original Duke Ellington version, and it knocks me out still after all these years.

"Sunday morning, December 8, 1941 — Bam! Bam! Pearl Harbor was bombed! I was working in the



“Popular American music and dance bands in camps provided comfort and distraction to young internees. It was a reassuring cushion against their complete spiritual annihilation.”

produce section of a supermarket when the radio announced, "Japanese Planes Attacked the Military Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Major Damage Inflicted on the Pacific Naval Fleet. Thousands Killed, Injured."

"American citizens responded with anger, fear, hatred – Japs! Japs! You can't trust them. Put them all away! White Americans could not think of us as being fellow Americans. They thought we deserved to be locked up in retaliation for Pearl Harbor.

"I was tormented with paranoia. I didn't want to be Japanese – I'm not a Jap! I disassociated myself from being Japanese by getting rid of Japanese records, books, newspapers, and other gifts, whatever few I had from Japan. I repeated to myself, over and over again – I'm not a Jap ... **I am American!** I always pledged allegiance, and I sang – My country, 'tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty ... yeah, all my life.

"But I could not change my Japanese face. Those were fearful times with rumors of Japanese families and individuals being intimidated and even murdered. I'm reminded now of the frightful racial profiling and intimidation taking place today for the many immigrants and many Americans of Middle Eastern origin.

"Executive Order 9066 put 120,000 of us into internment camps. Those 10 camps, scattered throughout the United States were American camps. My parents and two younger sisters and I ended up in Poston. I was young then, and could stand the ordeal of primitive communal life in camp – long lines waiting in front of the mess hall, crowded latrines and showers. And the lack of privacy was disturbing.

"Physical discomforts were plenty. But the true pain, what really hurt, was being labeled "enemy aliens."



"Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. It was never so true in those American camps."

"That really hurt.

"Among the 10,000 in our camp, a handful of youngsters loved Big Band music ... I played the saxophone. We played the music of Glen Miller, like Moonlight Serenade ... Joe Sakai was the drummer ... I noticed that the kids from San Francisco danced differently from the kids from LA ... But I liked to jitterbug to In The Mood....

"There was the Heart Mountain camp band with leader George "G.I." Igawa. What was extraordinary about this band was they were invited by outside, regular high schools outside of Heart Mountain. Imagine going out of camp to play somebody else's Senior Prom ... Incidentally, one of the trumpet players still plays with my Big Band in San Francisco, Yone Fukui.

"On April 27, 1945 a Couples Only Dance, the last to be held in the Topaz, Utah camp, had admission at 50 cents. It was requested that couples dance counterclockwise to avoid confusion on the dance floor. Music was supplied by Ich Sasaki and his 6-piece Jivesters.

"The significance of this event was the fact that all 10 detention camps were being closed.

"It was a crucial and demanding time – time to create new lives ... my wife and I returned to California and worked as domestics in a private home. With sheer determination, devoid of deep resentment, most of us returned to establish our lives.

"The post-war years were a time for healing. In 1978, the Japanese American Citizens League passed a resolution to seek redress for each detainee. In 1980, President Carter signed a bill to create the Commission of Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to review Executive Order 9066. Subsequently, 10 public hearings were held, with the final recommendation for Congress to recognize the grave injustice done; offer a public apology; and issue a one-time per captive, compensatory payment of \$20,000 each, for the 60,000 surviving internees. After all those years, about half of the detainees had passed away, because so many of them were elderly. In 1988, President Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act. In 1990, the letter of apology was signed by President George H.W. Bush."

Second Annual Mahavir Ahimsa Seminar

Gurudev Chitrabhanu

The author of 25 books on world peace and the founder of the Jain Meditation International Center, located near the United Nations in New York addressed “Compassion and Nonviolence in Principle and Practice” on April 24, 2004 in the Konover Auditorium of the Dodd Center at the Univ. of Connecticut. Gurudev Chitrabhanu is the preeminent spiritual leader and motivator for the formation of JAINA, the federation of Jain associations in North America, an umbrella group that has more than 100,000 members and 61 centers. He has worked closely with the World Fellowship of Religions. Chitrabhanu’s teachings have inspired many people from all walks of life toward vegetarianism and peace work. His mastery of several languages including Sanskrit, Prakrit, Kannad, Hindi, Gujarati and English, enables him to reach a wide spectrum of people with his message of cultivating awareness and reverence for all life. He has lectured at Princeton, Sarah Lawrence, Cornell, Harvard, SUNY Purchase, among others. On May 22, 2001, he delivered the opening prayer, an unprecedented recognition and honor, in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Keynote Address

Calling his talk a “sharing of experience,” Chitrabhanu invited the audience to look at compassion as a feeling that allows for seeing and feeling another’s pain, not as pity but as an experience of being fully alive in the world. “To feel for others, we have to experience the joy of being alive,” he said. “When you get up in the morning, see the first light, the beautiful dawn, look around and say, ‘I am alive!’

“The whole world is for you ... and the person that takes care of him/herself will take care of others. There is so much pain and suffering ... we don’t see what we have ... let us workshop to free us from the concepts, beliefs and dogmas of caste, creed and nationality.”

He urged the audience to go deeper than mere concepts, “to feel life,” and to integrate the practice and principle of Ahimsa, the Sanskrit for nonviolence. “People who live with harmony of principle and practice, a life of integration, are always collecting the vibrations of the universe, and they feel enriched ... you can make a choice in your life – what to say, how to live. Ahimsa starts with practicing awareness!

“And it is followed by harmlessness, so that you build a bridge between life and life, not with a religious concept which is just separatism,” continued Chitrabhanu. He called instead for understanding, which he equates with love. He also urged a re-examination of our tendency toward accumulation, suggesting that the root of violence is greed, and that one way out is through service.

Conflict Resolution and Interfaith Discussion

Moderated by AASI and Sociology Asst. Prof. Bandana Purkayastha, the session on conflict resolution featured Ann McCoy and Marie Pace. In the first presentation, artist and curator of The Museum of Contemporary Spiritual Art in Lublin, Poland, Ann McCoy, showed slides illustrating her work on “divine birth” informed by both her study of Jungian psychology and Jain practices. She said that artists must be “light bringers ... part of creating positive transformation.” For Ann McCoy, nonviolence practice begins at home. Peace worker and Ph.D. candidate in the Program for the Analysis and Resolution of Conflict at Syracuse Univ. Marie Pace, brought to bear her insider’s perspective in the



Faquir Jain, Padam Jain, Gurudev Chitrabhanu, Bandana Purkayastha

conflict resolution field and her Buddhist practice, in proposing that social change agents need to get beyond polarizing strategies. She sees the challenge as not about eliminating conflict, but engaging it in nonviolent ways. Pace said, “We need an inner ability to hold the ‘paradox’ of revolution and resolution.”

The Seminar closed with the Interfaith Discussion led by members of the Connecticut Council for Interreligious Understanding, Dr. Padam Jain, President of Jain Center of Greater Hartford, Rev. Peter Grandy of Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, and Rev. William Warner-Prouty, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and a middle school teacher. They were joined by Ann McCoy, Marie Pace, and Gurudev Chitrabhanu.

About the Annual Mahavir Ahimsa Seminar

Ahimsa is the Sanskrit word for non-violence. The Asian American Studies Institute at UConn organized the Nonviolence Colloquium on September 29, 2001, in honor of Tirthankar Mahavir, whose teachings of Ahimsa Permo Dharma and symbiosis undergird Jain practices; the latter presaged the modern basis of ecological science. The annual seminar, which is free and open to the public, was established as an annual event in partnership with the Greater Hartford Jain Center and the Jain community of Connecticut.

continued from front page

respective programs, and in particular for generously supporting their idea of a reunion and of making it a reality. That timely recognition coincides with the 10 Year Anniversary celebration of the establishment of both programs at UConn in 1993. A commemorative brochure *Forging A Dynamic Presence* was formally debuted and distributed.

To close the evening's program, Roger Buckley said, "History will be kind and good to this university for doing the right thing, for providing a home away from home, and for living up to all those many ideals we Americans claim as our birthright. To anyone who will stop and listen, I will

tell him or her it has been a great honor for me to lead this institute these 10 years. And more than anything else, it was the courage and indestructible human spirit of our Japanese American brothers and sisters who gave me the zest to lead, and I thank them and welcome them back, home, from the bottom of my heart."

Gripped by fear and insecurity following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. government's unjust incarceration of some 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry and long-term resident aliens signifies a watershed moment in American history. Among those who were uprooted from their homes and placed in remote camps on U.S. soil were young Japanese American students enrolled in colleges in the West. Most universities would not accept them on their campuses. One of the exceptions, a shining example of integrity in a time of uncertainty, was the University of Connecticut, where 14 Japanese Americans attended beginning in 1943.

Remembering UConn

Shiro Aisawa

"Life, since [Poston] camp, has been good - beginning with the day I arrived at UConn. It was a Sunday and everything was closed. Fortunately ... four students ... saw me looking lost and offered their assistance ... a place to stay temporarily, and showed me where I could get a job in the Dining Hall. All of this for a total



1940s Japanese American students and Asian American Faculty gather outside of Beach Hall, UConn in Fall 2003

stranger, especially one [with] the appearance of a Japanese, gave me a good feeling about UConn that has persisted to this day."

George Masaaki Fukui

"Each time I return to the University of Connecticut it feels like coming home."

Toshie Hamasaki Kato

We were transported to Topaz, Utah. I attended high school in camp and graduated in 1944. That fall I enrolled at UConn. The war ended ... I continued my education at University of California at Berkeley. Although I was at UConn for only one year ... the people were very friendly and I felt very comfortable there."

Kay Kiyokawa

"I grew up in Oregon and was attending Oregon State University when my family was sent to Tule Lake Internment Camp. Through the Quaker Church, I was able to attend UConn to major in Agriculture and Horticulture. I was an active member of the baseball and football teams, and my two years at UConn were the most memorable experience of my life."

Jim Nakano

"I was born in Redwood City, California. My family was sent to the internment camp in Topaz, Utah. I spent two years at UConn studying Ornamental Horticulture. I continued my education at UC Berkeley and UCLA. UConn was a great place to 'grow up' from a naïve 17 year old to a regular UConn student. Living on campus was an experience I will never forget."

Satoshi "Satt" Oishi

"My family was interned at Rohwer, Arkansas in 1942. I came to Connecticut in 1944 and received a B.S. in Civil Engineering with expertise in bridge and structural engineering, rail-transit design, architecture, environmental assessments and military facilities."

Kazuo Fred Yamaguchi

"As I was a native New Yorker, I was never incarcerated. I majored in Horticulture. Soon after graduation, I started a greenhouse business in Melville, Long Island, NY. My freshman year was a wonderful introduction to college. The UConn campus was beautiful in its classic New England setting. The reception I received from everyone was taken for granted by me then. But in the intervening 60 years I have come to kansha all those wonderful people that made it happen."

Terry Yeya Yatsu

"I went to Tule Lake, which became a camp for dissidents ... then sent to Jerome, Arkansas, where I finished high school. I left camp to go to work in Philadelphia for Student Relocation, who recommended UConn to me and arranged a scholarship. I will never forget the generous action of the university for waiving out-of-state tuition -- it really helped. My major was Sociology / Psychology. Looking back, UConn was the most wonderful time of my life, where people were warm and accepting. I made life-long friends and discovered myself in the process."

Pursuing Excellence

Faculty Accomplishments

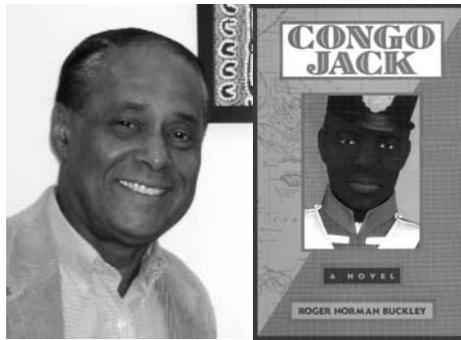
The pursuit of excellence has been a lasting preoccupation of higher education. The same is true for the Asian American Studies Institute as it celebrates 10 years at the University of Connecticut. Professor of History Roger N. Buckley, Asst. Prof. of Art History Margo Machida, Asst. Prof. of Allied Health Usha Palaniswamy, and Asst. Prof. of Sociology Bandana Purkayastha have each met the challenge of excellence in their work, with dedication and passion. Machida, Palaniswamy and Purkayastha each hold a joint appointment with Asian American Studies. They agreed to be interviewed by AASI's Fe Delos-Santos to talk about publishing books and interesting developments in their respective fields, and their outlook for the future of their work in Asian American Studies.

War and Society

Roger N. Buckley considers storytelling as both good scholarship and good citizenship.

"When I did *Congo Jack* (Pinto Press, 1996), friends said I was dealing with something there called accommodation and resistance. I know that in history most people don't go to the barricades. They reach some kind of intimate accommodation with an oppressive regime. So it was that one day, it just hit me. How could these guys be fighting for the British? And then I began to find stories, began to do some research and there they were – they were Hindus, they were Blacks, and occasionally, they were Whites – and they were doing this at a time when there were race wars. In many ways, the Sepoy Rebellion was a race war."

Buckley published *I, Hanuman* in 2003 with the Writers Workshop in Calcutta, West Bengal. Set during the Bengal Army Rebellion of 1857, it is the true story of Bedasee Singh, a Hindu soldier whose political awakening is compelled by having to choose between his loyalty to the British and



Roger Buckley

his devotion to India. *I, Hanuman* is the second installation of Buckley's "Rebellion Trilogy." In the last of the series Buckley tells the story through the eyes of an Irish soldier.

"It's been a combination of lots and lots of years of looking at these armies, not so much from the point of view of battle, more into war and society. And I thought, what more important issue is there than the question of loyalty. In fact, it was [Japanese American activist] Yuri Kochiyama who helped me, who said for me to deal with the question of accommodation and resistance and loyalty. It was Yuri who asked me to deal with the question of to whom should you give your loyalty. It was she who put it together, yet all of my life, I had been thinking about all that." Since finishing the trilogy, Buckley has been working on Kochiyama's biography and an edited book of her writings.

Contemporary Culture

Margo Machida pioneers the project of articulating the intricate problems of interpreting works of art, and constructing meaning from visual work produced by people of other cultural backgrounds.

"In the past decade, I have witnessed a ground swell of new writing on Asian American art. Much of that primary documentation is directly linked to exhibitions initiated by Asian American curators, artists, academics, and cultural activists. Such work is critical to expanding the field of art history. Yet there are certainly challenges to doing scholarship in any area that is perceived as connected to domestic

identity or minoritarian politics, which some critics perceive as marginal. I think that in order to counter such beliefs, and to enlarge our notions of what constitutes American culture, this work must begin at the level of undergraduate education by making Asian American art part of the core art history curriculum."

Machida co-edited *Fresh Talk / Daring Gazes: Conversations on Asian American Art* with Elaine Kim and Sharon Mizota. Published by Univ. of California Press in 2003, the book chronicles the blossoming of Asian American art and anticipates the growing democratization of American art and culture. "This project grew out of my ongoing interest in how Asian American visual artists use their work to articulate issues of identity and identification as people of Asian heritage living in the United States. I have been involved in this field for over 20 years, as a scholar, cultural critic, and independent curator. My own transition from a small town in Hawaii to New York City in the late 1960s made me acutely aware of the importance of place in shaping our sense of self and position in the world."

Machida just received the School of Fine Arts New Scholar Award for 2004, and recently completed a new essay based on extensive interviews of San Francisco artists who were



Margo Machida

involved in community arts activism from 1965 to 1980. She has also begun researching Asian American artists in Hawaii for another book project, while she waits for the release of

The Poetics of Positionality: Art, Identities, and Communities of Imagination in Asian America from Duke Univ. Press.

Healthy People

Usha Palaniswamy expands thinking about plants as both food and medicine, and incorporates a global attitude about health practices that will lead to more access and better quality of life.



Usha Palaniswamy

“Studies show that traditional diets are better. Indian immigrants, after coming here, completely changed their eating style — more meat, less vegetables. And they are also limited by how many varieties they can have in the U.S. unless local farmers, as in New Jersey, choose to grow those that are available in India. Not everybody has that privilege. But it has also been shown that some cancers decrease upon immigrating to the US, as with the Japanese and the decline in stomach cancers. It’s really complex. [Health practices] can’t be addressed from only one side. It has to be looked at from many different perspectives.”

Palaniswamy published *A Guide to Medicinal Plants of Asian Origin and Culture* in 2003 with CPL Press of the U.K. Covering an extensive range of plants, the book explores how these plants have been used for many hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of years by Indian, Chinese and other cultures. The book also details the specific phytochemicals that may be responsible for the observed medicinal

activities. She is at work on a textbook version of her book, and has another book project that will cover Asian food crops and human dietetics.

“It’s important to make people think critically about decisions they make. Moderation is the key in diet, and variety – not just eating three tablets of lutein a day, or vitamin E three times a day, or Omega-3. Everybody is eating all those tablets, trying to isolate those compounds, and that’s just pure commercialization. I would certainly critique such an approach.” Palaniswamy thinks that Asian American Studies can benefit from incorporating more science in its higher education curriculum. She recently won the Provost General Education Incentive Competition to develop curricular materials for honors-enhanced sections of her courses on Critical Health Issues of Asian Americans, and Asian Medical Systems.

Power and Poverty

Bandana Purkayastha questions the standard frameworks of knowledge, to locate the interlocking issues of empowerment, language and social realities locally, and raises the bar for scholarship about poor women’s experiences.

“People use the word empowerment all the time. What does that mean when it’s translated into many different languages? Does the sense of what empowerment means here, with its emphasis on individuals doing better, have any social relevance in other places? There might be all kinds of other models of empowerment. In other words, it’s not that other societies lack social imagination of how their lives can be improved and enriched. But that’s a different way of thinking about empowerment than thinking about empowerment in an individual sense.”

Purkayastha co-edited *The Power of Women’s Informal Networks: Lessons in Social Change from South Asia and West Africa* with Mangala Subramaniam. Published in 2004 by Lexington Books, an imprint of Rowman and

Littlefield, the book is the outcome of witnessing the growth of interest in international work within the last decade. “One of our real concerns was and still is, that in doing international work, you need to have a situated idea of poverty. What that means there. Sitting in the U.S. we really very frequently equate being poor with having no status. That may not necessarily be true in the same ways in other parts of the world. It need not be true in different parts of the same country. There could be a lot of variations.”



Bandana Purkayastha

Purkayastha recently won the State of Connecticut’s Outstanding Immigrant Award, in recognition of her advocacy on behalf of the South Asian immigrant community of CT. She also received the 2004 UConn Woman of Color Award for Excellence in Leadership, Achievement and Service. Her new book *Negotiating Ethnicity: Second Generation South Asian Americans Traverse a Transnational World* takes the same compelling ideas that she applies to international work and focuses this time on a U.S. population. It is in production queue for fall 2004 with Rutgers Univ. Press.

Visit AsianAmerican.UConn.Edu for more information on our faculty and courses.

Course Offerings 2004 - 2005

Fall Semester 2004

AASI 215 - Critical Health Issues of Asian Americans addresses health issues affecting Asian American populations and discusses current trends in medical practices in Asian American populations.

AASI 222 - Asian Indian Women examines how gender, class and race and ethnicity structure the everyday lives of Asian Indian women in the U.S. and India. It also examines how Indian women have mobilized to change the social context of their lives.

AASI 274 - Asian American Literature reviews novels, short stories, drama and poetry by and about Asian Americans, and discusses pre and post 1965 "waves" of Asian immigration and exclusion, and how literature explores the difficulties of dislocation and relocation. *Also offered Spring Semester 2005.*

AASI 277 - Modern India 1500 to the Present examines the development of India from the Mughal and European invasions of the Sixteenth Century to the present. India's remarkable synthesis of East and West, traditional and new, is the focus.



Dr. Hira C. Jain, Payal Vachhani,
Mrs. Sunita Jain

NEW AASI 298 (1) Special Topics - Asian Americans and the Law introduces students to American law, jurisprudence and legal institutions that have defined the history of the Asian American experience. This course will inform students about the legal context of Asian American history in the United States, and will introduce them to the literature of this field, teaching them to critically review primary and secondary sources. This course will broaden students' understanding of the history of U.S. minorities and the history of U.S. racism.

NEW AASI 298 (2) Special Topics - Researching Asian American Studies is designed for a dual purpose. First, students will read and discuss some outstanding research in the field of Asian American Studies. Second, students will study and practice social science methodology and techniques in the process of conducting their own research. The basics of qualitative research will be covered and then some of the branching strategies such as ethnography and biography and historiography will be explored, and the emergence of new possibilities will be attended by reference to constructivism, critical theory, the humanities and ethnic epistemology. Students will be encouraged to inform their own research process with these contemporary openings.

Hira Jain Scholarship Payal Vachhani

The second semester, Dean's List, pre-pharmacy major Payal Vachhani, is the first Hira Jain Scholar. She received an award of \$500 and met with the donors on March 26, 2004. Dr. Hira C. Jain and Mrs. Sunita Jain established the endowment fund scholarship to recognize academically outstanding students at UConn.

Spring Semester 2005

AASI 201 - Introduction to Asian American Studies is an interdisciplinary course that provides a general introduction to major themes in Asian Pacific American Studies through readings and class discussions, guest speakers, group projects, visits to community organizations and video screenings. This course explores issues of identity, history and community, as well as aspects of what constitutes Asian American art and culture.

AASI 216 - Asian Medical Systems examines traditional medical systems of Asian origin and their prevalence in the US. This course discusses the most popular Asian medical systems: Ayurveda; traditional Chinese medicine; Chinese, Indian and Japanese herbal medicine; and the values and beliefs of the different models.

NEW AASI 294 - Asian American Experiences in the U.S. is an introductory survey of Asian American experiences in the United States since 1850, when the first "wave" of Asian immigrants arrived in the country of "Golden Mountains." The course examines ways in which Asian Americans have responded to both opportunities and discriminations in the new land. While acknowledging the rich and complex experiences of Asian Americans, the course focuses on one issue: does the history of the so-called "model minorities" substantiate the popular ideal of the United States as a "melting pot?"

Asian American Faculty & Staff Association

80-20 Initiative's S.B. Woo

Dr. S.B. Woo, Co-founder and President of the 80-20 Initiative, addressed the importance of Asian American participation in the presidential election in November 2004, at a luncheon hosted by UConn's Asian American Faculty and Staff Association, co-sponsored by the Asian American Cultural Center and AASI, on April 26, 2004. A retired physics professor and former Lt. Governor of Delaware, S.B. Woo easily navigates between the world of academics and political players. He is keen to rally Asian Americans to get over their various tribalisms, "to overcome our own inertia," to develop the necessary political clout. 80-20 is a national, nonpartisan, Political Action Committee dedicated to winning equal opportunity and justice for all Asian Pacific Americans through a swing bloc vote, ideally directing 80% of the community's votes and money to the presidential candidate endorsed by 80-20.



R. Malla, M. Machida, C. Tian, J. Joshi, S.B. Woo, Chwen'hwa Luh, P. Luh, J. Yang

AASI Co-sponsors Women's Studies Conference

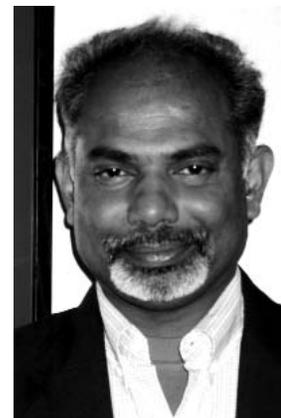
Keynote Speaker Robin Chandler

Entitled "Arousing the Lioness in the Forest: Moving Toward a Critical Scholarship of Service, Solidarity and Sisterhood," Associate Prof. of Sociology and Chair of African American Studies at Northeastern Univ. Robin Chandler said on April 3, 2004, that the "only thing that will move a lioness into ferocity is a threat to her cubs, that she would give her life in service for those she loves. The wolf is in the house, and it is time to fight, to transcend the particularities. We would be smart to prepare for battle not along the lines of gender but along lines of service, in order to fight dominion." Her call to action includes partnership with the nonacademic community and with men, activism through the arts, and sharing the suffering of other women.

Masala: Diversity & Democracy in South Asian Art

Contemporary Artists of the Diaspora

Featuring an eclectic collection of contemporary art and photography, folk and pop-culture art from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the exhibition, which ran from January 31 to April 9, 2004, was curated by School of Fine Arts Prof. Kathryn Myers. Incorporating the work of contemporary artists of the South Asian diaspora, the panel discussion on March 1, focused on the work of Sarina Khan Reddy (media/film); Siona Benjamin (painting); Annu Palakunnathu Matthew (photography); and Vijay Kumar (printmaking). The panel was moderated by Asst. Prof. Margo Machida, who opened her remarks with "What does it mean to carry one's house on one's back?" To engage the questions of identity, tradition and culture(s) is, she said, "a matter of making conscious decisions about how to construct one's sense of place and attachments in the world."



Jeyaseela Stephen

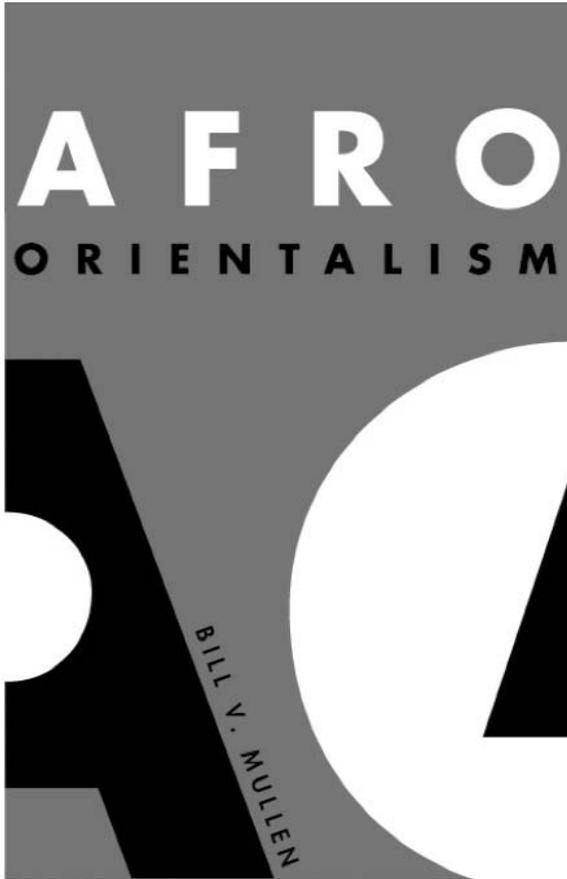
Faculty and Scholar Exchange Program

Visva-Bharati / Tagore University

Dr. Jeyaseela Stephen, Chair of Dept. of History at Visva-Bharati, West Bengal, India visited UConn on March 18 and 19, 2004 to formalize the faculty and scholar exchange program between the Asian American Studies Institute and Tagore University as outlined in a memorandum of understanding agreed to by all parties in October of 2002. The program is intended to promote networks of knowledge towards a globally inclusive world. Among other things, both institutions have also agreed to organize seminars and courses to promote active research in a variety of disciplines and to establish a distance education component that utilizes digital database collections of oral histories and other materials related to underserved populations in both countries. Dr. Stephen met with Vice Provost of Multicultural and International Affairs, Ron Taylor, and faculty, students and staff of the Asian American Cultural Center and AASI.

Asian American Studies Minor

Students are required to take the Introduction to Asian American Studies course and complete 18 credits to qualify. All courses are at the 200-level. Contact us for the **Plan of Study** and list of **Approved Courses**.



Author Bill Mullen reads from his new book *Afro Orientalism*, Univ. of Minnesota Press in November 2004.

Sponsors include The Asian American Studies Institute & the Asian American Cultural Center

Visit AsianAmerican.uconn.edu for updated information.

Asian American Studies Institute 2003 – 2004

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