

FILIPINO AMERICANS: HISTORY, CULTURE, POLITICS
Race, Rhymes, and Representation

Instructor: Dr. Rod Labrador
Office hours: George Hall 303
Office hours: Thursday, 2-3pm, or by appointment
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Teaching Assistant: Ruben Campos

Course description

This upper-division and interdisciplinary course will provide an overview of the historical and contemporary experiences of Filipinos in the United States, focusing primarily on cultural production and political expressions and representations in hip hop. In this regard, we will draw mainly from the works of Native Guns, Bambu, Kiwi, Blue Scholars, Rocky Rivera, Hokie Spitshard, Power Struggle, Deep Foundation, and Apl De Ap. We will consider how these artists lyrically, visually, and sonically represent Filipina/o life with respect to race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, history, culture, and power. To contextualize Filipina/o cultural production in hip hop, the course also covers the historical trajectory of hip-hop from its emergence in New York City during the 1970's to its contemporary manifestation as a global phenomenon. This class will combine lecture, discussion, and in-class group activities. You will be required to do the readings, listen to the music, and watch videos.

* The class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00-1:15pm, in BusAd D201.

* Students with special needs should make an appointment to see me within the first week of class to insure your full involvement in the course.

Required Readings

* Rose, T. 1999. *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*. St. Martin's Press: New York.

* Additional readings will be distributed in class or available via laulima.

Course Requirements

Assignments are designed to encourage critical thinking and to develop analytical and writing skills. Your course grade will be based on the following:

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is mandatory. Please come to class on time and plan on staying for the duration. Failure to prepare for class and persistent (and unexplained) failure to attend will result in a reduction of the overall grade. You will be allowed one unexcused absence. You will lose 2 points for every absence after that. Please call or email the instructor before missing class, if possible. Your absences will be reflected in the grade you receive for participation.

Participation involves speaking and active listening in class. Your participation grade will depend on a) keeping up with the reading and engaging the course material, b) contributing to large-class discussions and small-group discussions on a regular basis, and c) in-class writing assignments.

Readings: You must come to class having done the assigned reading(s). You cannot participate in the class discussions if you have not completed the readings and you are not in class. Also remember that the level of your participation in the discussions will also affect the grade of the facilitators, who put in considerable time and effort to generate discussion questions.

Writing Assignment: In order to reflect on the material discussed in class, the readings, and media, you will be writing two short papers (3-4 pages) critiquing song lyrics and a music video. You will receive a prompt for each writing assignment.

Midterm: The midterm exam will draw directly from lectures, readings, guest speakers, films, and class discussion.

Final Exam: The final is NOT cumulative. It will draw directly from lectures, readings, guest speakers, films, and class discussion since the midterm. The final exam is scheduled for Thursday, December 16, 12:00-2:00pm.

Class facilitation/creative project presentation: Each student will be assigned to a group responsible for leading one of the weekly discussion sessions using a creative project that reflects an understanding of key concepts proposed by the readings and music. This means that those of you who sign up as facilitators for the day will bring discussion questions to interrogate the readings and raise questions and issues around the material. You will need to meet with TA and/or Professor prior your presentation.

Policies:

Late papers

The dates on which the papers are due are firm deadlines. Late assignments will lose 2 points for every day it is late (this means if you turn in a 19-point paper a day late, the grade will be scaled down to a 17).

Plagiarism and academic integrity

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Student Conduct Code. Any work submitted by a student will be the student's own work. Copying or submitting other people's work, and/or not properly attributing ideas that are not original to you are considered plagiarism. A good rule of thumb is "if you have to ask if this is cheating, it probably is." Any infraction of the Student Conduct Code will lead to sanctions from the instructor (ranging from receiving a zero on an assignment to failure of the course and University disciplinary action).

Classroom discussion ground rules

Throughout the course, we will be examining complex issues about which most students have passionate feelings. We must be respectful and intellectually open to perspectives that may differ from our own. It is vital that we treat each other's comments and opinions with respect and courtesy even when they may conflict with yours. We must be careful not to personalize attacks to discredit or invalidate others' perspectives and positions. We must create a classroom environment that allows for productive and constructive discussion, where perspectives have the right to be argued, challenged, and defended in intellectual ways.

Grade Distribution

Attendance and Participation	10%
Writing Assignment #1 (Critique of Lyrics)	10%
Writing Assignment #2 (Critique of Music Video)	10%
Class facilitation/creative presentation	15%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%

COURSE OUTLINE

****NOTE:** The syllabus is subject to change at instructors' discretion**

Week 1: Introducing Hip Hop and Filipina/o America

- Aug 24 Overview of class; review syllabus; brief discussion on the Work of Representation
Aug 26 READ • Wang, Oliver. 2007. "Rapping and Repping Asian: Race, Authenticity, and the Asian American MC," in *Alien Encounters: Popular Culture and Asian America*, edited by Mimi Thi Nguyen and Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu.
LISTEN • Joe Bataan, Rap-O Clap-O; Joe Bataan, Ordinary Guy (Afro-Filipino); TopKat, AfroFilipino

Week 2: Hip Hop and Filipina/o America

- Aug 31 READ Bonus, Rick. 2000. "Filipinos and Filipinas in America," in *Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space*.
WATCH *Filipino Americans: Discovering Their Past for the Future*
Sep 2 READ San Buenaventura, "Filipino Immigration to the United States,"

Week 3:

- Sep 7 READ • Rose, Tricia. 1999. "All Aboard the Night Train': Flow, Layering, and Rupture in Postindustrial New York," in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.
Sep 9 READ • Rose, Tricia. 1999. "Soul Sonic Forces: Rap Music and Contemporary Black Cultural Production," in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.

Week 4:

- Sep 14 READ • Rose, Tricia. 1999. "Voices from the Margins: Technology, Orality and Black Cultural Practice in Rap Music," in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.
WATCH *Guns Show* by Tadashi Nakamura
LISTEN • Native Guns, "Champion," *Barrel Men*; Native Guns, "Handcuffs"
Sep 16 READ • Rose, Tricia. 1999. "Prophets of Rage: Rap Music and the Politics of Black Cultural Expression," in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.
WATCH • Bambu, "Pull It Back" ...*i Scream Bars for the Children...*
• Bambu, "Crooks and Rooks," ...*Exact Change...*

Week 5:

- Sep 21 READ • de Leon, Lakandiwa M. 2004. "Filipinotown and the DJ Scene: Expression and Identity Affirmation of Filipino American Youth in Los Angeles." In *Asian American Youth: Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity*, edited by Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou.
WATCH *Beats, Rhymes and Resistance: Pilipinos and Hip Hop in Los Angeles*
Sep 23 READ • Revilla, Linda. 1997. "Filipino American Identity: Transcending the Crisis," in *Filipino Americans: Transformation and Identity*, edited by Maria P. P. Root.
LISTEN • Deep Foundation, "Children of the Sun," *The First Draft*.

Week 6:

- Sep 28 READ • David, E. J. R. and Sumie Okazaki. 2006. "Colonial mentality: A Review and Recommendation for Filipino American Psychology." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*.
LISTEN • Native Guns, "Look in the Mirror," *Barrel Men*.
• Native Guns, "Slave Thinking," *Barrel Men*.

- Sep 30 READ • Rose, Tricia. 2008. "Hip Hop Demeans Women" and "Hip Hop Is Not Responsible for Sexism." *The Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop – and Why It Matters*.
 WATCH • Black Eyed Peas, "Bebot," *Monkey Business*.
 LISTEN • Black Eyed Peas, "Mare," *The E.N.D.*

Week 7:

- Oct 5 READ • Tintiangco-Cubales, Allyson. 2005. "Pinayism," *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory: Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience*.
 LISTEN • EyeASage, "Stilleto," *Married to the Hustle Mixtape*.
 • Rocky Rivera, "MRSHMLO," *Rocky Rivera*.
 • Hopie Spitshard feat. EyeASage, "Supernova," *The Diamond Dame*.

- Oct 7 READ • Samson, Frank. 2005. "Filipino American Men: Comrades in the Filipina/o American Feminist Movement," *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical Theory: Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience*.
 LISTEN • Blue Scholars, "Sagaba," *Blue Scholars*.
 • Bambu, "The Queen is Dead," *Paper Cuts*.

Week 8: The State of Filipina/o American hip hop

- Oct 12 READ • Rose, Tricia. 1999. "Bad Sistas: Black Women Rappers and Sexual Politics in Rap Music," in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.
 LISTEN • Rocky Rivera, "Heart," *Rocky Rivera*.
 Oct 14 READ • Pisares, Elizabeth. 2006. "Do You Mis(recognize) Me," in *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse*.
 LISTEN • EyeASage, "Married to the Hustle," *Married to the Hustle Mixtape*
 • Rocky Rivera, "MRSHMLO," *Rocky Rivera*.

Week 9:

- Oct 19 READ • Tiongson, Jr., Antonio T. 2006. "On the Politics of (Filipino) Youth Culture: Interview with Theodore S. Gonzalves," in *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse*.
 LISTEN • Blue Scholars, "Selfportrait," *Blue Scholars*.
 • EyeASage, "Resurrect," *Married to the Hustle Mixtape*.
 Oct 21 READ • Sison, Jose Maria. 2004. "The Global Situation and Revolutionary Internationalism," in *Jose Maria Sison: At Home in the World: Portrait of a Revolutionary, Conversations With Ninotchka Rosca*.
 LISTEN • Bambu, "Chairman Mao" ...i Scream Bars for the Children...
 • Bambu, "Spare Change," ...Exact Change...
Writing Assignment #1 Due

Week 10:

- Oct 26 READ • Rose, Tricia. 2008. "Mutual Denials in the Hip Hop Wars." *The Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop – and Why It Matters*.
 WATCH *Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*
 Oct 28 **Midterm Exam**

Week 11:

- Nov 2 READ • Bascara, Victor. 2005. "'Within Each Crack/A Story': The Political Economy of Queering Filipino American Pasts," in *East Main Street: Asian American Popular Culture*.
 LISTEN • Native Guns, "Immigrant," *Stray Bullets Mixtape*.

- Power Struggle, "Deporting the Pilgrim," *Hearts and Minds*.

Nov 4 READ • Rutledge, Renee. 2009. "The Struggle of Filipino Veterans." *Colorlines: The National Newsmagazine on Race and Politics*. <http://www.colorlines.com/article.php?ID=667&p=1>
 WATCH • Black Eyed Peas, "The Apl Song," *Elephunk*.
 WATCH • Son of Ran, "Death March/Veterano,"
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZLofLgisto&feature=search>

Week 12:

Nov 9 Guest Speakers: Bambu, Geologic aka Prometheus Brown, and Kiwi
 WATCH: *Sounds of a New Hope*
 Nov 11 READ • Mendoza, S, Lily. 2006. "A Different Breed of Filipino Balikbayans: The Ambiguities of (Re-) turning," in *Positively No Filipinos Allowed: Building Communities and Discourse*.
 LISTEN • Deep Foundation, "A Place Called Home."
 • Bambu, "Jeepney" ...i Scream Bars for the Children...
 • Bambu, "Home Cooked" ...i Scream Bars for the Children...

Week 13:

Nov 16 READ • España-Maram, Linda. 2008. "Making A Living: The Meanings of Work and the Struggles for Solidarity," in *Creating Masculinity in Los Angeles's Little Manila: Working-Class Filipinos and Popular Culture, 1920s-1950s*.
 LISTEN • Blue Scholars, "Proletariat Blues," *The Long March*.
 Nov 18 READ • Viola, Michael. 2006a. "Filipino American Hip-Hop and Class Consciousness: Renewing the Spirit of Carlos Bulosan." *MR Zine* (April 15). <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/viola150406.html>
 LISTEN • Native Guns, "Revolutionaries," *Stray Bullets Mixtape*.
 • Native Guns, "Work It," *Barrel Men*.

Week 14:

Nov 23 READ • Viola, Michael. 2006a. "Hip-Hop and Critical Revolutionary Pedagogy: Blue Scholarship to Challenge 'The Miseducation of the Filipino.'" *Journal of Critical Education Policy Studies* 4(2). <http://www.jceps.com/index.php?pageID=article&articleID=71>
 LISTEN • Blue Scholars, "No Rest For The Weary," *Blue Scholars*.
 • Blue Scholars, "Wounded Eyes," *The Long March*.
 • Blue Scholars, "Cornerstone," *The Long March*.
 • Blue Scholars, "Commencement Day," *The Long March*.
 Nov 25 READ • Brodtkin, Karen. 2007. "Making Identities Political." *Making Democracy Matter: Identity and Activism in Los Angeles*.
 LISTEN • Native Guns, "Seize The Time," *Stray Bullets Mixtape*.
 • Native Guns, "Hammer," *Barrel Men*.
 • Native Guns, "Overnight," *Stray Bullets Mixtape*.

Week 15:

Nov 30 READ • Said, Edward. 1980. "The Question of Palestine," in *The Question of Palestine*.
 LISTEN • Bambu, "When Will The Time Come?" *A Song For Ourselves Mixtape*.
 • Kiwi, "Gaza 2 Oakland," *A Song For Ourselves Mixtape*.
 • Bambu, "Guerra" ...i Scream Bars for the Children...
 Dec 2 READ • Rose, Tricia. 2008. "Six Guiding Principles for Progressive Creativity, Consumption, and Community in Hip Hop and Beyond." *The Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop – and Why It Matters*.
 • San Juan Jr., Epifanio (ed.). 1995. "Freedom From Want" and "If You Want To Know What We Are," in *On Becoming Filipino: Selected Writings of Carlos Bulosan*.

LISTEN • Kiwi, "Imagine," *Writes of Passage: Portraits of a Son Rising*.
• Blue Scholars, "Self Portrait," *Blue Scholars*.

Writing Assignment #2 Due

Week 16: Contemporary Issues

Dec 7 LISTEN • Native Guns, "Handcuffs"

Dec 9 READ • Forman, "Race and Place"

LISTEN • Bambu and Geologic aka Prometheus Brown, "Slow Down," *Paper Cuts*.
• Bambu, K-Luv, and Big Mox, "Slow Down (808 Remix)"