

CAALS CFPs for ALA 2018

The next American Literature Association Annual Conference will be held in San Francisco, CA, May 24–27, 2018. Below are CFPs for the five panels sponsored by the Circle for Asian American Literary Studies (CAALS), which will also hold its annual business meeting at the conference.

Please note that if your proposal is accepted and you agree to participate on a panel, you will need to become a member of CAALS prior to presenting, in addition to registering for the conference. For more information, please visit our website at <http://caals.org/>.

1. CFP: The Return to Asia in Asian American Literatures

Organized by the Circle for Asian American Literary Studies (CAALS)

Chair: Na-Rae Kim, Kennesaw State University

In contrast to stereotypes of Asian American migration patterns that presuppose America as the penultimate destination, Asian American literatures have long captured the multidirectional migrations of Asian Americans, challenging the shifting line between the citizen and the alien, the immigrant and the emigrant, the racialized and the white, and the national and the transnational.

This panel considers return migration to Asia in and through Asian American literature. How does Asian American literature challenge the presupposition of the point of origin and of return? How does it straddle the national and the transnational in constructing its literary contours? What are the moments that these representations are recuperated as quintessential American literature or diasporic Asian literature? Also, are there inherent features of literary genres that are transportable to other sociocultural contexts, or are there some that are only intrinsic to their locale? Does the nation attain a different form of legibility vis-à-vis certain literary conventions? In other words, how does Asian American literature bring to light the moments that the national contours of the state are concretized or stretched to include transnational subjects, topics, and literary forms?

This panel welcomes papers that grapple with return migration in a broad sense, whether representations of brief returns or permanent resettlements in Asia, or the migration of Asian American texts to Asia via publication, screening, or staging in Asia. Please email a proposal (max. 250 words) and a brief CV to Na-Rae Kim (nkim21@kennesaw.edu) by January 14, 2018. Be sure to mention any technological needs for your presentation.

2. CFP: Asian American Literature and Visual Texts

Organized by the Circle for Asian American Literary Studies (CAALS)

Chair: Laura Wright, University of Connecticut

Lisa Lowe's foundational *Immigrant Acts* (1996) reminds us that Asian American identity is characterized by "heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity," which are "attempts to name the

material contradictions that characterize Asian American groups” (67). From Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s *Dictee* in 1982 and Karen Tei Yamashita’s *I-Hotel* in 2010, this sense of “heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity” is apparent in the mix of media, particularly images, that these novels incorporate. As Asian American literature takes on new hybrid forms through visual texts, Lowe’s description is increasingly compelling for its assessment of how meaning emerges through difference and/or contradiction. For purposes of this panel, “visual texts” are defined broadly and include art, TV and cinema, and graphic novels. Visual texts can combine visual elements with the literary, merging word and image, or visually adapting the written word to make new arguments through their hybridity of media.

This panel invites papers that consider how visual texts use their hybrid forms to challenge or complicate racial representation. How do cross-media adaptations (i.e., memoir or novel to TV series or film) expand or crystallize racial formations? How do graphic novels reframe depictions of Asian Americans? How do visual texts challenge or complicate our understanding of historical contexts? What does this evolving form signal about larger changes in Asian American literature?

Please email a proposal (max. 250 words) and a brief CV to Laura Wright (laura.wright@uconn.edu) by January 14, 2018. Be sure to mention any technological needs for your presentation.

3. CFP: John Okada’s *No-No Boy*: 60 Years Later

Organized by The Circle for Asian American Literary Studies (CAALS)
Chairs: David Cho, Hope College, and Christine Kitano, Ithaca College

“*No-No Boy* has the honor of being among the first of what has become an entire literary canon of Asian American literature,” writes Ruth Ozeki in the foreword to the 2014 re-issue of John Okada’s novel. First published in 1957, *No-No Boy* gained no critical or popular reception until its rediscovery in the mid-1970s. Today it is widely taught in university and high school classrooms and is considered the first novel to take the effects of the Japanese American incarceration as its subject. In the current cultural and sociopolitical climate, the issues at stake in *No-No Boy* are more pressing than ever.

This panel invites papers on all aspects of John Okada’s life and work, including critical approaches to reading and interpreting *No-No Boy*, comparative approaches, pedagogical approaches, and papers that consider how the novel speaks to contemporary issues.

Please email a 250-300 word abstract to David Cho (cho@hope.edu) and Christine Kitano (ckitano@ithaca.edu) by January 14, 2018. Mention any technological needs in your abstract.

4. CFP: Refugee Counternarratives

Organized by the Circle for Asian American Literary Studies (CAALS)

Chair: Mai-Linh Hong, Bucknell University

The emerging interdisciplinary field of Critical Refugee Studies, pioneered by Yen Le Espiritu and others, urges scholars to take seriously refugees as “‘intentionalized beings’ who possess and enact their own politics as they emerge out of the ruins of war and its aftermath” (Espiritu, quoting Nicholas Mirzoeff). Such politics may emerge from works of literature and art that challenge, reframe, or strategically use dominant cultural narratives about refugees. This panel invites papers about literature, art, and film by refugees in the Asian diaspora (broadly defined), or papers that build upon Critical Refugee Studies scholarship with an emphasis on literary and cultural studies. We especially seek papers that explore: What narratives and counternarratives are most crucial to the work of Critical Refugee Studies? How do refugee-authored texts critique, reimagine, and reconstruct the social and political contours of refugee life? How do refugee counternarratives enable us to newly understand and articulate not only refugee experiences, but more broadly, the interrelations of nation, citizenship, empire, violence, and justice?

Please email abstract (250-300 words) and a brief CV to Mai-Linh Hong (mai-linh.hong@bucknell.edu) by January 14, 2018. Mention any technological needs in your abstract.

5. CFP: Asian American Histories and Citizenship: Concepts of Legality in Literature

Organized by the Circle for Asian American Literary Studies (CAALS)

Chair: Krupal Amin, The Ohio State University

Asian American literary studies has a long history of contesting definitions of citizenship in the United States. Various developments in immigration and exclusion laws specific to Asian immigrants have changed the groups they target, but these laws share many similarities. Victor Bascara sums these histories up succinctly: “Blatantly racist laws disallowed the naturalization of immigrants from Asia, ensuring their subsequent ineligibility to own land under Alien Land laws. Privacy, property, and citizenship went together, as did disenfranchisement and exploitation.” We are interested in how Asian American literature responds to these legal histories.

As a response to painful and contested histories, this panel will broadly address the following questions: How has the trajectory of Asian American literature reflected legal developments over time? How do Asian Americans and Asian diasporic communities reflect the trajectory of the field? What kinds of dialogues take place between the Asian American literary canon and the broader concept of U.S. citizenship?

The recognition of specific gender, class, and racial differences within Asian American communities has spurred heated arguments about levels of citizenship. We have seen how the “alien” has worked its way into fiction as well as how that very fiction has reflected tensions in the literary community in regards to citizenship and recognition. Specifically, we see tensions in the ways Asian American bodies occupy a liminal space of both belonging and integration as

they simultaneously experience rejection and tolerance. Asian diasporic histories grow increasingly complicated and layered; major historical events have continually shaped our conception of the literature and what it even means to have a recognized body of literature. This panel invites considerations of a wide range of Asian American texts such as fiction, poetry, film, journalism, memoir, or activist writing, and encourages intersections with critical ethnic studies, feminist studies, queer studies, disability studies, and environmental studies.

Please email a 250-300 word abstract of your paper to Krupal Amin (krupalamin@gmail.com) by January 14, 2018. Be sure to mention any technological needs for your presentation on your abstract.