

2025 AAAS Student Research Symposium

Hosted by the Department of Asian and
Asian American Studies
In Partnership with University Libraries

Wednesday, May 7th, 2025



Stony Brook University

2025 AAAS
Student Research Symposium
Hosted by the Department of Asian and Asian
American Studies
In Partnership with University Libraries
Panels & Schedule

Welcome

12:00 -12:05 pm

Janet Clarke, University Libraries
Eriko Sato, Asian & Asian American Studies

Panel 1

12:05-12:30 pm

“Careful the Things You Say, Children Will Listen”: How Chinese American Parents Influence Anti-Black Racial Attitudes Based on Their Child’s Gender
Presenter: **Kaya Rexford**, Asian & Asian American Studies/Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Advisor: Sandra So Hee Chi Kim

Where Can Queer Go?: The Price of Nonconformity and the Embrace of Nature in the Face of Patriarchy

Presenter: **Grace Sargent**, Graduate student in English

Advisor: Jeffrey Santa Ana

12:30-12:35 pm Discussant: Nerissa Balce

12:35-12:45 pm Discussion & Q&A



Panel 2

12:45-1:25 pm

Capturing the Spirits of Japan: Life and Impact of Lafcadio Hearn's Kwaidan

Presenter: **Alexandria Locke**, Biology/Japanese Studies & **Meghan Mallia**, Political Science/Japanese Studies

Advisor: Eva Nagase

The East Villages of New York and Beijing as Sites of Contemporary Chinese Art

Presenter: **Yulong Hu**, Graduate student in Art History and Criticism

Advisor: Andrew Uroskie and Sohl Lee

“Find God!”: The Blinding Light of the Sufi and Bhakti Devotional Paths

Presenter: **Naomi Kirkup**, Asian & Asian American Studies/China Studies/Religious Studies/South Asian Studies

Advisor: Atsuko Oyama

1:25-1:30 pm Discussant: E.K. Tan

1:30-1:40 pm Discussion & Q&A

Panel 3

1:40-2:05 pm

Japanese Courses in the SUNY System: Their Modalities and Potential Outcomes

Presenter: **Veronica Peck**, Graduate student in Contemporary Asian & Asian American Studies

Advisor: Eriko Sato & Gregory Ruf

Is Egui the New Yabai?: Generational Differences and Semantic Shift

Presenter: **Ayaka Mayo**, Graduate student in Contemporary Asian & Asian American Studies

Advisor: Atsuko Oyama

2:05-2:10 pm Discussant: Eva Nagase

2:10-2:20 pm Discussion & Q&A

2:25 pm Closing Atsuko Oyama, Asian & Asian American Studies

Abstracts

Panel 1

Kaya Rexford

“Careful the Things You Say, Children Will Listen”: How Chinese American Parents Influence Anti-Black Racial Attitudes Based on Their Child’s Gender

This research addresses how Chinese American sons and daughters develop anti-Black racial attitudes from their parent’s own attitudes on race. The goal is to understand parents’ racial attitudes and the racial messages they send based on their child’s gender. This will be achieved by distinguishing the mother and father’s racial attitudes, classifying the combination of racial attitudes, and evaluating each combination’s influence on their children. A mixed-method approach will be used by combining surveys and interviews to span over the course of 5 months. The expected outcomes would be fathers’ racial attitudes influence their sons and mothers racial attitudes influence their daughters. The broader significance of this research is to potentially lead to minimizing anti-Blackness in the Chinese American community.

Grace Sargent

Where Can Queer Go?: The Price of Nonconformity and the Embrace of Nature in the Face of Patriarchy

Patriarchal societies foster an environment that privileges groups of people it deems elite, while punishing those who are unable to fit their established criteria. There are numerous forms in which this discrimination manifests; some of the most prominent examples include toxic masculinity, misogyny, sexual entitlement, and exclusivity as perpetuated by dominant heteropatriarchal culture. Although there are numerous minority groups who find themselves facing extreme prejudice, my research seeks to analyze the experiences queer people specifically share within a patriarchal society. My argument functions under the definition of “queer” as a term referring to any individual defying current dominant notions of how the normative person is expected to behave. The narratives of Asian and Asian American authors, such as Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian* and Ocean Vuong’s novel *On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous*, work to uncover the mental turmoil inflicted upon ostracized people struggling to survive under the weight of patriarchal standards. These narratives not only address the aforementioned struggles of people who upset systems with their nonconformity—they also uncover the unique circumstances that cultivate an intimate relationship between queer people and nature. Patriarchal ideals, though now heavily intertwined with societal standards, have been socially constructed and are therefore absent from nature; natural environments are then able to provide queer people with a space in which they are free from the bigotry of a patriarchal society. My findings bring to the forefront the accepting and tender qualities of nature that provide queer people a newfound sense of belonging.

Panel 2

Alexandria Locke & Meghan Mallia

Capturing the Spirits of Japan: Life and Impact of Lafcadio Hearn's Kwaidan

The Kwaidan is a collection of stories passed down throughout Japan, filled with depictions of the strange and supernatural. The anthology was collected and translated by the notable professor, Lafcadio Hearn, who moved to Japan in 1890, and began to acquire various preternatural tales from regions around the nation. The stories that have been passed down and have haunted civilians for centuries continue to be an impactful and profound piece of Japanese culture. Tales such as “Mimi Nashi Hoichi” and “Yuki-onna” encapsulate the true peculiarities of the Kwaidan and the hold it still has on society today.

This presentation aims to bring to light the importance and influence Lafcadio Hearn's Kwaidan has on not only Japanese culture, but how it cultivated further understanding of Japanese culture.

Yulong Hu

The East Villages of New York and Beijing as Sites of Contemporary Chinese Art

Contemporary Chinese art in the late 20th century emerged from diverse sites and even multitudinous concepts of site that refer to more than geographic locationality. A site could be a communal village of like-minded artists, a temporary apartment, or even an object embodying deeper connections—like a mirror reflecting Beijing's rapidly evolving cityscape. Video recordings of everyday life also represented conceptual architecture, capturing urban transformation through a lens of time and space. This project investigates such significant Contemporary Chinese art in the late 20th century emerged from diverse sites and even multitudinous concepts of site that refer to more than geographic locationality. A site could be a communal village of like-minded artists, a temporary apartment, or even an object embodying deeper connections—like a mirror reflecting Beijing's rapidly evolving cityscape. Video recordings of everyday life also represented conceptual architecture, capturing urban transformation through a lens of time and space. This project investigates such significant sites in contemporary Chinese art history, focusing on the underexplored yet vital role of site-specific installations, performances, and public art. My case studies primarily examine photography, performance, and video art from the 1990s, revealing how urbanization and globalization shaped artistic expression. In doing so, I explore sites outside of China and sites not according to provinces or nations, but rather cities and even more narrow neighborhoods.

Naomi Kirkup

“Find God!”: The Blinding Light of the Sufi and Bhakti Devotional Paths

This paper explains what the devotional paths of the *Bhakti Movement* and *Sufism* are, in response to their being overlooked, misunderstood, and under-researched. Through close textual analysis of primary sources of prominent thinkers—especially Ibn al-Arabi, Rumi, Kabir, and other Bhakti poets—it highlights common themes and nuanced differences. This paper pursues three primary objectives: to elucidate the nature of the devotional paths within *Sufism* and the *Bhakti Movement*, to analyze their comparative dynamics, and to confront common misconceptions by offering a more accurate interpretive framework. As a side effect, this paper provides the tools for a reader to find God.

We researched, in this paper, by means of content and comparative textual analysis of primary texts, what the devotional paths of these traditions are and how they both compare and contrast. I did so by utilizing syntax, meaning, and theme. This paper is part of an effort to contribute material to academia in response to a lack of topical research and to make it more accessible to the general public.

This paper finds a spectrum of devotional paths, with Sufism slightly leaning one way and Bhakti to the other. Interestingly, Rumi and Kabir are found to be more near the middle but leaning opposite their own traditions. The key point of difference is that Sufism is bound by Islamic dogma and the Bhakti Movement lacks centralized doctrine. The key point of similarity is the assertion of Unity. Importantly, devotion is founded upon knowledge and gives birth to Love.

Panel 3

Veronica Peck

Japanese Courses in the SUNY System: Their Modalities and Potential Outcomes

It's been established that remote course offerings increase educational accessibility. This is especially the case when discussing accessibility of foreign language learning; such courses give students access to a language that may not be present in their local community, and instructors the ability to teach far outside of their local community. With that in mind, how many remote Japanese courses are available in the SUNY system? What levels, and which modes are they offered in? And what modalities work best for developing which skills? This is the beginning of a larger study seeking to understand how remote course modality (synchronous or asynchronous) can impact a Japanese student's communicative competence.

Ayaka Mayo

Is Egui the New Yabai?: Generational Differences and Semantic Shift

This study investigates the Japanese slang word *egui* and its use across generations and social situations. Originally, *egui* described something harsh or cruel, but it has recently become more common in casual speech among younger speakers, often used to express strong emotions such as surprise or admiration. This paper compares *egui* to *yabai*, an older slang term that has undergone semantic broadening and is now used positively and negatively by people of all ages.

To understand how *egui* functions in contemporary Japanese, I conducted an online survey with 52 native Japanese speakers ranging from their twenties to fifties, with some participants in other age groups as well. The survey included situational prompts and questions about the use and impressions of *egui* and *yabai* in different contexts. The findings indicate that *egui* is most commonly used by people in their thirties, particularly in casual, peer-based conversations. However, due to the small number of younger respondents, this trend may reflect the sample rather than an age-specific pattern. While *egui* is still often used negatively, many participants—especially younger speakers—reported using it in positive ways similar to *yabai*. These results suggest that *egui* is in the early stages of semantic shift, gradually becoming a more flexible and expressive word among younger generations. Further research with a broader sample is needed to confirm these trends and understand the continued evolution of *egui*.