

**Stony Brook University
The Graduate School**

Doctoral Defense Announcement

Abstract

In Search of a Past Future: Repoliticizing Asian American Identity and Culture

By

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Asian American postmodernist politics essentially emerges from the site of its own nullification. This paradoxical generation of Asian American postmodernist politics is associated with the now familiar illogic that calls for the strategic use of essentialism. The nomination of *Asian American*, a designation that recalls the politicization of diverse Asian groups into a collectivity during the 70s in U.S. history, appears in the form an after-thought in Asian American critical discourse. The fundamental question this dissertation explores involves the status of this very after-thought that has become a politics. It is my contention that lodged in this strategy of essentialism, though minority/postcolonial discourse owes much to the insights drawn from post-structuralist critique, is a particular ontology of politics that works to depoliticize minoritarian politics.

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