



Institute for Korean Studies

한국학 연구소

Nationalist Frames of Memory and The Korean War:

The National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian and The War Memorial of Seoul

a lecture by

Daniel Y. Kim

Associate Professor of English, Brown University



Tuesday, February 25, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Multicultural Center, Ohio Union, 1739 N. High St.

IKS LECTURE SERIES

A curious similarity between two state-sponsored sites of historical memory examined in this lecture—the War Memorial of Seoul and the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC—is that both present the Korean War as an event whose meaning is discernible only insofar as it is contextualized in relation to other wars. In *The Price of Freedom: Americans at War*, a permanent exhibit at the National Museum of American History in the Smithsonian, the Korean War section comprises a small corner room that sits between the monumental exhibits devoted to the Second World War and the Vietnam War. That conflict is reduced to either an echo or foreshadowing of another war, its meaning crowded out by the other, more significant conflicts that preceded and followed it. Ironically, a similar dependence on framing characterizes the place of the Korean War in the War Memorial of Seoul. While the conflict functions as the centerpiece and climactic event in that exhibit, the sections devoted to a centuries-long history of repelling foreign invaders as well as to the South Korean involvement in Vietnam are in fact indispensable to explaining the Korean War's significance.

Daniel Y. Kim is Associate Professor of English at Brown University where he teaches classes in Asian American literature, American literature and Ethnic Studies. He is the author of *Writing Manhood in Black and Yellow: Ralph Ellison, Frank Chin, and the Literary Politics of Identity* (Stanford University Press, 2006). He is currently working on a book provisionally titled *The Korean War in Color: Race, Nation, and the Intimacies of Conflict*, which examines cultural representations of what has come to be known as “the forgotten war” with a particular focus on the interlocking domestic and transnational histories of race and empire that constellate around this historical event. An essay based on material from this project was published in the journal, *American Literary History*. His articles have also appeared in the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, *Novel* and *Criticism*. He is also co-editor of the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Asian American Literature*.

Dr. Kim will also conduct a manuscript workshop for Lynn Itagaki's *Racial Burnout: The Crisis of Civil Racism at the End of the Millennium* on Tuesday, February 25 from 11:00 -12:30 p.m. in 168 Dulles Hall. To receive a copy of the manuscript, please RSVP to aas@osu.edu. Lunch will be served.



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