

The Department of Comparative Cultural Studies  
presents:

# THE MAKING OF NORTH KOREAN AMERICANS IN THE AFTERLIFE OF U.S. COLD WAR CULTURAL POLITICS



Dr. Kim examines the cultural and legal ways North Korean refugees are now being groomed to become an assimilable population to the United States, with a focus on two Korean American texts that were published in 2015: North Korean defector Yeonmi Park's memoir, *In Order to Live: A North Korean Girls' Journey to Freedom*, and Korean American writer Suki Kim's investigative journalism book, *Without You There is no Us: My Time with the Sons of North Korea's Elite*. She argues that the North Korean people are increasingly being recognized and imagined as a potential next wave of immigrant Americans, or, more precisely, Asian Americans, even though there is a simultaneous political and societal refusal to practically actualize this possibility. Her analysis demonstrates that contemporary representations of North Korea narrativize a Cold War legacy pattern of rehabilitation. Recognizing this calls on us to re-think current humanitarian and human rights frameworks in conceptualizing North Koreans, the subject division between immigrant/refugee, and the function of "empathy" in producing a North Korean subject in the American imaginary.

**Na-Rae Kim, PhD**

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2022  
12:00 - 1:30 PM

FARISH HALL 215



Comparative Cultural Studies  
College of Liberal Arts  
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