Institute for Korean Studies Event

Monica Kim

“Making a Prisoner for War: Examining the Korean War Armistice from Behind and Beyond the Barbed-wire Fence”

Wednesday, April 17, 2013
12:30 p.m.
Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Ave., Columbus, OH 43201

To register for this event, RSVP on Eventbrite by Monday, April 15, 2013. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Ann Powers at powers.108@osu.edu.

Monica Kim is assistant professor at University at Albany (SUNY) and a Mellon postdoctoral fellow at University of Pennsylvania. Her research and teaching interests lie in U.S. and global race relations, modern East Asian and Asian American history, and international legal history.

Her current book project, Humanity Interrogated: The Wars over War in the Interrogation Room, 1942-1960, examines the relationship between two global phenomena that have critically marked the history of the 20th century -- international warfare and formal decolonization -- through the prism of military interrogation rooms of the Korean War, where the legal figure of the prisoner of war became the site of protracted struggles to invent the “liberated” subject of a decolonized Asia in the early 1950s.

She has a BA from Yale University and PhD in history from University of Michigan.

Abstract
In light of 2013 being the 60th anniversary of the armistice signing, I turn our attention to the very controversy that prolonged the ceasefire negotiations at Panmunjom for 18 straight months: POW repatriation. Although scholars have often dismissed the POW controversy as a footnote or a propaganda ploy, I will contend that the controversy, upon closer examination, reveals the limits of international laws of war in front of decolonization. From the vantage point of the largest United Nations Command POW camp on Koje Island, I will re-examine
the workings and consequences of the armistice to suggest ways for understanding the legacies of a war that has still not officially ended.