

Producing Race in the University: Asian Racialization, Whiteness, and the Pedagogical Politics of Cultural Studies

**Dr. Aaron Teo | University of Southern
Queensland**



This talk examines how contemporary Cultural Studies is shaped by institutional and political pressures while confronting demands for engaged public pedagogies. Focusing on the racialization of settler colonial Asian identities and insights from critical whiteness theory, Dr. Teo explores how universities produce and regulate knowledge about race. Further, by considering how Asian racialization has been alternately hypervisible and marginalized within Western academic discourse, the talk interrogates how institutional norms reproduce racial hierarchies prejudicial to this racialized group through curriculum design, hiring and promotion practices, and standards of “neutral” scholarship. He also considers tensions between academic insularity and public scholarship, asking whether Cultural Studies can contribute meaningfully to debates on race despite institutional constraints. In doing so, this talk highlights the field’s role in fostering critical reflection on power, representation, and accountability.

**Tuesday
7 July 2026
6:15 – 7:45 pm
(CEST)
Room 8**

Aaron Teo is a Critical Sociologist of Education at the University of Southern Queensland and a 2026 Bonn International Fellow. He serves on the Australian Human Rights Commission’s Anti-Racism Education Reference Group and the Australian Association for Research in Education’s Research Development Advisory Committee. He is editor of *Critical Studies in Education*, convenor of the AARE Social Justice Special Interest Group, and Queensland convenor of the Asian Australian Alliance. His research examines the raced and gendered subjectivities of Asian migrant communities in Australia, focusing on migration, racism, sexism, critical Asia literacy, multiculturalism and critical pedagogies in predominantly white educational spaces.