

to the SHS adults' fear of drugs in their school, to the way SHS is reminiscent of Columbine High School (which calls on very different images of violence than inner city violence), to the complex gender and sexual overtones of the film *Pleasantville*—that the nascent focus on race as a driving factor for our culture of fear is muted. Here and elsewhere, readers are left impressed by the variety of methods and analyses in *Punishing Schools* and by the overall argument even as we struggle to connect the ethnographic data, the readings of cultural texts, the history of a state educational school system and of two individual schools, and the multiple theoretical focuses employed by the authors.

As a reader, then, I sometimes want Lyons and Drew to pull the pieces of their analysis together more definitively, but I also see their study as significant because its analyses raise so many variables affecting public education today. Ultimately, one of the book's greatest strengths is that it challenges us to question how we can accumulate complex, multi-layered forms of data about education—the kind we need to understand our schools in an ethically responsible way—and tie this data together in persuasive arguments for multiple audiences: academics, the general public, politicians, and parents. If the various forces affecting education will never be subject to neat, comprehensive analyses, how will we get such disparate audiences to listen to our multi-layered arguments, when those espousing simple (if less helpful) solutions are more easily heard? Lyons and Drew have not resolved this issue, but their ability to provide provocative theoretical and historical analyses along with detailed observation and close readings of texts compels us to think hard about the power corporate and state interests maintain over schools and how difficult the battle to limit this power will be.

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*Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie (解读英语饼): The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric* by LuMing Mao. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2006.

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LuMing Mao's *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric* is the first theoretical endeavor that conceptualizes Chinese American rhetoric as a living rhetoric, an endeavor liberating to a group of border residents—Chinese Americans. The last two decades have witnessed exhilarating development of studies of Chinese rhetoric, for example, the works of Mary Garrett, Xing Lu, Xiaoye You, and others. Interest-

ingly, although the majority of Chinese rhetoric scholars are border residents in the U.S., until Mao's book, none of our scholarship has approached Chinese American rhetoric as its own kind, a hybrid that, like the fortune cookie (to repeat Mao's metaphor), has evolved from both Chinese and American cultures and presents itself only in English in the U.S. Indeed, among us—scholars on the rhetorical borderland, Mao is the first to examine and define Chinese American rhetoric in its own right.

Reading *Chinese Fortune Cookie* has developed from Mao's years of work on Chinese rhetoric since the early 1990s. His naming of Chinese American rhetoric as "togetherness in difference" reflects his daily interactions with his mainstream American students and colleagues as well as his involvement in scholarly and civic activities. Throughout the book, Mao lets readers feel his dilemma and triumph when he painstakingly reflects on his and other Chinese Americans' rhetorical practices both in the real and literary worlds. Mao's book maps out a complicated rhetorical borderland between Chinese Americans and their Euro-American counterparts, a rhetoric landscape "infused with conflicts, contestations, and ambiguities" (3). Therefore, in a sense, this book counts for more than a pure scholarly effort; Mao's case studies show that he, a Chinese American, is the living embodiment of the rhetoric, and what he studies is a rhetoric for life. However, until recently, this rhetoric has often been studied through dualism and paradoxes, which, as Mao rightly points out, sometimes overemphasize differences between Chinese and American traditions and sometimes ignore essential differences to sustain a hope for harmonious co-existence.

Moving beyond the dualism and paradoxes, Mao characterizes the making of Chinese American rhetoric as "articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (3), moments of negotiations and creations in the daily borderland life. As a living example, Mao decides, though not without hesitation, to flout the English grammatical convention for the book title, "Reading of Chinese Fortune Cookie," to recreate the hybrid rhetoric visually and to return to the Chinese convention wherein nouns are never preceded by articles. The book title then reflects precisely the author's status as a border-straddling rhetorical practitioner, who is neither an exile nor an immigrant anymore because of his increasingly critical and refreshing perspectives on his original and host cultures, both of which have enabled him to think outside linguistic conventions and to transform them through his discursive practice. At the same time, the fortune cookie as an analogy to Chinese American rhetoric accurately reveals the nature of the hybrid rhetoric—a unique U.S. product of Chinese immigrants' consistent and conscientious realignment, participation, and transformation in the host culture.

Unraveling the making of the fortune cookie in the opening chapter, Mao starts a daunting task to delve into the established analytical categories that, to some extent, have stereotyped and misrepresented Chinese and Chinese American rhetoric for decades. For example, face, harmony, interdependence, and indirection are often used to teach and analyze Chinese rhetoric (Gao and Ting-Toomey; Oliver). Recognizing that these features are visible in Chinese rhetoric, Mao reexamines these categories one by one, as they resurface in the U.S., intertwined with the Euro-American rhetorical tradition. In all of the six chapters, he carefully delineates the intricacies woven into the fabrics of Chinese American rhetoric to dispel misunderstandings and misconceptions. In doing so, Mao's highly analytical approach deviates largely from traditional rhetorical criticism dominated by the matter-of-fact logical reasoning distanced from the author's personal voice. In a strong personal voice and with great candor, he shares his rhetorical dilemmas in the classroom and his reading of Chinese-American rhetoric literature and civil rights activism.

For example, to illustrate Chinese face (脸, 面子) as a dynamic rhetorical concept, Mao reveals his thoughts about teaching in a strong personal voice:

In order for me to earn my 脸, I must comply with all the necessary conventions and requirements associated with good, effective teaching, . . . must meet and exceed the expectations of my students. . . . Because of this strong normative and communal connotation associated with 脸, any loss of my 脸 necessarily erodes . . . my 面子—that is, my reputation, my prestige. (40)

Furthermore, to explain “how Chinese indirection acquires its new form and content as it grapples with the logic of European American directness,” Mao uses his teaching moments again as well. Many of his mainstream American students enjoyed Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* but were puzzled by her narrative development. Mao utilizes these moments of discomfort and confusion to help his students realize that their classroom is part of rhetorical borderlands where they must learn to negotiate with other perspectives both in fiction and in the classroom. Indeed, while literary critics have approached *The Woman Warrior* from all sorts of standpoints—feminist, cultural, historical, and more—only Mao reveals that the voice which Kingston has chosen to tell stories may result from the interlocking tension between Chinese and American rhetorical traditions, a hybrid rhetoric confusing to many critics and students who are conditioned by the Euro-American literary framework emphasizing transparent and causal progression. On a different level, Mao's personal

accounts also add pedagogical meanings to the dynamic rhetorical interactions between the Chinese American professor and his mainstream American students. These accounts remind us that the composition classroom is indeed a rhetorical borderland where both the instructor and students must read and write from diverse, even opposite, perspectives. Therefore, Mao's book would be fitting for graduate seminars in comparative studies of rhetoric and literature. It is also a must-read for scholars in Asian American studies.

Mao's reflection, however, does not stop at teaching practices. He takes the making of Chinese American rhetoric from the writing classroom to the street. Analyzing the speech acts of his fellow Chinese Americans in Cincinnati, Ohio, who deployed a different, non-confrontational "protest rhetoric" to combat racism and reclaim discourse agency, Mao demonstrates that mainstream American rhetoric has much to learn from highly performative Chinese American rhetoric. In 2003, an urban redevelopment consultant proposed to the Cincinnati Over-the-Rhine Chamber "never to rent to Chinese restaurants" (124). Against this racist proposal, the Cincinnati Chinese community strategically combined Western directness and Chinese indirection to deploy a non-confrontational, correlative rhetoric that ended up with creating "a confident, respectable 脸 for the Chinese community," saving 面子 for the City Council, terminating the contract with the racist consultant, and protecting the common interests of the Cincinnati community as well. Mao's analysis sheds light on the border residents' awareness of the powerful relationship between the word and the world and on the transformations that the Chinese American rhetoric can bring to mainstream American rhetoric.

In conclusion, *Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric* is written with great care and exquisiteness. In the intentionally-chosen personal voice, Mao's conceptualization of Chinese American rhetoric as "togetherness-in-difference" properly defines this emerging ethnic rhetoric. Reexamining commonly-used terminologies in Chinese rhetoric, Mao further reveals their complexity in practice and demonstrates that features like face, indirection, and interdependence indicate no deficiency but difference, which, if deployed properly, can create togetherness, a correlative perspective that American society needs for conversation and collaboration.

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The book title, "Reading Chinese Fortune Cookie," for instance, exemplifies such a rhetorical practice in the borderland. While message-stuffed pastry is a covert means of communication in ancient China, serving fortune cookies as dessert, only seen in American restaurants, reflects a European-American practice. Reading the stuffed message while enjoying the cookies at the end of a Chinese meal therefore constitutes a hybridized rhetorical practice. Interestingly, Mao practices the hybrid rhetoric when structuring his book. Mao then demonstrates the making of this rhetoric in the next four chapters. In chapter two, "Face to Face: Chinese and American Rhetoric," Mao focuses on instances of "face work" in cross-cultural contexts.