English 1B **Book Club Presentation: Details**

**What to cover**: You are presenting your book to the class, with exposition, analysis, and evaluation all part of the task. I won’t absolutely require that you use visual aids, but I strongly recommend that you have something beyond just your voices. You can use the smart room technology as I do. (More on this below.) This doesn’t need to be really elaborate, but making a good presentation will require at least a little research and preparation, aside from just reading the book. This is one reason I have you working in teams.

* **Plot**: This should be BRIEF. Tell us what the book is about, major plot points, maybe the parts you liked the best. Discuss how the choices of which episodes to “explode” (tell in detail) might have been intended to shape the audience’s response to the story.
* **Personal voice**: With two exceptions (*Richistan* and *Outcasts United*), all of your books are written as personal memoirs told in the first person (“I” and “me” rather than “he” and “him”). So they are basically doing what you did in your personal essay except they are telling a longer story.

Tell your audience what that personal voice sounded like. How does the narrator come across as a person? What is the prevailing tone, if there is one? You might select a short passage to read that has a characteristic tone. How would it affect the book if it were switched to a third-person voice?

* **Writing about Culture:** In most of these books, there is at least a minor element of what sociologists call “ethnography,” that is, writing about culture, particularly about subgroups that have a culture separate from the main culture. This element is least evident in *The Film Club* (though you could say it examines the home-schooler subculture), and it is strongest in *Richistan*, which is composed of one ethnography after another (people who want to be butlers, people who own yachts, “new money” versus “old money,” and so on). It is also very significant in *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*.

Tell your audience what groups are examined in your book, and share some key insights that the writer makes about them. You might also notice something about a group that the writer shows but doesn’t draw our attention to.

* **Critical Reception**: This is about what the professional book critics said about the book. Although some of these books got more attention than others, you will be able to find at least some reviews on each of them. You might also find published interviews with the writer and maybe video clips of the author being interviewed on a news website or on You Tube. You can also include the sort of amateur reviews you can find on Amazon or Barnes & Noble websites, though these are usually less reliable and less sophisticated.
* **Cultural Impact:** Has your book had an impact on the public discourse, maybe even on public policy? Two books that didn’t get chosen this semester (*Desert Flower* and *Three Cups of Tea*) definitely did affect history. Of this semester’s crop, the Tiger Mother one has made the biggest splash nationally, and others have made significant impacts locally (*The Pact’s* influence on Newark, New Jersey, for instance).

How can you gauge your book’s impact? You can simply do a Google search with your book’s title and “impact” as a search term. (Doing this with the Tiger Mother book got hits as various as a personal blog on a website about mothering and an article on the UCSD website with charts and graphs, written by an economics professor.) You can see if the author was interviewed in high profile places (Charlie Rose, Oprah, Stephen Colbert), whether their books are being read and discussed on campuses (Google the book title and “campus”) or as an all-state-reads-one-book selection, and whether a foundation has been set up as a result of the book (e.g. fugeesfamily.com for Outcasts United).

* **Follow-up:** Some of these books create a strong attachment in the audience for the writer and/or for the people they write about, so it would be nice if you could tell us what happened to them after the book ended. Did Jesse ever finish his formal schooling? Is Luma still coaching? Is Daoud Hari safe now, even if his country is still a disaster zone?

**Written Portion of the Presentation (Due before the presentation):**

* **An outline:** This means a brief overview of what you will cover in your talk, with some of the best nuggets of information. For example, in the Critical Reception section, you should include some significant quotes from some of the most important reviews, cited. The other sections should have a short paragraph each with the most important information about each. If one of the categories just doesn’t work for your book, just say so briefly.
* **Format:** This must be TYPED, and it should have every group member’s name on it.
* **Grading:** The written portion will be graded collectively, though I will make some attempt to buffer the hard-working, consistent students from the weaker performance of the less reliable members, if obvious discrepancies exist. It is worth 20 points (for each of you). **Due 4/16**
* Also: There will also be a short in-class writing assignment due on presentation days, so please plan to be there on day two, even if you are not presenting.

**Judging the presentation:**

**Criteria for the Oral Presentations**: (In approximate order of importance):

* **Thoroughness** of research (esp. with critical reception & cultural impact) and in covering the topics
* **Clarity** in explaining personal voice & ethnography elements
* **Balance between** **conciseness and thoroughness** in presenting your information, Balance of work among group members.

**Visual Aids**: Spiffy graphics and audio/visual support are not required but will be appreciated, as long as they don’t take up too much time fiddling with the technology. If you want to show us a *short* video (say, something that gives us a sense of the writer’s personality), that’s fine. You might also want to call up the book’s website if it has useful materials, such as a map of Darfur, brief profiles of the 3 doctors, or a list of Luma’s rules. In some cases they can help in the “thoroughness” category. On the other hand, this isn’t a speech class, so don’t stress too much about making a detailed power point presentation or shooting your own You Tube spot. You might also want to make a handout, maybe with the chart defining the 3 levels of Richistan, with their annual expenses, or you could put that on a laptop and project it as I do.