

Author shares perspective

■ Journalist Helen Zia hosts a reception and book reading Tuesday, offering a unique look at the history and emergence of Asian-American culture

By Lisa Toth
Oregon Daily Emerald

From her personal memoirs to the voices of South Asian taxicab drivers, award-winning journalist and former executive editor of Ms. Magazine Helen Zia read from her recently published book "Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People" at a reception Tuesday evening.

Zia's presentation was one of a wide variety of events taking place this week during the University's International Week.

The reading and reception was presented by The Women's Law Forum, the Asian Pacific American Law Students' Association, the Asian Pacific Students' Association, the Eugene 4J School District Multicultural Equity Office, the Eugene Association Minority Affairs Committee, Asian Pacific Americans Supporting the Arts, Paper Traders in the Fifth Street Public Market and the Chinese

Consolidation Benevolent Association.

Zia has been on tour the last two weeks, visiting 12 cities nationwide. She said she was prompted to go on tour because mid-list trade books such as hers, which are not expected to be Stephen King best sellers, need to have authors marketing their books so they do not go out of print.

Zia said her book targets any American reader interested in

“We need to give an honest depiction of who we are.”

Helen Zia
Author and journalist

American history and the dynamics of the various peoples in America.

“So many American stories are what I call M.I.H., or missing in history, and my book is an attempt to reclaim past as well as modern day contemporary stories of Asian-American people,” she said.

Zia said she wrote the book in a way that would let readers feel as if they were walking into her living room and having a real conversation about a vibrant community of Asian-Americans, which she said is so poorly understood.

The title of her book describes “the coming of age of Asian-Americans.” Zia said her book is about the American people and American dreams, with the particular twist that Asian-Americans have these dreams.

Zia said the story is about the rise of Asian-Americans as a politically and socially influential racial group. It is written in the form of a journalistic chronicle of key events and personal essays, which recount her own journey to pan-Asian awareness.

“All Americans share certain ideals -- a dream of equality, a dream of living to their potential, a dream of freedom and hope for their families and future generations,” she said. “Asian-Americans and recent immigrants to America also have this dream.”

The book examines the stereotypes toward Asian-Americans, the Los Angeles riots and civil disturbances of 1992 and the murder of Vincent Chan, a Chinese-American, by two white autoworkers who believed he was Japanese.

Zia said she wanted her book to give a real portrayal of Asian-Americans and incorporate “the good, bad and the ugly.”

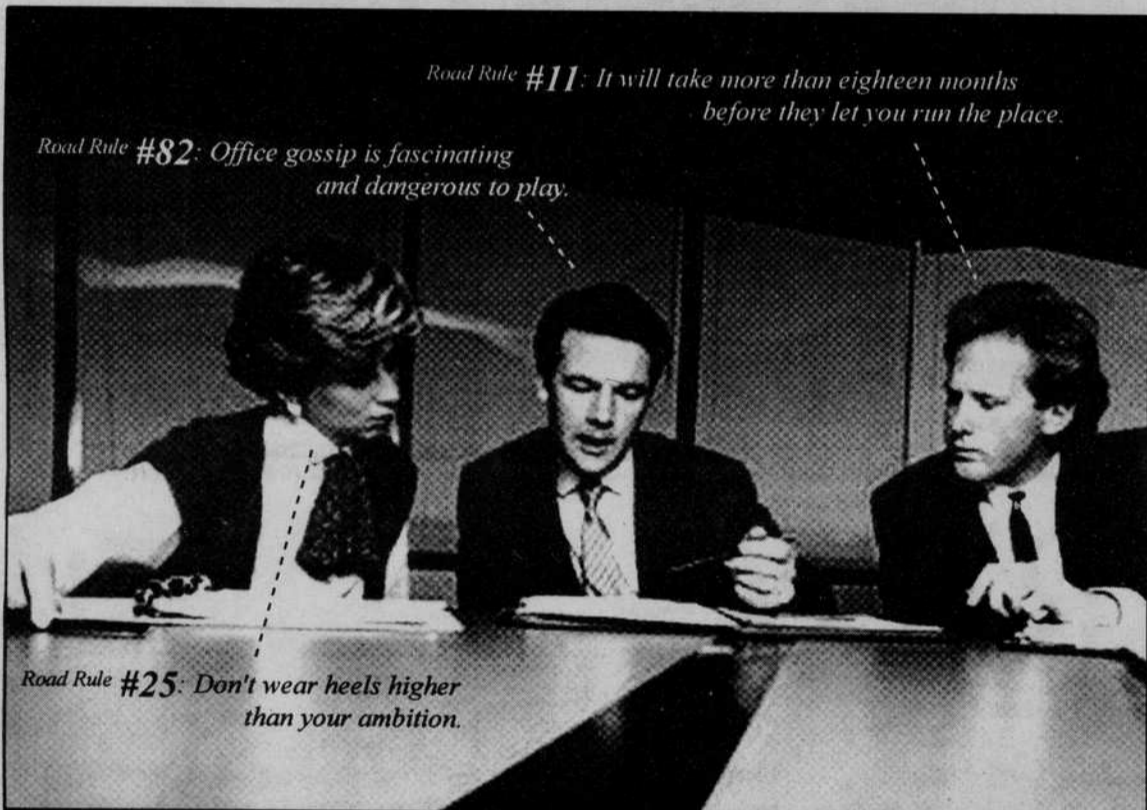
“We need to give an honest depiction of who we are,” she said. “The more each of us can talk about who we are in our particular context, the more understanding there will be of the incredible diversity there is among Asian-Americans.”

Zia, the daughter of Chinese immigrants, was born in New Jersey in the 1950s, when only 150,000 Chinese-Americans existed in America. She was educated at Princeton and Harvard. Zia is one of the founders and a former president of the New York chapter of the Asian American Journalists Association. She has been an active member since 1986 and currently lives in Oakland, Calif., in the San Francisco Bay area.

Zia's book can be purchased at the University Bookstore.



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald
Helen Zia speaks to law students at the William W. Knight Law School. Zia is the author of "Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People."



Road Rule #11: It will take more than eighteen months before they let you run the place.

Road Rule #82: Office gossip is fascinating and dangerous to play.

Road Rule #25: Don't wear heels higher than your ambition.

Hear the Rules of the Road expert Eve Luppert discuss:

How to Survive Your First Job Out of School

Monday, April 17
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Working full-time is a whole new world. Let author and human resource expert Eve Luppert be your guide on how to succeed in the 9 to 5 arena with tips on everything from how to deal with office politics to doing stupid jobs brilliantly. Ms. Luppert is former director of Human Resources and Administration for Chiat/Day Advertising, Inc. She has hired, helped, and even promoted tons of recent graduates.



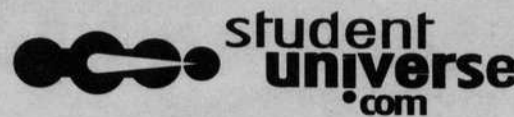
Get the book: Autographed copies of Rules for the Road: Surviving Your First Job Out of School will be available for purchase at Gerlinger Hall Lounge before and after the presentation. Also, the book is available at the UO Bookstore.

Sponsored by the Career Center as part of Spring Career Fair activities. The fair will be on Wednesday, April 19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the EMU Ballroom.



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