

NEW HEIGHTS IN AMERICA

A Chinese Boy and Seven (English Edition) American Teachers

Written by
Kuangkuang

放飞美国

——一个中国男孩和七个美国老师



Unclosing
American school life

New concepts on
American quality education

Enjoy Kuang Kuang's stories

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A Chinese Boy and Seven
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USA

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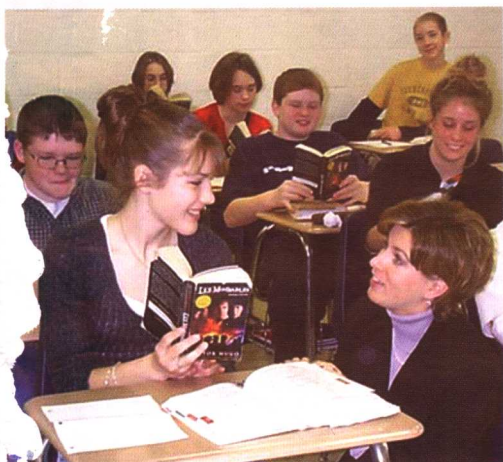
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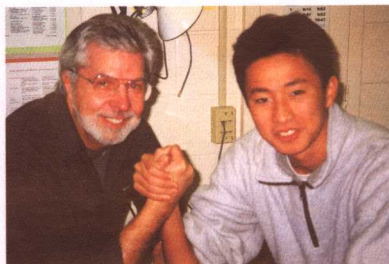
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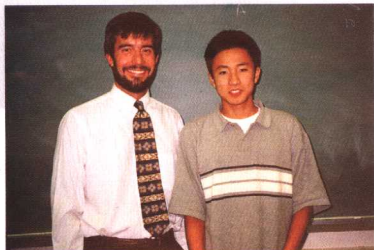
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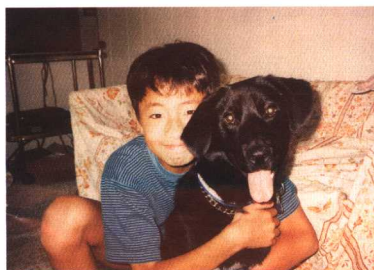
Mrs. Abrams giving her student one on one help.



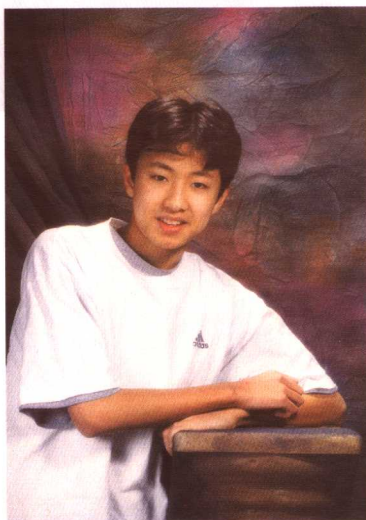
Kuang Kuang and his art teacher, Brother Wanda, arm wrestling.



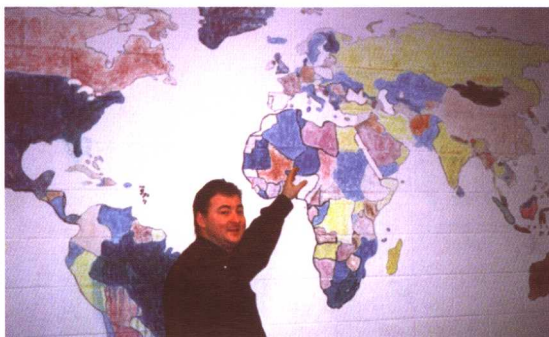
Leader of Moeller's Academic Team and Math Team, and math teacher, Mr. Ward, and Kuang Kuang.



Kuang Kuang and his dog Lucky.



Kuang Kuang.



Mr. Henrich and his famous painted walls depicting the world with Africa in the center.



Mrs. Abrams lecturing her students and having some fun at the same time.



Kuang Kuang and Mr. Henrich



The day Kuang Kuang scored the golden goal to allow his team to go on to win the championship.

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An Insignificant but Uneasy Role

I had barely gotten past my fifth birthday before I found myself in America. Looking back, I suddenly realize that I have already been here eleven years.

At this point in my life, nearly sixteen years old, "eleven years" isn't my whole life. But, it is the majority of my life experience. When I think about it, it's obvious to me that most of the more "colorful" experiences have taken place in school—from my first days in preschool all the way to my first year at Moeller High School, it all adds up to six different schools.

Anyone using eleven years of research on a topic is bound to have some success. On that note, anyone using eleven years to *experience* something is assured to have some sort of result as well.

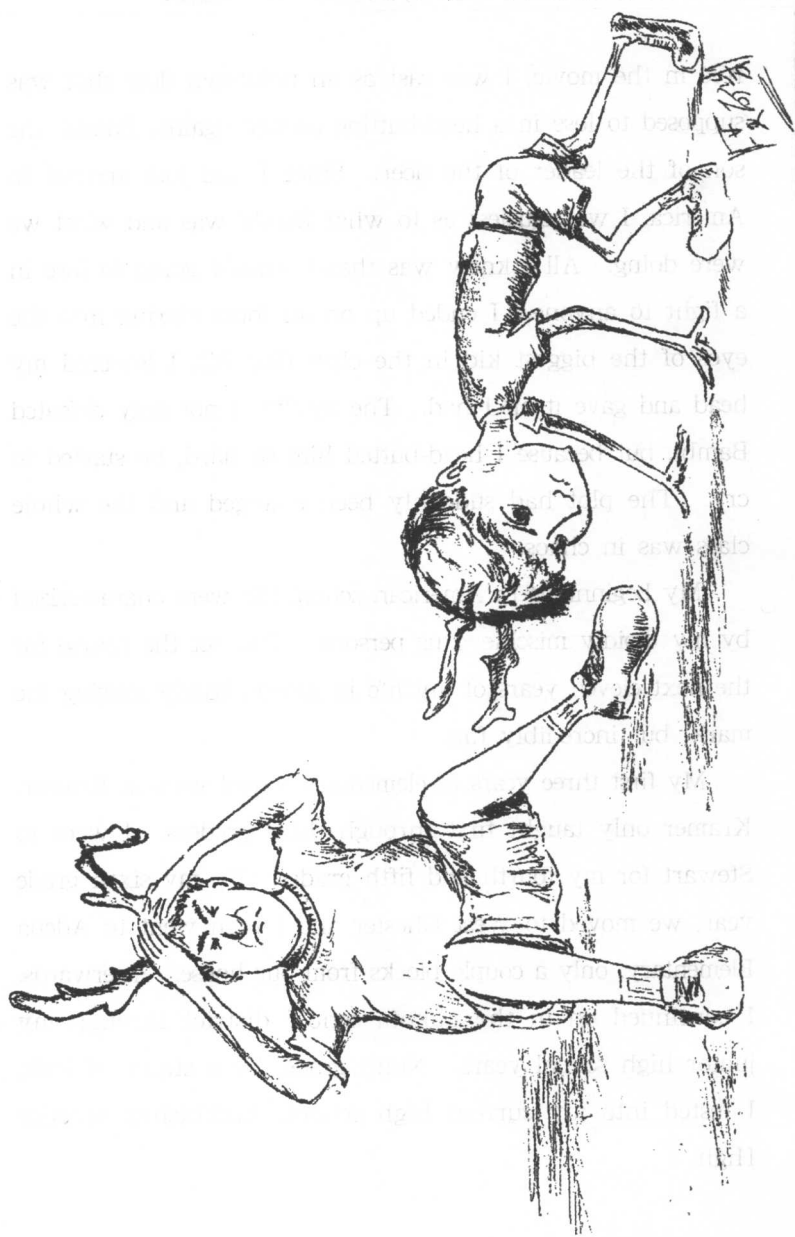
According to my parents, the first day I landed in America, the moment I got off the plane, I couldn't wait to report my new findings—the way Americans ride their bikes is completely different from that of Chinese. Americans ride with their body hunched forward with elbows sticking out to the sides and backend sticking up in the air, pumping their legs like pistons on a car, whereas Chinese rode sitting straight up and pedaled slowly and calmly.

It's a shame that I can't create a comparison between American and Chinese schools, because my time in Chinese schools was too little to have anything to compare. I only have a couple lingering memories of my short time in Chinese kindergarten. A teacher who wore a red jacket, my friend Tian Hai, and trying to fall asleep every noon...that's all.

Actually, my distant time in American kindergarten seems just as long ago and just as hard to remember as my time in China.

All that I can remember amounts up to my first day of kindergarten when I fought with an older American kid, whom I ended up biting.

Other events included videotape taken of me during my stay at McGuffy kindergarten. Where my fellow students and I participated in a reenactment of the Disney Film, "Bambi" (a story of a young deer). The teacher gave me a very small



role in the movie, I was cast as an unknown deer that was supposed to lose in a head-butting contest against Bambi, the son of the leader of the deer. Since I had just arrived in America, I was clueless as to what Bambi was and what we were doing. All I knew was that I wasn't going to lose in a fight to anyone. I ended up on all fours staring into the eyes of the biggest kid in the class (Bambi); I lowered my head and gave it all I had. The result? I not only defeated Bambi, but because I head-butted him so hard, he started to cry. The plot had suddenly been changed and the whole class was in chaos.

My beginnings in American school life were characterized by my tepidly mischievous persona. This set the course for the next eleven years of my life in school, barely missing the mark, but incredibly fun.

My first three years of elementary school were at Kramer. Kramer only taught first through third graders. I went to Stewart for my fourth and fifth grades. By my sixth grade year, we moved to West Chester and I then went to Adena Elementary, only a couple blocks from our house. Afterwards, I continued on in the Lakota school district through my junior high school years. Ninth grade, by a stroke of luck, I tested into my current high school, Archbishop Moeller High.

Now, I am a sophomore at Moeller (10th grade, it's equivalent to the Chinese high school freshman).

Since the beginning, I have never been a teacher's pet, but I am definitely not a bad student. I know that most of my teachers view me this way.

Teachers always appraise their students. Students should also form opinions of their teachers, but the opportunity to evaluate their teachers arrives much less than those of the teacher. Also, very few people have any concern over what students think about their teachers. Who has the patience to listen to some high school student ramble on about his teachers?

I feel very fortunate to be able to praise and give my critique on my American teachers.



Four Types of Teachers

If you go and ask any American child what the biggest source of stress in their lives is, 95% of them would tell you, "School".

How can this be? Isn't school supposed to be a scholarly haven of education and progress? That's what most parents believe.

But the reality of it is, to the average American child, school is rarely a place where he or she goes to learn.

I believe, that the cause of this way of thinking is the people teaching the students. The focuses of many teachers aren't on *what* they are teaching; teaching has just become a job for them, a job to support their families with.

I'm not saying that there is anything wrong with this, to those who believe that survival, in a society such as

America, is most important. That is very understandable. But those very people, who use teaching as a means for living, invoke an attitude, which can and does serious harm to students. Many times, causing students to forget the information that they just learned a few days after learning it.

The secret to becoming a great teacher in America is to teach your students something that they feel is valuable.

To judge whether a teacher is good or bad, not only must you look at *how* they teach, you must also look at *why* they teach. This “why” is the inner motivation of teaching. The force behind what they do. If this force is not a very strong one, or the purpose behind it isn’t correct, not only will the teaching be affected, but also the students.

Have you ever been forced to do something that you really didn’t want to do? Whatever it is, whether it be playing a sport or learning an instrument or even getting a job. If I have guessed correctly, I’m sure that you will agree that when you are forced, the results of what you do are not on a par with what you can do when you really want something to be done.

“Do what you want to do. Get a job you *like*.” This idea is kind of hard to accept in America because the entire country over here runs on a simple motivation—Money.

You get a job, to make money. Simple.

Very few people get a job that they love to do, because the large bright spotlight of American culture is forever focused on money and wealth.

This brings me inevitably to my point about teachers and their motivation. There are four different types of motivation for teachers and many others.

I don't want to be an educational theorist. I don't want to take too much time out of my life to think about education and the problems facing it. My "four types of teachers motivation" come from my own feelings and from my observations of my teachers. No matter what other educational experts say, I still believe that my theory represents my opinion.

The first kind of teacher, "Livelihood is the purpose".

This kind of teacher makes teaching their means of survival, a job to make money to support his or her family. They are only concerned with putting food on the table. Students, teaching, and school come in second. In such a competitive society like America, this type of motivation is certainly understandable.

Many people outside of America think it to be a place where everything is fair and easy and there are a lot of opportunities. That's not entirely true. America was built