Essay 3: Journeys, Genres, and Genes in *The Best We Could Do*

- proposal (1 page, 1 pt.) due Tuesday, October 22
- reading notes (2+ pages, 2 pts.) due Tuesday, October 29
- outline (2+ pages, 1 pt.) due Thursday, October 31
- rough works cited page (1 page, 1pt.) Thursday, October 31
- rough draft (5+ pages, 2 pts.) due Tuesday, November 5
- meet with a tutor (or me) by Monday, November 11
- final draft (5+ pages, 15 pts.) due Tuesday, November 12

All of these must be typed using MLA format.

**Topic**

The second half of *The Best We Could Do* is more chronological than the first half, and Thi Bui focuses more directly on the impact of war, immigration, and family history. She also incorporates real-life images and photos into the panels.

As you read and analyze *The Best We Could Do* (pages 173-330), choose one of the following topics for your essay (5+ pages, 6+ paragraphs):

1. How and why does Thi Bui compare and contrast the Vietnamese and American views of the Vietnam War?
2. To what extent does *The Best We Could Do* demonstrate that a graphic-novel memoir can be art and / or literature?
3. According to *The Best We Could Do*, how and why is personal (or even national) trauma passed on to the next generation (or not)?
4. What lessons about immigration and refugees can be learned from *The Best We Could Do*?

Analyze specific examples, quotations, and images from the book by examining the events, content, themes, style, tone, artwork, layout, colors, etc. In addition, incorporate research to support or introduce your analysis in every supporting paragraph.

**Audience & Purpose**

Imagine that your reader has read *The Best That We Could Do* but may not share your interpretation of the book. The purpose of your essay is to persuade your reader that your perspective is valid.

**Reading Requirement**

- *The Best We Could Do* (173-330)
- various articles related to the book on my website

**Research Requirement**

You must include and analyze supporting examples from the book and two research articles. Use the library’s databases to find articles (i.e., Academic Search Complete, SocINDEX, JSTOR, etc.). You may also use credible internet websites (including the articles on my website).
Structure & Content Checklist

____ Write an informative yet creative title for your essay; write an inventive hook as well.
____ Identify the book, its author, and its topics in your introduction.
____ Your thesis statement needs to preview your essay’s points very specifically and must match your topic.
____ Include clear topic sentences and transitions.
____ You must incorporate and analyze 1 or 2 specific examples, descriptions, quotations from *The Best We Could Do* in every supporting paragraph.
____ You must also include one quotation from research in every supporting paragraph.
____ Remember to ICE: introduce, cite, and explain each quotation, example, or paraphrase.
____ Write a strong conclusion that summarizes and wraps up the entire essay.
____ It is acceptable to use first-person (“I,” “my,” “we,” “us,” “our”).
____ Edit and proofread your sentences so that they are as clear and correct as possible.
____ Include a properly formatted works cited page.
____ Format your paper properly: double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point font such as Times New Roman.

Process – You must complete and submit all of the following with the final draft (I will provide a folder):

____ final draft & works cited page
____ copies / printouts of all articles used in the paper [very important]
____ tutoring receipt or my comments**
____ rough draft(s) & works cited page
____ peer review sheet
____ outline
____ rough works cited page
____ reading notes
____ proposal

Do not plagiarize (copy, borrow, steal, or buy someone else’s writing); if you do, you will receive zero points for this assignment and possibly fail the course.

** You must visit SI, a tutor, or my advice hours for this essay.

• Bring your assignment sheet, *The Best We Could Do*, and draft with you when you see a tutor at the Language Success Center.
• Please feel free to visit my advice hours (MW 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & TTh 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.) or email me (neil.watkins@chaffey.edu) at any point in your writing process.

Proposal Questions – 1 page, typed, due Tuesday, October 22

1. What do you think of when you hear the word “research”? How might you need to adjust your mindset (or not)?
2. Which topic do you think you will choose for this essay? Why have you chosen that topic?
3. What do you already know about topic? What do you need to find out?
4. What do you want your reader to learn or understand from your essay?
5. What obstacles or challenges might you face as you write? How will you overcome those?
6. When & where will you write the essay?