

Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards*

*Presented by the Cleveland Foundation

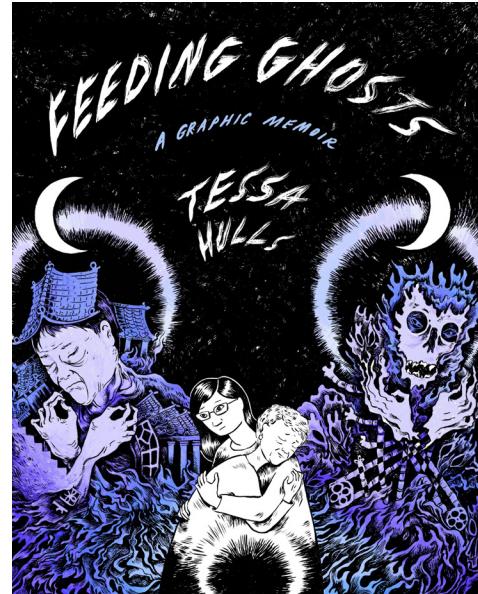


CLASS OF 2025 BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Feeding Ghosts

by Tessa Hulls

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1. In "Feeding Ghosts," Tessa Hulls includes scenes of herself actively writing the memoir as the story unfolds. This technique breaks from the traditional memoir conventions, which often presents the past as a completed, chronological narrative told from a reflective distance. Instead, Hulls invites the reader into the messy process of remembering and misremembering by weaving together historical research, familial oral history, investigative journalism and contemporary reflections.

In doing so, Hulls blurs the line between past and present, between memory and fiction and reveals the ruptures that create generational inheritances. How did Hulls' decision to depict herself actively writing the memoir change your experience as a reader? Are there stories about your family's history that you'd like to explore further? How could you adapt some of the immersive journalistic techniques Hulls' used in your own life?

2. "Feeding Ghosts" traces three generations of women against the backdrop of Chinese history. Each generation is shaped by trauma, migration and silence, and Hulls' writing opens the boxes of space and time to unravel the ties that bind her family together.

Throughout the book, Hulls tries to distance herself from her family's past but ultimately learns some stories are with you wherever you go. How does the legacy of Chinese history and political upheaval shape the three generations depicted in "Feeding Ghosts?" In your own life, have you ever tried to distance yourself from your family or your cultural history? What does it take to begin healing across generations, especially when the past feels heavy? What are the stakes of not feeding the ghosts and letting them linger?

3. "Feeding Ghosts" is the first graphic memoir to win an Anisfield-Wolf Book Award and only the second to win the Pulitzer Prize. Why do you think this story, told in this form, resonates so deeply? What affordances come with the blend of visuals and text? If you were to begin making a graphic memoir about your own family history, where would you start?