

Author discusses Asian stereotypes at Iowa State U.

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__University Wire __04-06-2004 __ (Iowa State Daily) (U-WIRE) AMES, Iowa -- M. **Evelina Galang** explained Monday why "monkey" has more meaning than you might think it does. __The former Iowa State University professor and assistant professor of English at the University of Miami, who edited the 2003 anthology "Screaming Monkeys: Critiques of Asian American Images," read parts of that and other works Monday night at the Brunner Art Museum. __One impetus for "Screaming Monkeys," **Galang** said, was a Milwaukee Magazine review of a Filipino deli that referred to a customer's son as a "rambunctious little monkey." __"[T]his affront carried with it historical baggage, a racial slur first cast toward Filipinos by American soldiers during the Spanish-American War and then here in the states, when our first Filipino elders, U.S. nationals, arrived on the northwest coast of America," **Galang** said, reading from her introduction. __**Galang** said the aftermath of the incident, which included several back-and-forths between upset readers and a less-than-apologetic magazine editor, taught her a lot about one of the more prevalent bases of insensitivity -- ignorance. __"In the end, we concluded that the reason things like this happen is because our history books -- and I mean our American history books -- do not cover this, our Asian-American history," she said. "We can kind of see these things and not think twice about them." __Derek Lehman, junior in mechanical engineering, said he agreed mistakes involving stereotypes and derogatory terms like "monkey" were likely if people aren't aware of a culture's history. __"I think many people were right in thinking [the food review] was very poorly written," he said. __"Screaming Monkeys" includes several fiction passages, including works by **Galang** and by Eugenio Matibag, associate professor of foreign languages and literatures, which were read Monday. But it also contains quotes, headlines and photos from the media, original art and nonfiction writing **Galang** said let readers make their own interpretations. __"I just wanted to put out the facts," she said. "When it came to the found images and the found texts and the artwork, we didn't put any commentaries with that." __Jane Davis, associate professor of English, arranged **Galang's** visit and said her work was valuable because of its broad relevance. __"It deals with important themes that are both particular to Asian-Americans and also are themes that readers in general should know about, whether or not they identify with the situations at first," she said. "She's brilliant in terms of using imagery to convey emotions." __**Galang** teaches creative writing at Miami and read some of her "flash fiction" Monday. She said she writes from the perspective of a Filipino-American, but enjoys discussing other viewpoints with students and peers -- discussions she said have substantive value in ensuring comprehension of others' experiences. __"It can be frustrating, it can be very difficult; your discussions in classrooms can even get ugly," she said. "But I think it's necessary. __"If I felt like it was a futile effort, I don't think I would be a writer or a teacher."

__<!-- Photos Begin --> _photo1: 14818_s-40722a036986c-75-1.jpg _photo1 credit: Alison Sickelka _photo1 desc: M. **Evelina Galang**, professor at the University of Miami, signs the anthology "Screaming Monkeys: Critiques of Asian American Images." Eugenio Matibag, associate professor of foreign languages and literatures, read his piece from the book as well. _photo2: _photo2 credit: _photo2 desc: _<!-- Photos End --> __ (C) 2004 Iowa State Daily via U-WIRE