

# **Student Essay on Breaking Cultural Ties in "The Joy Luck Club"**

## **Breaking Cultural Ties in "The Joy Luck Club" by Amy Tan**

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# Essay

## Communication in The Joy Luck Club

"I wanted my children to have the best combination: American circumstances and Chinese character. How could I know these things do not mix?"

Lindo Jong said that in "Double Face" when she told her daughter, Waverly Jong, that she wouldn't be recognized as Chinese if she went to China for her second honeymoon. "Even if you put on their clothes, even if you take off your makeup and hide your fancy jewelry, they know. They know just watching the way you walk, the way you carry your face. They know you don't belong."

Waverly Jong, as well as the rest of the daughters, didn't follow the Chinese ways their mothers tried to teach them. They wanted to be American. To have no trace of their Chinese heritage in them. This caused a real communication problem between the mothers and daughters. The four daughters often hated their mothers strange customs and ways of life. They never cared for their Chinese heritage. They ignored what their mothers had to say and only then realized the reasons why their mothers acted the way they did when they truly listened to their stories of their lives.

The daughters often found themselves ashamed of their mothers too. Like how they don't have the perfect English or that when they try to tell them a story or act certain ways they don't understand.

"Over the years, she told me the same story, except for the ending, which grew darker, casting long shadows into her life, and eventually into mine." Jing-mei Woo, who also went by June, thought that the story her mother often told her was fake since she always changed the ending. One night though her mother told her a very different ending from the usual happy ones. Suyuan tells her how she had eventually had to leave everything behind. When Jing-mei asks what happened to the babies all she said was her father wasn't her first husband and you weren't one of the babies. As Jing-mei learned the rest of the story she finally started to understand her mother.