

ANTH 5250
SEMINAR IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHINA I
Autumn 2024 **Provisional** Course Outline

Instructor: Andrew KIPNIS
Class Meeting: Wednesday 6:30-9:15 location TBA
Instructor Office Hours: by appointment: NAH409
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Course Description: In this course, students will read some recent ethnographies about China. We will come to understand China from a wide variety of perspectives and grapple with questions of the power and limitations of social anthropology to illuminate Chinese society. The weeks will be organized according to topics, but students should remember that ethnographic writing tends to be holistic, so that the author of a given ethnography may use the “topic” of the book as a lens through which she or he explores a wide variety of issues. Students will be required to do a research paper on an ethnographic topic of their choosing.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learn how to read ethnographies critically
- Understand Chinese Society from many perspectives
- Understand how ethnographic methods vary with the topic addressed

Language of Instruction: English, some opportunity to read texts in Chinese.

Assessment:

1. Attendance/Participation and Weekly Discussion Forum Postings: 20%: For 10 out of the 11 weeks for which there are readings, students should post questions and comments on readings for tutorial on blackboard. You should post once or twice a week for at least 10 weeks and the deadline for each week is Wednesday afternoon before class at 12noon. If there are two articles, you should post once for each article.

Forum posts: For ten weeks of your choice, you will need to submit one or two forum posts on assigned readings (these should be either responses to your classmates’ comments or your own post if you would like to discuss something different). Your posts do not have to be long—they could be as brief as two-three sentences, but they must meet the following criteria:

- *be pertinent to the main arguments of the readings (demonstrate that you have read the texts)*
- *be meaningful and original (demonstrate that you have thought about the texts)*
- *be polite and respectful*

The posts should be posted to the forum “Discussion Forum” on Blackboard.

2. Book review: 20%: Students will read one book in full from the class list of possible ethnographies. They will make a presentation about the ethnography in class. Students will be given a chance to sign up for their ethnography on the first day of class. The presentations should analyse the book in terms of the research methods used, the style of writing, the

organization of the book as a whole and the arguments the author makes. The time limit for the presentation will be strictly enforced. Rehearse your presentation to see how long it takes and adjust it accordingly. If your presentation is too long or too short, you will receive a poor grade. The time limit for the presentation will be determined after I see how many people have signed up for the course. The presentation should be accompanied by a powerpoint and there will be time allotted for questions and answers about the book after your presentation.

3. Annotated Bibliography: 10%: Students must prepare a bibliography of at least 8 sources that they will refer to in their final paper (more if the sources are short). The bibliography should start with a 200-word description of the student's chosen essay topic. After each entry in the bibliography, the student should write a sentence or two explaining how the source relates to the student's topic. The bibliography should be turned in by hard copy at the beginning of the class on 6 November. This assignment is really just the first step in writing the final paper and is meant to ensure that students begin their research early enough in the semester. Sources may be in any language but the paper must be written in English. Students wishing to do ethnographic instead of library research should consult with the professor about methods and the possibility of using fewer written references.

4. Final Paper: 50%: The paper may be on a topic of the student's choosing that is relevant to the course and that is approved by the instructor. The approximate length of the paper should be 2,500-3,000 words. The paper should be submitted through the plagiarism detection engine VERIGUIDE and use the standard department style for citations. The paper should be submitted on Veriguide with a hardcopy turned into the office by Monday 9 December at 12 noon.

Course Schedule:

Week One: 4 September Introduction

- Sign up for book reviews
- Chinese modernities

Week Two: 11 September ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Read: Stig Thøgersen and Maria Heimer 2006. "Introduction" In *Doing fieldwork in China*. Pp. 1-18.

Xiao Qiang 2019. "President Xi's Surveillance State" *Journal of Democracy* 30(1):53-67.

- Ethnographic Methods
- Research in Zouping

SEPTEMBER 18 NO CLASS, Day After Mid-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Week Three: 25 September URBAN CHINA, URBANIZATION

Read: Kipnis, Andrew B. 2013. "Urbanization in Between" *China Perspectives* #3:5-12.

Cliff, Tom. 2013. "Peripheral Urbanism" *China Perspectives* #3:13-23.

- Urban ethnography

- Typing people in China

Possible ethnographies:

- Cliff, Tom
2016 Oil and Water: Being Han in Xinjiang. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Evans, Harriet
2020 Beijing from Below: Stories of Marginal Lives in the Capital's Center. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Jankowiak, William R.
1993 Sex, death, and hierarchy in a Chinese city : an anthropological account. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kipnis, Andrew B.
2016 From Village to City: Social Transformation in a Chinese County Seat. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Liu, Lucia Huwy-min
2023 Governing Death, Making Persons: The New Chinese Way of Death. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Zhang, Li
2001 Strangers in the City: Reconfigurations of Space, Power, and Social Networks Within China's Floating Population. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Zhang, Li
2010 In Search of Paradise: Middle Class Living in a Chinese Metropolis. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

(Cliff 2016; Evans 2020; Jankowiak 1993; Kipnis 2016; Zhang 2001; Zhang 2010)

Week Four: 2 October RURAL CHINA

Read: Fang, I-chieh 2015 Family Dynamics after Migration in Post-Mao Rural China. *In Anthropology of this Century*. <http://aotcpress.com/articles/family-dynamics-migration-postmao-rural-china/>, Vol. 12. London.

Steinmuller, Hans. 2010. Communities of complicity: Notes on state formation and local sociality in rural China. *American Ethnologist* 37(3):539-549.

- Rural Ethnographies
- Morality and Ethics

Possible ethnographies

- Cody, Sacha
2019 Exemplary Agriculture: Independent Organic Farming in Contemporary China. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lai, Lili
2017 Hygiene, Sociality, and Culture in Contemporary Rural China: The Uncanny New Village. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Liu, Xin
2000 In One Own's Shadow: An Ethnographic Account of the Condition of Post-reform Rural China. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lora-Wainwright, Anna
2013 Fighting for Breath: Living Morally and Dying of Cancer in a Chinese Village. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Oxfeld, Ellen
2010 Drink Water, But Remember the Source: Moral Discourse in a Chinese Village. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Santos, Goncalo
2022 Chinese Village Life Today. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Steinmuller, Hans

- 2013 Communities of Complicity: Everyday Ethics in Rural China. New York: Berghahn.
 Wu, Ka-ming
 2015 Reinventing Chinese Tradition: The Cultural Politics of Late Socialism. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

(Cody 2019; Lai 2017; Liu 2000; Lora-Wainwright 2013; Oxfeld 2010; Steinmuller 2013; Wu 2015)

Week Five: 9 October RELIGION

Read: Johnson, Ian. 2017. *The Souls of China: The Return of Religion after Mao*. New York: Pantheon. Pp. 5-51.

- Politics of Religion in China
- Popular Religion

Possible ethnographies

- Boretz, Avron
 2011 Gods, Ghosts and Gangsters: Ritual Violence, Martial Arts and Masculinity on the Margins of Chinese Society. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Cao, Nanlai
 2011 Constructing China's Jerusalem. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Chau, Adam Yuet
 2006 Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Chen, Nancy N.
 2003 Breathing Spaces: Qigong, Psychiatry, and Healing in China. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kipnis, Andrew B.
 2021 The Funeral of Mr. Wang: Life, Death and Ghosts in Urbanizing China. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Li Geng
 2019 Fate Calculation Experts: Diviners Seeking Legitimation in Contemporary China. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Matthews, William
 2021 Cosmic Coherence: A Cognitive Anthropology through Chinese Divination. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Ng, Emily
 2020 A Time of Lost Gods: Mediumship, Madness and the Ghost after Mao. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Palmer, David A.
 2007 Qigong fever : body, science, and utopia in China. New York: Columbia University Press.

(Boretz 2011; Cao 2011; Chau 2006; Chen 2003; Kipnis 2021; Ng 2020; Palmer 2007)

Week Six: 16 October CHANGING FAMILY RELATIONS

Read the introductions from Brandtstadter and Santos, and then Harrell and Santos

- Kinship
- Social Relations

Possible ethnographies

Brandtstadter, Susanne, and Goncalo D. Santos, eds.

- 2009 Chinese Kinship: Contemporary Anthropological Perspectives. Milton Park, UK: Routledge.
- Harrell, Stevan, and Goncalo D. Santos
2017 Transforming Patriarchy: Chinese Families in the Twenty-First Century. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Kipnis, Andrew B.
1997 Producing Guanxi: Sentiment, Self, and Subculture in a North China Village. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sangren, P. Stevan
2017 Filial Obsessions: Chinese Patriline and its Discontents. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shi, Lihong
2017 Choosing Daughters: Family Change in Rural China. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Wolf, Margery
1972 Women and the family in rural Taiwan. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Yan, Yunxiang
2003 Private Life Under Socialism: Love, Intimacy and Family Change in a Chinese Village 1949-1999. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Yang, Mayfair Mei-hui
1994 Gifts, favors, and banquets: the art of social relationships in China. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

(Brandtstadter and Santos 2009; Harrell and Santos 2017; Kipnis 1997; Sangren 2017; Shi 2017; Wolf 1972; Yan 2003; Yang 1994)

Week Seven: 23 October WORLDS OF WORK

Read: Jacka, Tamara, Andrew B. Kipnis, and Sally Sargeson. 2013 *Contemporary China: Society and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 5 pp 105-124.

- Work
- Occupational and Class difference in Contemporary China

Possible ethnographies

- Cho, Mun Young
2013 The Specter of "The People": Urban Poverty in Northeast China. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Chumley, Lily Hope
2016 Creativity Class: Art School and Culture Work in Postsocialist China. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Hanser, Amy
2008 Service Encounters: Class, Gender and the Market for Social Distinction in Urban China. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Osborg, John
2013 Anxious Wealth: Money and Morality Among China's New Rich. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Pun, Ngai
2005 Made In China: Women Workers in a Global Workplace. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wong, Winnie Won Yin
2013 Van Gogh on Demand: China and the Readymade. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Zheng, Tiantian
2009 Red Lights: The Lives of Sex Workers in Postsocialist China. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

(Cho 2013; Chumley 2016; Hanser 2008; Osborg 2013; Pun 2005; Wong 2013; Yan 2008; Zheng 2009)

Week Eight: 30 October EDUCATION AND PARENTING

Read Kipnis, Andrew B. 2001 The Disturbing Educational Discipline of "Peasants". The China Journal (46):1-24.

And either

Kipnis, Andrew B. 2006 Suzhi: A Keyword Approach. The China Quarterly (186):295-313.

Or

Woronov, Terry E. 2011 Learning to Serve: Urban Youth, Vocational Schools and New Class Formations in China. The China Journal (66):77-99.

- Education
- Parenting

Possible Ethnographies

Bregnbæk, Susanne

2016 Fragile Elite: The Dilemmas of China's Top University Students. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Fong, Vanessa L.

2004 Only Hope: Coming of Age Under China's One-Child Policy. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hansen, Mette Halskov

1999 Lessons in Being Chinese: Minority Education and Ethnic Identity in Southwest China. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Hansen, Mette Halskov

2015 Educating the Chinese Individual: Life in a Rural Boarding School. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Howlett, Zachary M.

2021 Meritocracy and Its Discontents: Anxiety and the National College Entrance Exam in China. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Kipnis, Andrew B.

2011 Governing Educational Desire: Culture, Politics and Schooling in China. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kuan, Teresa

2015 Love's Uncertainty: The Politics and Ethics of Child Rearing in Contemporary China. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Obendiek, Helena

2016 Changing Fate: Education, Poverty and Family Support in Contemporary Chinese Society. Berlin: Lit Verlag.

Woronov, Terry E.

2016 Class Work: Vocational Schools and China's Urban Youth. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Xu, Jing

2017 The Good Child: Moral Development in a Chinese Preschool. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

(Bregnbæk 2016; Fong 2004; Hansen 2015; Kipnis 2011; Kuan 2015; Obendiek 2016; Woronov 2016; Xu 2017)

Week Nine: 6 November MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Read: Rofel, Lisa. 2007 Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Chapter 4, pp. 111-134.

- Migration
- Mobility

Possible Ethnographies

- Chu, Julie Y
2010 *Cosmologies of Credit: Transnational Mobility and the Politics of Destination in China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Fong, Vanessa L.
2011 *Paradise Redefined: Transnational Chinese Students and the Quest for Flexible Citizenship in the Developed World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Jacka, Tamara
2005 *Rural Women in Urban China: Gender, Migration, and Social Change*. London: ME Sharpe.
- Ling, Minhua
2019 *The Inconvenient Generation: Migrant Youth Coming of Age on Shanghai's Edge*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Yan, Hairong
2008 *New Masters, New Servants. Migration, Development and Women Workers in China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Zavoretti, Roberta
2017 *Rural Origins, City Lives*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

(Chu 2010; Fong 2011; Jacka 2005; Ling 2019; Yan 2008; Zavoretti 2017)

Week Ten: 13 November **CHINESE MEDICINE AND ANALOGIC THOUGHT**

Read: Hay, John. 1983 *Arterial Art*. *Stone Lion Review* (11):71-84.

Farquhar, Judith 1985. "Time and Text: Approaching Contemporary Chinese Medical practice through the analysis of a Published Case"

- Health
- Chinese Medicine

Possible Ethnographies

- Bartlett, Nicholas
2020 *Recovering Histories: Life and Labor after Heroin in Reform-Era China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Farquhar, Judith
1994 *Knowing practice: The clinical encounter of Chinese medicine*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Farquhar, Judith
2002 *Appetites: Food and Sex in Post-Socialist China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Farquhar, Judith, and Qicheng Zhang
2012 *Ten Thousand Things: Nurturing Life in Contemporary Beijing*. New York: Zone Books.
- Gottschang, Suzanne Z.
2018 *Formulas for Motherhood in an Urban Chinese Hospital*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Liu, Shao-hua
2011 *Passage to Manhood: Youth Migration, Heroin, and AIDS in Southwest China*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Mason, Katherine A.
2016 *Infectious Change: Reinventing Chinese Public Health after an Epidemic*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Song, Priscilla
2017 *Biomedical Odysseys: Fetal Cell Experiments from Cyberspace to China*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Uretsky, Elanah
2016 *Occupational Hazards: Sex, Business and HIV in Post-Mao China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Zhang, Everett Yuehong
2015 The Impotence Epidemic: Men's Medicine and Sexual Desire in Contemporary China. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Zhang Li
2020 Anxious China: Inner Revolution and Politics of Psychotherapy. Berkely, CA: University of California Press.

(Bartlett 2020; Farquhar 1994a; Farquhar 1994b; Farquhar 2002; Farquhar and Zhang 2012; Gottschang 2018; Liu 2011; Mason 2016; Song 2017; Uretsky 2016; Zhang 2015; Zhang 2020)

Week Eleven 20 November ETHNIC MINORITIES AND TOURISM

Read: Harrell, Stevan. 1995 Introduction: Civilizing Projects and the Reactions to Them. *In* Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers. S. Harrell, ed. Seattle: University of Washington Press. Pp. 3-36.

- Travel
- Ethnicity

Possible ethnographies

Byler, Darren
2022 Terror Capitalism: Uyghur Dispossession and Masculinity in a Chinese City. Durham, Duke University Press.

Chio, Jenny
2014 A Landscape of Travel: The Work of Tourism in Rural Ethnic China. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Gillette, Maris Boyd
2000 Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Litzinger, Ralph A.
2000 Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Makley, Charlene
2007 The Violence of Liberation: Gender and Tibetan Buddhist Revival in Post-Mao China. Berkeley: University of California Press.
2018 The Battle for Fortune: State-led Development, Personhood and Power among Tibetans in China. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Mueggler, Erik
2001 The Age of Wild Ghosts: Memory, Violence, and Place in Southwest China. Berkeley: University of California Press.
2017 Songs for Dead Parents: Corpse, Text and World in Southwest China. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Notar, Beth E.
2006 Displacing Desire: Travel and Popular Culture in China. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Schein, Louisa
2000 Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

(Chio 2014; Gillette 2000; Litzinger 2000; Makley 2007; Makley 2018; Mueggler 2001; Mueggler 2017; Notar 2006; Schein 2000)

Week Twelve: 27 November ONLINE ETHNOGRAPHIES

Read: MacDonald, Tom. 2019. "Strangership and Social Media: Moral Imaginaries of Gendered Strangers in Rural China" *American Anthropologist* 121(1)76-88.

Wang, Tricia 2013. “Introduction” to PhD thesis *Talking to Strangers: Chinese Youth and Social Media* UCSD Sociology Department pp. 1-28.

- Online Life
- Relations on the Internet

Possible ethnographies

Carrico, Kevin
2017 *The Great Han: Race, Nationalism and Tradition in China Today*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Chua, Emily H.C.
2023 *The Currency of Truth: Newsmaking and the Late-Socialist Imaginaries of China’s Digital Era*. Ann Arbor Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

McDonald, Tom
2016 *Social Media in Rural China*. London: UCL Press.

Wang, Xinyuan
2016 *Social Media in Industrial China*. London: UCL Press.

Wang, Xinyuan
2023 *Ageing with Smartphones in China*. London: UCL Press.

Yang, Guobin
2010 *The Power of the Internet in China*. New York: Columbia University Press.

(Carrico 2017; McDonald 2016; Wang 2016; Yang 2010)

FINAL PAPERS DUE MONDAY 9 December at 12 NOON

GRADE DESCRIPTORS:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Criteria for 1) the course and 2) for coursework</i>
A	1) Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. 2) The work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way. The argument is logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. Concrete evidence corresponds to statements and claims.
A-	1) Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. 2) The work synthesizes course materials and key ideas in an original way, but there are areas for improvement.
B-range	1) Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. 2) The work demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence.
C-range	1) Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.

	2) The work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged. The argument and the writing is not clear, and/or there is no evidence for statements and claims made.
D-range	1) Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. 2) The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are major problems with clarity of argument and writing.
F	1) Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. 2) The work has failed respond to the assignment prompt.