

**Community Proposal:  
Africans in Chinese Media and Chinese in African Media: Perceptions and Misperceptions**

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**Students: Josie Buchwald, Jamila Lankford, Qingyuan Li, Nicholas Shipley**



The People’s Republic of China was established in 1949. In the 1950s, the new Republic went in search for international alliances. Despite the diversity and complexity of the region, Africa became appealing in part because the majority of African countries were then under European colonial domination with growing nationalist movements demanding independence. A sense of “third world” brotherhood solidarity- a solidarity of the lesser powerful- brought China and several African countries closer together. It was the cold war era. This strategic political alliance of the leaderships did not automatically translate into a broader mutual acquaintance of Chinese and Africans.

In recent years, China’s economic boom and growing influence in world politics, has encouraged a huge migration of Chinese businesses to Africa and attracted huge numbers of African migrants to China. Yet, Africans and Chinese still have ways to go in learning to know and appreciate one another beyond the stereotypical representations they each receive from popular media. In this research project, we will begin by tracing back the history of the relationship between China and Africa. Next, we will examine the media representation of Africa and Africans in China today and then, we will examine how China and Chinese people are perceived in Senegal and Ghana for example.

Research on the relationship between China and Africa has more heavily focused on the growing presence of China in Africa and the worry, imagined or real, that China is acting as a new colonizing force. Emphasis on economic exchange and China’s need for raw material has cast shadow on research on the underlying cultural exchange existing between China and Africa. This research, therefore, aims to examine how these “third world brothers” perceive and represent each other through their dominant media discourse.

**Research questions:**

**Africa and Africans in Chinese Media:**

What is Africa in Chinese imagination? Why did Africa feature so prominently in the picture of China's foreign policy of the 1950s? How did Africa help shape China's own identity/self-portrait as a developing country? Has the growing presence of Africans in China and growing presence of Chinese in Africa influenced the way Africa and Africans are perceived in China?

**China and Chinese in African Media:**

What is China in African imagination? Are Chinese welcomed brothers? How are Chinese viewed in Senegal and Ghana? What kind of cultural exchange, if any at all, occurs between Chinese and Africans in Senegal and Ghana?

**Common question for the two sides:**

How has Western media influenced the perception of the relationship between China and Africa?

**Dissemination of the Products of the Research:**

The faculties and the students in the research community will present the final papers on WU campus in Fall 2017 (possibly late September or early October). The community will encourage faculties, students and interested people to come to the presentation. The two faculties will continue revising and editing the paper until they are publishable. For example, Huike Wen intends to submit the final version of the paper to the journals like *Feminist Media Studies* and *Media, Culture and Society*.

**Individual Research Proposals**

**Amadou T Fofana**

**Topic:** Integration or Isolation? How do Chinese immigrants interact with local populations in Senegal and Ghana?

With the launch and implementation of its 'open door' policy in the late 1970s and its 'go out' strategy in the late 1990s, China has increased its trade and investments cooperation with the rest of the world in general, and with Africa in particular<sup>1</sup>. Since the emergence of China as a global player at the beginning of the twenty first century, independent entrepreneurial migrants from China have been increasingly flocking to Africa in search of "greener pastures." A new form of Chinese migration, largely independent from big Chinese players, these "new entrepreneurial migrants" come to Africa to follow their own economic dreams. Generally invested in petty manufacturing, printing, pharmaceutical and medical services, restaurants, beauty salons, and general trade, these independent Chinese migrants are often perceived as unwelcomed competitors by some while acknowledged by others for bringing affordable new commercial

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<sup>1</sup> (Daouda Cissé, *African Review of Economics and Finance*, Vol. 5, No.1, December 2013)

services and goods to low income households on the African continent<sup>2</sup>. Howard W. French (2015) delves into the lives of some of the one million-plus Chinese migrants he says are now building careers in Africa. Through interviews and personal stories he narrates the actual life stories of those Chinese who have uprooted themselves to settle and work in Africa.

Rather than focusing on the national level politics, or the kind of businesses individual Chinese migrants are involved with, as most research in this field has it so far, this project aims to provide a close-up and inquisitive look at the various forces that constitute social inter-relations between Chinese and Africans. Although most of the literature on China-Africa relations has focused on Chinese government's imperialistic intentions and the corrupt business practices of China's big companies, this research aims to examine how Chinese immigrants live their daily lives, how they interact with the languages, cultures, and people of their host communities in Senegal and Ghana. The project aims to shift attention to the level of the individual and community. Thus I will look at interactions that take place in the market place, in the streets, in the social spaces of work, in business neighborhoods with strong Chinese presence. Using documentary as well as fiction films, interviews, literary texts, and personal testimonies, this project will look to understand the nature and extent of interactions between Chinese immigrants and local Senegalese and Ghanaians.

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<sup>2</sup> For example, see Baah et al. 2009 on Ghana; Bredeloup and Bertoncetto 2006 on Senegal; Sylvanus 2009 on Togo; Ogen 2008 on Nigeria; Kohnert 2010 on Benin and other cases).

## Filmography

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## Huiké Wen

**Tentative Topic:** Marrying Up or Marrying Down—Media Representation of Interracial Marriage and Relationship between Chinese and Africans in China

Relationships between Chinese and African people in China have stirred up much sentiment and discussion in Chinese media. International and interracial relationships have become a well-established subject in Western academia but are still a less-examined territory in Chinese studies. While there is some research on relationships between Chinese and American citizens that can help illuminate the representation of relationships between Chinese and African people, the latter have specific characteristics that require a detailed analysis and investigation. The modest literature on Chinese-African interracial marriage and relationships in China is often part of a discussion of racism in China (Pfafman, Garpenster and Tang, 2015). In Li Anshan's (2015) detailed examination of the African diaspora in China, which summarizes an impressive body of research from very broad disciplines, there is no material about interracial relationships. However, such relationships are an important part of the new situations that China must face and it must review its role as a nation and citizenship in the era of globalization. More importantly, these relationships provide a case to help understand mainstream culture's perception, and the elements that affect the perception, of love, marriage, and happiness in people's lives. My project examines representations of relationships between Chinese and African individuals in Chinese television programs and mainstream-media websites. The research aims to examine the relationships as part of the discourse of Africans in recent Chinese media by comparing the language and images used to describe relationships between a Chinese woman and an African man and between a Chinese man and an African woman, as well as the mixed-race children (mainly the celebrities) born in these types of relationships. I want to learn whether the representation is gendered and reflects a nationalist or internationalist interpretation. At the same time, because sexual and marital relationships often bear the hegemony created by neoliberalism's promotion and celebration of individual choices and possibility, while nationalism and collective identity are still dominant in Chinese mainstream culture, my project also seeks to examine the interaction, negotiation, and conflict between neoliberalism and nationalism. Ultimately, I want to learn how representations of the relationships help define Chinese-ness and a cultural definition of African-ness in contemporary Chinese media and mainstream culture.

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### TV Program

- Beijing Girl's African Family (Beijing Daniu de Feizhou Yijia Qin), Jiyi (Memory), Beijing TV Since Education Channel (July 7, 2016)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wb2nobLIe0>
- If you are the One* (Fei Cheng Wu Rao), Nanjing Satellite TV (2009-)
- Let me Help you* (Rang Wo Bangzhu Ni), Yunnan Satellite TV (Mar.25, 2015)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3oNgeXdzuNc>
- MBeijing-er* (Beijing Ke), Beijing Youth TV (Nov.12, 2014)  
[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=%E4%B8%AD%E9%9D%9E%E8%81%94%E5%A7%BB](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=%E4%B8%AD%E9%9D%9E%E8%81%94%E5%A7%BB)

**Josie Buchwald**

### Zimbabwe and China: Employment of Media to Shape Powerful Public Opinion

I am history major with a focus on post-colonial transnational history, and this research topic caught my attention because it falls within my academic interest. I took three courses with Professor Murillo who introduced me to the discipline of transnational post-colonial theory. The classes I took from her, Consumer Culture in Africa, Transnational History, and Expressive African Culture, all centered on different colonial or post-colonial African countries and their unique transnational ties. Murillo emphasized a bottom-up perspective that centered political, social, and economic conditions in relation to

domestic culture. These bottom-up perspectives provide a valuable contrast to top-down approaches by accentuating the ability of culture, especially those that have experienced the violent and oppressive forces of colonization, to impart change on systems of power.

Relations between China and Zimbabwe have been well documented in the “west”. It is common knowledge that China backed President Mugabe during the Rhodesian Bush War (1964-1979) and that China is the largest investor in Zimbabwe today. The coverage often cites the causes of this “non-western” alliance as “economic volatility and Mugabe’s authoritarian system.”<sup>3</sup> Articles with striking titles like *The Diplomat*’s “Zimbabwe: China’s All-Weather Friend” abound that stress the agency of China and downplay that of Zimbabwe. However, the 2008 elections in Zimbabwe complicated “western” assumptions of power balances between the two nations.

The 2008 elections culminated in the enactment of a nationalization law that was a result of wide spread “public opposition to illicit revenues accrued from diamond exports.”<sup>4</sup> This political event, which has sparked intense debate over its effects on Chinese relations, revealed a more complex system of power relations that caused Zimbabwean citizens to demand change on foreign policy, domestic politics, and international relations. Known as the “Zimbabwe strategy”, China’s actions in Zimbabwe detract from Zimbabwean cultural, social, economic, and political agency by falsely assuming monolithic authoritarianism.

In *Africa and China: How Africans and their Governments are Shaping Relations with China*, Gadzala’s problematizes the “China in Africa” theme within Sino-African studies. The tendency within the academy to see Africa as an entity continuously acted upon, she argues, contains an echo of colonialism and must be countered. Gadzala inverts imperial gaze on Trans-African transnational relations, accentuating the “multidimensional aspects of the ‘Africa’ in ‘Africa and China.’”<sup>5</sup> In this project, I will analyze the different ways China and Chinese identities were mobilized through media, by both the Zimbabwean government and independent political organizations, to harness the power of public opinion prior to the 2008 election. With this, I aim to critically examine and challenge the implicit and insidious denial of agency to Zimbabwe in much of the literature on China-Africa relations.

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<sup>5</sup> Aleksandra W. Gadzala, *Africa and China: How Africans and Their Governments Are Shaping Relations with China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).p. x

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## Jamila Lankford

### LARC 2.0 2017 Proposal

As a freshman in the fall of 2015, I was in a colloquium class with Professor Andries Fourie titled, "the Arts and Identity in South Africa." Though I had previously studied South African history throughout my high school career, this course covered a much more comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the country's origins. The primary focus of the class aimed to show us how art of all forms can be used to express and represent the current political climate of one's country. As an intended science major, I had no interest in pursuing courses in history of any kind. However, within the first few months of the semester, I discovered a love for African history I did not know existed. Professor Fourie's colloquium was very impactful on me for a multitude of reasons, but perhaps one of the most valuable takeaways from his class was its ability to develop my sense of self-identity and cultural heritage. Being a first generation college student of both African and Mexican descent, this was remarkably valuable.

What attracted me to this LARC grant was the opportunity to continue studying Africa, whose history has spiked my academic curiosity. Additionally, I am in the process of pursuing a Chinese Studies minor. I have been taking the language for two years, and plan to continue for the remainder of my collegiate career. Because of these strong academic and cultural ties to Africa and China, I feel that I can adequately design a project that allows me to combine research on these two regions. Moreover, as media coverage continues to be a growing topic of discussion, it is extraordinarily important we educate ourselves to think critically about the way in which it is presented to us. In doing so, we gain the ability to heighten our understanding of our world, especially in our own changing political climate in the United States.

Media is used to communicate with a large number of people on a broad scale, reflecting both the political and social climate of a specific time period. Places with governments which censor their media seek to control expression and thought. However it is in these areas that media is the most expressive, as people find new, more discreet ways to get their messages heard. South Africa, for example, heavily censored its media up until the late 1990s, and within the last five years, tried to pass legislation to allow the government to control it again. Although South Africa remains to be under the leadership of the African National Congress, corruption and greed inside the government remains rampant. It was under the current government, however, that economic ties with China were solidified. In the eyes of several Western nations, this partnership has become a matter of controversy.



My intended research topic for this grant will closely examine how China's involvement and role in South Africa has changed under the current president, Jacob Zuma. Additionally, I will study how these strong economic ties have been represented through various media, including news, film, and literature.

I believe that my research most closely resembles that of Professor Fofana's, who is examining the representation of China in African media. My topic will aid him in providing insight as to how misrepresentation of another country and its people can occur under a corrupt government. By studying different regions, I think we can begin to piece together how Africa as a whole perceives its relationship with China.

I chose to write my grant on South Africa because of the strong academic connections I have made. My research will focus on the conflicting influences in media, specifically between Western and non-Western sources. This will allow me to determine how perception of non-Western countries is shaped. Because South Africa was run by an authoritarian government predominantly comprised of people of European descent, it may have adopted more Western ideologies. Moreover, this perhaps led its media to paint anything non-Western as threatening to Western ideals, including the expansion of Western economies. In order to fully answer these questions, I will analyze differences in representation from sociological, historical, and socioeconomic perspectives in order to reach an accurate consensus on the perception of China and its people through African media.

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**Qingyuan Li**

### **The Racism and Xenophobia in Chinese-African Relationships**

In my research process, I would like to find out the development of racism in Chinese culture over the past twenty years. By looking at how Chinese mainstream media portrays African migrants over the time from 1990s to 2010s, as well as the problems African migrants have faced in China due to Chinese people's perception of African migrants, one can examine the representations that reflect how Chinese perception of Africans develops from late 20th century to present.

Due to the rapid economic development of China over the years, more and more African migrants moved to China to settle and to seek business opportunities. In China, the African population mostly gathers in the south, especially Guangdong province. In 1990s, the first group of African businessmen went to the city of Guangzhou (the capital of Guangdong province). At the time, these business people only went to China for the purpose of commerce, and to bring Chinese products and raw material back to their countries in order to profit. However, as the international relations changed over time, by the end of 2008, the population of African immigrants as permanent residents in Guangzhou is approximately 20,000, and the floating population of African migrants in Guangzhou is over 60,000 according to Chinese government official statistics. The population of African migrants has continued to grow. From January 2014 to May 2014, approximately 100,000 people entered China through different African countries' airlines and have arrived at Guangzhou International Airport.

With the rapid growth of African migrants population, a series of problems have emerged in society. In my research process, I would like to focus on the problem the children of African migrants have been facing -- difficulties of getting education in inland China. In order to look in depth of this problem, I would like to look into the school enrollment system for children of African migrants and find out where the struggles start at. Furthermore, I would like to look at the representation and scholarly discussions of children of African migrants and explore if the representation and experience of the African migrants' children reflect racism and xenophobia.

The most cardinal and fundamental reason of all such problems is the racism and xenophobia that is rooted in Chinese people's mind against African people. And the reason I would love to participate in this program is because of the accumulated disappointment I have with China in regards to this issue. And I long to better understand such social phenomenon, and work towards resolving these problems.

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## Nicholas Shipley

### How Media Impacts the Rhino Horn and Ivory Trade in China and Africa

Can media convince individuals to poach or not poach endangered animals? Can it influence consumers to buy or abstain from buying poached products? I want to study how rhino horn and ivory tusk poaching and rhino horn as a product are represented in the media of China and the countries of Southern Africa, particularly South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. To do this, I will collect print and television reports and information from South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Kenya, as well as any accounts from persons living in areas where poaching is common. Additionally, I want to explore how the politics of poaching as well as rhino and elephant protection is depicted in Chinese media.

My research will depend largely on sources such as *The Times* in South Africa, *Foreign Policy*, *The Chronicle* and *Zimbabwe Daily News* in Zimbabwe, *The People's Daily* in China, *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard* in Kenya, and *The Namibian* in Namibia. While this is not an exhaustive list by any means, but I want to begin the project by compiling a diverse range of media sources.

I think that this research will complement the professors' because both of their research projects revolve around identity and media in China and Africa, and my project will explore the identity of Chinese rhino horn and ivory consumers and to what degree the 'African-ness' of these animal parts influences the identity of the consumer. Media plays a large role in conservation and public awareness campaigns in the west and I want to explore the presence of conservation information, both factual and misleading, on Chinese and African media. Additionally, I am curious what role the consumption of local animals by wealthy Chinese

consumers plays in African media. Is this a continuation of a new form of colonialism? Is it seen as an opportunity for local entrepreneurs to capitalize on the rhino trade? I want to determine if there is an apparent correlation between how poachers and those tasked with stopping them are depicted and actual poaching rates. For example, when painted negatively, do poaching rates decrease? Does depicting conservationist and refuge park rangers in a positive light help with recruiting people to these causes? By studying media, I want to discern which factors make Africans living in poaching areas and those who could be connected to the trade in some way in China choose a side between poachers and those who oppose poaching.

While this project will certainly include some statistics and history of rhino poaching, as well as a description of possible solutions, I want it to focus primarily on the role of various media sources in shaping public opinion in both China and the aforementioned African nations on the topic of rhinos, poachers, and what should be done about them. I think it crucial to the purpose of this paper to include accounts and analysis from sources that are pro-consumption of rhino horn. While my own dispositions are against using animals for products, I think it important to understanding this issue, especially as it pertains to media portrayal and identity shaping, to include those calling for regulated horn trade, advocated of game-hunting parks, and breeding of rhinos specifically for collecting their horns.

Additionally, when I analyze sources such as newspapers, news sites, television broadcasts, and conservation websites I will keep in mind varying levels and types of censorship that may be taking place in a given society's media, particularly China and Zimbabwe.

### Bibliography

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- Botswanan source explaining the politics of ivory and horn trade
- Botswanan source from 2008 when demand was rising again for Ivory
- Chinese media portrayal of suspected ivory smugglers.
- Details dispute between Southern African states in their approach to ivory trade.
- EXPLORING THE ILLEGAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES | Pieters-James, L. (n.d.). Retrieved December 17, 2016, from <http://www.sundaystandard.info/exploring-illegal-trade-endangered-species>
- Illegal ivory network rocks Botswana | Pitse, R. (n.d.). Retrieved December 22, 2016, from <http://www.sundaystandard.info/illegal-ivory-network-rocks-botswana>
- John Kerry hearing on ivory trade:
- Lamprecht, J. (n.d.). Govt issues permit to hunt N\$1,4m rhino. Retrieved December 24, 2016, from [http://www.namibian.com.na/49480/read/Govt-issues-permit-to-hunt-N\\$14m-rhino](http://www.namibian.com.na/49480/read/Govt-issues-permit-to-hunt-N$14m-rhino)
- Penzhorn, B., & Kriek, N. P. J. (1994). *Proceedings of a Symposium on Rhinos as Game Ranch Animals, Onderstepoort, Republic of South Africa, 9-10 September 1994*. Onderstepoort: Wildlife Group, South African Veterinary Association in collaboration with the Wildlife Research Programme, Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria.
- Portrayal of Chinese businesswoman accused of ivory smuggling in Tanzania by Chinese media.
- Shapwonale, N. (n.d.). Criminal Chinese tarnishing name – embassy. Retrieved December 24, 2016, from <http://www.namibian.com.na/49223/read/Criminal-Chinese-tarnishing-name-%E2%80%93-embassy>

## Symposium on poaching:

T. Digital. (n.d.). Ivory from Africa's elephants remains banned for sale. Retrieved December 17, 2016, from <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2016/10/03/Ivory-from-Africas-elephants-remains-banned-for-sale>

*The Namibian*- Legal rhino hunting

*The Namibian*- Account of Chinese rhino horn smuggler

*The Namibian*- Depiction of Chinese nationals in regards to Ivory trade, business visas

*The Times: South Africa* Portrayal of interstate negotiations on Ivory trade

*The Zambezan*. Includes perspective of writer from Mozambique reporting on fellow Mozambicans being incarcerated in South Africa over rhino horn smuggling.

Tjihenua, T. (n.d.). Chinese national arrested with 18 rhino horns. Retrieved December 24, 2016, from <http://www.namibian.com.na/48486/read/Chinese-national-arrested-with-18-rhino-horns#close>

United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, author. (2012). *Ivory and insecurity : The global implications of poaching in Africa : Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundred Twelfth Congress, second session, May 24, 2012*. (United States. Congress. Senate. S. hrg. ; 112-602). Washington: U.S. G.P.O.

Zambezan. (2015). South Africa jails Mozambican rhino poachers. Retrieved December 28, 2016, from <http://www.zambezan.com/south-africa-jails-mozambican-rhino-poachers/>

关晓萌. Mengzhen, W. "Trial of China's 'Ivory Queen' delayed in Tanzania." Trial of China's 'Ivory Queen' delayed in Tanzania - World - Chinadaily.com.cn. Accessed January 10, 2017. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2016-05/10/content\\_25192106.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2016-05/10/content_25192106.htm).

郭凯. Yin, C. "Suspected ivory traders go on trial in Beijing." Suspected ivory traders go on trial in Beijing - China - Chinadaily.com.cn. Accessed January 10, 2017. [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2016-07/18/content\\_26129690.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2016-07/18/content_26129690.htm)

**Proposed Budget: \$2950 (we may skip the trip to archives out of town if inter-library loan is helpful and/or the price is too high, which will reduce the budget to \$1750)**

**Books and Media (a common reading and screening list): \$1080**

**Books: \$130X6=\$780**

Stephen Harold Riggins. *The language and Politics of Exclusion: Others in Discourse*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997. (\$65)

Edward Said. *Orientalism*. Vintage, 1979. (\$14)

Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 2016. (\$15)

Kyle D. Killian. *Interracial Couples, Intimacy, and Therapy: Crossing Racial Borders*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2013. (\$36)

**Media: \$300**

*Guanghou Dream Factory: Immigration, globalization, Chinese factories and African dreams*. (2016). Deborah Bräutigam. : <https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/guangzhou-dream-factory>

Note: this DVD costs \$300. The production company is not selling to home markets. We will try to have the library buy a copy, but that is no longer guaranteed.

*When China Met Africa* (2002). Marc Francis and Nick Francis.

*Why Are They Here? Chinese stories in Africa*. (2011). Yara Costa

*The Africa-China Connection: a Thriving Business Partnership*. (2013). Film for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm) Film Media Group.; NPO/Netherlands Public Broadcast.

*From Marx to world revolution*. (2012). Films for the Humanities & Sciences (Firm); Films Media Group.; Pathé cinéma (France).

**Expenses for research related activities: \$1870\***

**Cultural Experiences: \$670**

Food at a Chinese restaurant \$120

Food at an African restaurant \$120

Trip to Portland Art Museum- (\$260)--admission \$19.99/e X 6 = \$120

Food \$15/e X 6 = \$90

Transportation \$ 50

Trip to U of O's Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at Eugene (\$170)-- admission \$5 X 6 = \$30

Food \$15/e X 6 = \$90

Transportation \$ 50

**\*Visiting Archives: (only if we can't get the materials through inter-library loan)**

Travel to archives at University of Oregon/Washington University (transportation, food, lodge and make copies of materials) **\$1200**

**Meeting Agenda (Tentative)**

Friday, May 12 First meeting (distribute books and discuss plans to move forward)

**May 14 (Commencement)**

Thursday, May 18 Second meeting (discuss readings and revised proposals)

Thursday, May 25 Third meeting (discuss first draft) (cultural experience and discussion)

Tuesday, June 6 Fourth meeting (progress report)—may visit libraries out of town

June 12, Fifth meeting (discuss readings and progress report)

June 19 Sixth meeting (discuss readings and progress report)

June 22 Seventh meeting (cultural experience and discussion)

Skype: July 3 (discuss second draft)

Skype: July 10 Tenth (discuss 3<sup>rd</sup> draft and wrap up research)

Skype: July 17 Turn in final draft