

STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I am an Associate Professor at Michigan State University, and have a 100% appointment in Anthropology. I joined the Anthropology Department at MSU in 1998, and was awarded tenure in 2004. Per my job description, I was hired to “promote the generation of scholarship on Asian Americans, and advance the Ethnic Studies goals and programs of the College and University.” I have successfully integrated my research, teaching and service at MSU and within the academy while carrying out this charge. I started a program in Asian Pacific American Studies (APAS) at MSU in 2004, and served as director from 2004-2012. I have worked across units to create programming and curricula that further understandings of migration and racial and cultural diversity, serving on important department, college, and university committees, and taking the initiative to develop new programs/ minors. These programs and activities integrate student extracurricular learning, anthropological approaches to race and ethnicity, and outreach in my capacity as both a faculty member of anthropology and director of the APAS program. I have organized faculty and staff who do work relating to APA Studies across campus units to build the program, working with multiple Deans to try to secure more programmatic support. I have been active nationally in the field of Asian American Studies, a discipline that enables me to pursue multi-sited, multi-disciplinary projects focusing on Chinese Americans and the Chinese diaspora using anthropological methods, with a specific focus on issues of race, ethnicity, and belonging particular to Asian Americans.

My research has also been closely integrated with my teaching and service goals. I have focused on conducting multi-sited ethnographic research projects and writing books, book chapters, journal articles, reviews and conference papers on the construction of Chinese American identities in the context of diaspora and transnational flows, with attention to their relationships both to China as a homeland and to the U.S. My goals have been to advance the academic literature on the construction of racial and ethnic identities of diaspora Chinese within the politics of belonging and exclusion in the U.S., which have also shaped histories of transnational migration. I have worked to revise theories of transnational migration for the second generation and beyond, with regard to their relationship with their homeland, and conceptions of rootedness, family, and “home.” My future goals are to continue to seek funding for and research the above themes through a multidisciplinary, mixed-methods team project on transnational Chinese students at MSU, and through an innovative ethnography of Chinese American narratives of family and identity as produced within the intersection of history, memory, and the model minority myth.

I. RESEARCH

My work elucidates counter-intuitive concepts that nuance existing academic literatures by combining approaches from different disciplines, time periods, and levels of analysis. The significance of my work extends beyond specific populations to make broader contributions to anthropology, Asian Studies, and Asian American Studies, including diaspora, racial and ethnic politics, globalization, transnational migration, identity politics, racialization, neoliberalism, and constructions of family and kinship. While my individual projects have provided ethnographically rich and historically situated case studies on specific populations, I use these as a basis from which to rethink conceptualizations of transnational migration, the model minority myth, homeland diaspora relations, and race and multiculturalism in the context of neoliberalism. Each project has necessitated that I learn a new body of literature, often extending beyond anthropology, and work across multiple analytical levels, thus enabling me to avoid staying within the same “intellectual silo” and therefore to make theoretical interventions in new areas. My work has spanned different time periods and geographical locations, from Cold War U.S. to mid-1990s Guangdong, China, to early 2000s St. Louis, MO and San Francisco, CA. My work is framed by the changing politics of exclusion and belonging in the U.S. Studying “Chineseness” is a productive place from which to gain new perspectives on these issues, given both the current geopolitical importance of China today and in the past, particularly in relation to the in-between racial status of Chinese Americans in the west, and the rich historical linkages between China and the U.S., particularly in the form of migration, that have brought different waves of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. (and back). My first book, *Chineseness Across Borders: Renegotiating Chinese Identities in China and the U.S.* [REDACTED] was published the year I received tenure and was awarded the 2006 Social Science book award for the Association for Asian American Studies. This work has been highly influential within a growing literature on homeland tourism, on transnationalism beyond the first generation, and Asian diaspora identities. My research has also advanced anthropological theories on the construction of narratives of history and identity within

multi-layered local, national, and transnational contexts. I cross the traditional boundaries of Asian American and Asian studies through the use of multi-sited research and analytical perspectives.

In 2001, I began a longitudinal (2001-2009), multisited (St. Louis, San Francisco, and China) ethnographic research project on white and Asian American parents who adopt children from China. This project was funded by two MSU IRGP grants, and an NEH Summer Stipend (2004). This research resulted in my second book, *How Chinese Are You?: Adopted Youth and Their Families Negotiate Identity and Culture* (New York University Press 2015), and two peer reviewed publications. *How Chinese Are You?* examines how white and Asian American adoptive parents address issues of “cultural socialization” and racism in relation to their children adopted from China, and how their children continue to build on these identities as they become teenagers. This project contributes to a burgeoning literature in transnational, transracial adoption studies that aims to contextualize both adoptive parents’ efforts to socialize their children, and adoptees’ own identity issues, within shifting politics of race and culture in the U.S. Chinese children adopted by white parents have specific relationships both to whiteness and Chineseness that differentiate them from Asian Americans with Asian American parents. My work also builds upon the literature in anthropology, sociology, and adoption studies that examines the class, racial, and political factors shaping the context within which adoptees and their parents form racial and ethnic identities. The longitudinal nature of the study and its focus on both white and Asian American adoptive parents and teens, differentiates it from previous works on Asian transnational adoption.

My article, titled “Pandas, Lions, and Dragons, oh my!: How White Adoptive Parents Construct Chineseness” (2009), was published in the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, the flagship journal in the field of Asian American Studies. “Encountering a Mediated China: An Ethnographic Examination of an Adoption Trip,” (2008) was based on fieldwork I conducted while accompanying parents to China to adopt their children in 2002 and provides an ethnographic lens on the ways they experience China in particularized ways that combines tourist practices and their focus on bonding with and bringing home their children. This peer-reviewed piece was published as part of an issue of *Encounters: An International Journal for the Study of Culture and Society*, titled “East Asian Transnational Migrants and Culture in a Global World.” I was also invited to contribute an article titled “Searching for Roots in Contemporary China and Chinese America” (2008) on my research on Chinese American roots for a peer-reviewed edited volume edited by prominent Asian American historians, titled *Chinese Americans and the Politics of Race and Culture*. The editors aimed to compile “leading-edge scholarship from a new generation of thinkers” to reflect on the past, present, and future of Chinese American studies.

In addition to the peer-reviewed pieces above, I have published an (editor-reviewed) article on international adoption in the context of migration studies in the *International Handbook of Migration Studies* (2012), edited by [redacted] and [redacted]. I was also solicited to write a keywords entry on “Generation” (2015) for the *Keywords for Asian American Studies* volume, published by NYU Press, and edited by prominent Asian American scholars. I was selected to contribute an entry on “Chinese Identity” (2009) to the *Encyclopedia of Modern China*.

Two additional peer reviewed articles are in press. The first, co-authored with [redacted] [redacted] titled “Car Talk: Automobility and Chinese International Students in Michigan,” has been accepted by *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*. The article focuses on how neoliberal economic reforms in China and the U.S. have led to unprecedented numbers of middle and upper class Chinese students seeking higher education in the U.S. Chinese students purchasing new automobiles in the context of a revitalizing Michigan economy are often seen as flaunting their wealth. However, the significance of automobiles to Chinese students living so far away from home can only be understood within the automobile culture of a rapidly growing mainland Chinese middle and upper classes, and in relation to idea of safety, status, and sociability that are produced within the context of transnational migration and the temporary settlement of students abroad. The second, titled “Reassessing Chinese American Identities: How Adoptees and American Born Chinese (ABCs) Negotiate Chineseness” has been accepted by the *Journal of Chinese Overseas*. I discuss both of my book projects--on American-born Chinese Americans searching for roots in China, and on Chinese adoptees and their families-- as they relate to the construction of relationships to the homeland by generations without direct ties.

My long-term research plans include seeking funding for my latest book project and additional funding for the Chinese student project. I also applied for a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant in April 2017 for my latest book. The numbers of Chinese international students at MSU has been steadily growing over the past five years. In 2013, I conducted a small pilot study, which was followed by a larger, mixed-methods project in 2014 in collaboration with MSU colleagues in Human Development and Family

Studies and in Education. We were awarded a Spencer Foundation Small Grant (\$50,000) in December 2015 and collected the bulk of the data in 2015-2016, which included extensive survey data on Chinese international students, non-Chinese international students, and domestic students, as well as ethnographic interviews of Chinese international students and domestic students. Our study is distinguished from other work on Chinese international students not only by its interdisciplinary, mixed methods approach, which combines perspectives from anthropology, education, and psychology, but also its focus on a specific university environment (MSU) and its surrounding community. We look not only factors within the university setting affecting their academic achievement, but also at the broader social and cultural environments within which they operate daily that link them to both Chinese and non-Chinese peers, on and off campus, and which often extend globally to friends and family in mainland China. Our study bridges the transnational context and the local context of a Midwestern university in which Chinese students have become a highly visible presence. We have submitted another article, on which I am second author (with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] titled, "Behind the Fancy Wheels: Social Class, Gender, and Identity of Chinese International Students in a Midwestern College Town." We focus on how Chinese student car purchases serve as performances of class identity within the transnational Chinese student population at MSU, and how the performances of the *fu'er dai* (second generation rich) and *tuhao* (uncouth nouveau riche) upper classes elicit critiques from fellow students.

My newest project, under contract with New York University Press (final manuscript due January 2019), is an innovative, interdisciplinary study that combines archival research with ethnographic interviews to tell the story of a particular historical event from a number of perspectives. [REDACTED], a widowed mother of eight children, emigrated to the U.S. in 1929 during the Chinese Exclusion Era as the second wife of laundry worker who had settled in Portland, ME. She was selected as national Mother of the Year in 1952, which garnered her national and international attention, including a meeting with Mrs. [REDACTED] and parades in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia Chinatowns. Her story was highlighted in the local and national media as one of assimilation, exemplary motherhood, and the achievement of the American Dream. This is especially noteworthy, in that recent historical studies have shown that the 1950s marked the rise of the model minority myth for Chinese and Japanese Americans, who had previously been viewed as unassimilable and alien. Much of this literature has focused on how the model minority myth arose within the broader context of the Cold War, the containment of communism, and shifting racial and ethnic politics in the U.S. Thus, the story of [REDACTED], a widow who raised eight successful assimilated children after refusing welfare, was a convenient allegory for the newly positive status of Chinese Americans, the importance of strong mothers to produce model families, and the opportunities that Chinese in the U.S. had that they would not have had in China. However, while the media told a narrative of success, assimilation, and model motherhood, my project focuses on counternarratives to this version of the story to provide a more complete and nuanced version of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] migration history, including the continuing challenges that she faced that complicate her model minority image, her transnational ties to China that contradict the narrative of Americanization, and the competing narratives that portrayed her as both a traditional and modern mother and woman at a time when these roles were being debated. I also focus on the retelling of her story in the present day, in public histories, and by later generations of Chinese Americans, including her descendants. I weave these multiple narratives together to rewrite her story through an ethnographic lens.

My book will be an important part of a rich literature in the field of Asian American studies that draws on historical materials to rethink the origins of model minority myth ([REDACTED] 2013, [REDACTED] 2015, [REDACTED] 1999, [REDACTED] 2005, [REDACTED] 2013, [REDACTED] 2012). Like my previous projects, this one considers issues central to the field of Asian American Studies such as identity, migration, narratives of family, racialization, belonging, and Asian American cultural production. However, this project is distinct in the sense that I have a personal connection to it-- [REDACTED] was my maternal grandmother—and because it represents an innovative form of anthropological ethnography that combines archival research with analysis of secondary newspaper and academic sources, and oral histories and interviews. More than a historical biography, the project is an ethnography of the shifting terrain of the model minority discourse, focusing on a family that was at the center of the media attention, and exploring the continuing effects of this discourse as it circulated. I am interested in the ways it has been re-narrated and re-worked to reflect current generations' desired interpretations of their own success.

II. IMPACT

My work has had a significant impact in the fields of Anthropology and Asian American Studies. I have published both of my books with top university presses, the first (pre-tenure) with Duke University

Press, and the second with New York University Press. *Chineseness Across Borders* has been cited 182 times (per Google Scholar), and my *American Ethnologist* article has been cited 102 times. My other articles and chapters have averaged approximately 25 citations. *Chineseness Across Borders* won the 2006 Association for Asian American Studies book award. Because it was published in August 2015, *How Chinese Are You?* has not yet been widely cited. However, it has been reviewed in the *American Anthropologist*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Anthropological Quarterly*, and *Contemporary Sociology*.

The prospectus for my latest book project, *Chinese American Mothering Across Generations* (under contract with New York University Press), was evaluated by anonymous reviewers for both New York University Press and Temple University Press. Reviews spoke to the significance and unique contributions of the project, as well as to my previous track record in publishing.

My work has also been recognized by colleagues, as indicated by the talks I have been invited to give. I have been asked to serve as a discussant on panels focusing on homeland tourism and to participate in a symposium on homeland tourism at the University of Toronto in which my research was known by the other participants and used in their teaching and research. I have been invited on two different occasions by Fulbright scholars in residence at Hong Kong University to present at the conferences they organized, the first titled "From South China to North America" organized by Dr. [REDACTED] in 2010, and the second titled "Imagining Asia in the Age of Trump," organized by Dr. [REDACTED] in 2017. I have also been invited to give talks at U.C. Irvine, University of Illinois Champaign Urbana, Columbia University, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, and Pomona College (Pacific Basin Institute) among other institutions.

III. TEACHING

My teaching reflects my contributions to the curriculum at MSU in Asian American Studies, Asian Studies, and the study of race, ethnicity, migration and identity in a global context. I have taught undergraduate courses including an introduction to sociocultural anthropology, a course on social and cultural analysis (an overview of anthropological theory), and upper division courses on China, Race and Ethnicity, and Asian Diasporas. I also teach a graduate course on transnational migration and globalization. I have mentored graduate students in developing research projects and conducting dissertation fieldwork and in particular mentored minority students, both undergraduate and graduate, in areas related to anthropology, Asian Studies, and Asian American studies. I have devoted significant time and energy into developing and directing a program in Asian Pacific American Studies (see Service).

My classes emphasize the broader disciplinary contexts of anthropology/social science as modes of inquiry into social problems, and the relevance of issues and concepts from class to students' own social and political concerns. I was asked to teach an ISS 335 National Diversity and Change, a special section of a general education course specifically on Asian Americans yearly when I arrived at MSU. I also teach my introduction to sociocultural anthropology and race and ethnicity courses with a focus on issues of race, ethnicity and other forms of social inequality. Teaching about Asian American issues and issues of race, class and power to a diverse audience of students of Asian, white, Latino and African American descent from various class and regional backgrounds represents an important direction for the development of ethnic studies in the Midwest. Bringing together these students has facilitated the sharing of knowledge across class and racial boundaries. Students in my Asian American class have been challenged to learn about race in American society through the lens of Asian Americans, whose position as an in-between (black and white), often-invisible minority elucidates important issues in U.S. racial politics. I employ identity exercises in which students are asked to think about their own positions in relation to U.S. racial and multicultural politics. In addition, I focus on the "hidden histories" represented by important events in Asian American history, and encourage them to think about the significance of these omissions from mainstream narratives. Students complete current events scrapbook projects in which they collect entries from a variety of media sources and analyze them in relation to class materials to encourage them to make connections between class materials and the "real world" and to critically read the media and their daily experiences. My lower division anthropology courses emphasize issues of social change in the contemporary world system, in both the U.S. and abroad. I try to dispel ideas about anthropology as the study of exotic, pristine cultures as I introduce students to concepts of colonialism and power inequalities within a world system including in the U.S., which often challenges students' preconceived notions about race, class, and other forms of social inequality. My graduate seminar on Transnational Processes and Identities (ANP 815) focuses on issues of migration, globalization, transnational and diaspora theories, and theories of place, space and identity. This course attracts students working in various regions of the world including Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the U.S. and

from anthropology, sociology, education, and history. Please see my c.v. for student comments.

I currently serve on nine graduate student committees, five of which I chair or co-chair. The majority of graduate students with whom I work are interested in topics such as transnational migration, globalization, diaspora, racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S., and identity production. I advise students working in all parts of the world. I have also served as an unofficial mentor for a many undergraduate students interested in pursuing further studies in anthropology, Asian Studies, or Asian American studies. Quite a few of these students are racial and ethnic minorities.

IV. OUTREACH/SERVICE

My service and outreach activities have focused on the development of the Asian American Studies and ethnic studies at MSU, which was stipulated in my job description when I was hired. I have also served on departmental, college level, and university committees. In 2004, after many years of student and faculty efforts to establish a program in Asian American Studies, I developed an interdisciplinary, cross college program in Asian Pacific American Studies at MSU. I created new courses, submitted a proposal for the specialization/minor to the college and put it through various levels of curricular approval, sought approval from departments and units whose courses are used in the program, produced a strategic plan, and recruited and worked with students, faculty, and staff members associated with the program to get the program up and running. I served as director of the program from 2004-2012, and was in charge of programming, budget, curriculum, grant writing, strategic planning, and supervising program personnel. With the help of an advisory board and program assistants, I organized two national conferences, outreach programming, guest speakers, and special events, including "Rethinking Hmong American Culture" in which I brought in an anthropologist specializing in Miao/Hmong people, a Hmong American activist, and some actors from the film *Gran Torino* to discuss portrayals of Hmong Americans in film and in literature, such as in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] book *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, a book commonly used in undergraduate teaching and in medical school curricula to teach about "cultural competence." I also arranged for the anthropologist and Hmong American activist to speak to all first and second year MSU medical students about the concept of Hmong American cultural difference and how that informs their beliefs.

I have served on a number of important committees in the Department of Anthropology, including the Graduate Admissions Committee (chair), faculty search committees, the Undergraduate Program and Curriculum Committee (chair), the Department's Advisory Committee (chair), and as Associate Chair for one semester. I have organized many speakers over the years for the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Lecture Series in Asian Anthropology, an annual endowed lecture series in honor of a retired colleague who conducted pioneering research in China and Taiwan. I have served on the CSS FAC, the CSS Curriculum Committee, and the Dean's Advisory Board for Diversity and Inclusion. I am a core member of the Asian Studies Center, and a member of the faculty advisory council of CASID. I have also been appointed to MSU's Diversity Research Network board.

I serve on the working editorial boards of two important journals in Asian American Studies, the *Journal of Asian American Studies* and *Verge/Studies in Global Asias*. I have also been active with the Association for Asian American Studies, an interdisciplinary organization for scholars working on research related to Asian Americans. In addition to serving on the program committee twice, I have also served on the book award committee for the social science category. In 2016, I was asked by the president of the association to serve as program committee co-chair for the 2018 Association for Asian American Studies meeting, to be held March in San Francisco, CA. Duties include developing the conference theme and CFP, selecting the program committee, organizing a plenary session, and scheduling.

As an outreach component of my research, I have obtained funding for and carried out a number of programs for families who have adopted from Asia in the area, including a mentorship program that paired MSU Asian American students with Chinese adoptees, and a workshop featuring a Chinese adoptee speaker and activist. I have supported Asian American students on campus, and have been the faculty advisor for numerous student organizations, including SKAA (Student Korean Adoptee Association), and Somewhere In Between (an adoptee organization). I have collaborated with other MSU colleagues focusing on ethnic studies, to co-organize a three-day mid-career workshop held in 2011, sponsored by MSU and CIC funds for ethnic studies faculty in the CIC, titled, "Making the Periphery Central." I was also selected to serve as a review panel member for the prestigious School of Advanced Research Residential Scholarships in Anthropology in 2013.