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EDUCATION

- Present University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
Joint Doctoral Candidate in Sociology and Business (Organizations and Markets)
Dissertation: “The Architecture of Grassroots-Oriented Corporate Philanthropy in Contemporary China”
Committee: Elisabeth Clemens (co-chair), Amanda Sharkey (co-chair), Dingxin Zhao, Brayden King (Northwestern University)
- 2014 University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
M.A. in the Social Sciences
- 2013 East China Normal University, Shanghai, China
B.A. in Sociology, with highest honors

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Organization Theory, Economic Sociology, Political Sociology, Qualitative, Statistical, and Computational Methods

SELECTED WORKING PAPERS

1. “Varieties of Competition: Nonprofit Status Hierarchies and Grassroots-Oriented Corporate Philanthropy in China.” Job market paper.

Prior research has established that corporate philanthropic donations in emerging market economies are predominantly received by the government, yet little is known about why firms support grassroots nonprofit organizations that are not dependent organs of the state. Drawing on a comparative qualitative study of corporate donations flowing to three coastal cities of China, I document why this grassroots-oriented corporate philanthropy prevailed in some localities but not others. Rather than surrendering control over donation allocation to political authorities through collaborating with government-led charities, Chinese firms set up social initiatives as immediate extensions of core business activities when working with grassroots nonprofits. Such grassroots-oriented corporate giving was, nevertheless, conditioned by structural configurations of local nonprofit status hierarchies. In localities where constant exposure to nonprofit performance ratings systems induced intense interorganizational competition for higher standings, grassroots nonprofits were more incentivized to invest in technological and organizational capabilities that in turn provided means for firms to implement philanthropic programs on the ground. Besides, when local performance contests were characterized by ambiguous criteria, grassroots nonprofits were more amenable to corporate donors’ commercial goals which had been previously discounted by civil society. These findings inform a status hierarchy theory of social structure underlying corporate philanthropy, contributing more broadly to work on social status competition, corporate social responsibility, and political embeddedness.

2. “The Make or Buy State: Governed Incentivization and Partisan Asymmetry in Federal Contracting” (with Elisabeth Clemens). In preparation for submission.

We use a quantitative analysis of the U.S. federal contracting data from 1979 to 2018 to demonstrate that the decisions to lodge federal government functions in the public or private sector are shaped by political and partisan agendas, rather than the need to optimize economic efficiency.

3. “Proximate Cohesion: Physical Copresence and Political Suturing in China’s Social Sector.” In preparation for submission.

On the basis of a multi-year ethnographic study of two Chinese social services organizations, I show that organization-wide negotiation is more likely to be achieved when members with opposed political preferences have long been working in closer physical proximity.

4. “Phantom of the Past: Resurgence of Totalitarian Discourses in Post-Socialist Propaganda” (with Tong Ju).

Applying computational techniques to 272,000 articles from 1966 to 2003 in the People’s Daily, known as the primary media outlet of the Chinese Communist Party, we find that when facing emerging social unrest, the authoritarian government in the transitional period reverts to extremely radical and ideology-infused discourses in order to tackle political uncertainty and reaffirm state legitimacy.

5. “Commercializing for Social Goods: Grassroots-Oriented Corporate Philanthropy as Extension of Core Business Activities.” Dissertation chapter.

Using interviews and an original dataset on philanthropic activities of corporate foundations in China from 2004 to 2019, I find that because of political precarity of grassroots nonprofits under authoritarianism, corporate donations to these organizations create opportunity for firms to advance core commercial activities—such as marketing products and connecting with business partners—exactly within philanthropic ceremonies and roadshows. Specifically, firm managers manage to integrate commerciality into grassroots-oriented corporate philanthropy through resource reconfiguration, agenda cooptation, and risk minimization.

6. “Public Procurement and Public Responsibilities: How Government Contracting Shapes Donations to the State.” Dissertation chapter.

I compile an original database on China’s corporate foundations and their funding companies and show that firms awarded government contracts are less likely to allocate donations to state-led charities. To do so, I also leverage an exogenous shock in local state policy, which seeks to benefit some government contractors through higher level of financial aids and other institutional supports.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Varieties of Competition: Nonprofit Status Hierarchies and Grassroots-Oriented Corporate Philanthropy in China.” Paper presented at the Early Career Workshop, Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics Virtual Annual Meeting, July 2021. Earlier drafts also presented at the Emerging Scholars Workshop Celebrating *the Nonprofit Sector*, University of Chicago, October 2020, the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA, August 2020, and the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston, MA, August 2019.

“The Make or Buy State: A Political Economy of Government Contracting” (with Elisabeth Clemens). Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York, NY, August 2019. An earlier draft also presented at the Money, Markets, and Governance Workshop, University of Chicago, May 2019.

“Phantom of the Past: Resurgence of Totalitarian Discourses in Post-Socialist Propaganda” (with Tong Ju). Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York, NY, August 2019.

“Spatial Considerateness: The Ecology of Micro-Institutional Change in Organizations.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, Montreal, Canada, August 2017. Also presented at the Kellogg-Booth Student Symposium at Northwestern University, Chicago, IL, April 2017.

“Chinese Nonprofit Organizations within Multiple Institutional Contexts.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of Shanghai Sociological Association, Shanghai, China, October 2011.

SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

2021-2022	Dissertation Fellowship, Center for East Asian Studies
2021-2022	Dissertation Fellow, Center for International Social Science Research
2021	Early Career Workshop Award, Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (SASE)
2021	Social Impact Best Dissertation Prize (\$10,000), Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation
2021	Department Nominee, Organization and Management Theory (OMT) Division Doctoral Consortium, Academy of Management Annual Meeting
2020-2021	Graduate Student Fellow, Social Sciences Research Center
2020	Charles R. Henderson Research Grant (\$5,000)
2019-2021	Research Support Funding (\$12,750), Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation
2019	Pre-Dissertation Research Grant (\$3,000), Center for East Asian Studies
2011	Annual Conference Best Paper Award, Shanghai Sociological Association
2010	National Scholarship Award (top 1% of class), Ministry of Education of China

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2017-2019	Research Assistant for Elisabeth Clemens, University of Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none">Analyzed U.S. federal government spending data by year and departmentPrepared materials for cases studies of federal outlays in key industries
2014	Research Assistant for Dali Yang, University of Chicago <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reviewed recent literature on corruption in the Chinese governmentGathered archival data to trace organizational history of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the Communist Party of China, one of China’s major anti-corruption government agencies
2010	Research Assistant for Melissa Brown, Stanford University <ul style="list-style-type: none">Undertook ethnographic research in three villages in Jiangxi Province, China to examine effects of foot-binding on daily routines of Chinese female labor in the early 20th centuryConducted over 30 semi-structured interviews with elderly women aged 70 to 100 in these villages

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2020 Teaching Assistant for Amanda Sharkey, Strategy and Structure: Markets and Organizations (MBA), University of Chicago
- 2019 Guest Lecturer and Teaching Assistant for Elisabeth Clemens, Political Sociology (Graduate and Undergraduate), University of Chicago
- 2019 Teaching Assistant for Marshall Jean, Applications of Hierarchical Linear Models (Graduate and Undergraduate), University of Chicago
- 2018 Teaching Assistant for Elisabeth Clemens, the Politics of Popular Sovereignty: Participation and Protest (Undergraduate), University of Chicago
- 2018 Co-Instructor with Terry Clark, Global-Local Politics (Graduate and Undergraduate), University of Chicago
- 2013 Teaching Assistant for Yunxiang Yan, Globalization in Context Research Seminar (Undergraduate), University of California, Los Angeles
- 2011-2012 Occasional SPSS Instructor (Graduate and Undergraduate), Graduate School of East China Normal University

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Ad-Hoc Reviewer, Academy of Management Annual Meeting (2019-), *American Journal of Sociology* (2018-)
- 2018-2019 Member, Manuscript Board, *American Journal of Sociology*
- 2018 Co-Chair, Roundtable on Chinese, Asian, and Western Local Governments and Citizen Responsiveness, Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association

NON-ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2014-2015 Program Assistant for the Master of Arts Program in the Social Sciences (MAPSS), Division of the Social Sciences, University of Chicago
- 2012 Assistant Officer of Grassroots and NGO Affairs, Civil Affairs Bureau, Jinshan District Government, Shanghai, China

MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association
Organizations, Occupations, and Work Section
Political Sociology Section
Economic Sociology Section
Asia and Asian America Section

Academy of Management
Organization and Management Theory Division
Strategic Management Division
Entrepreneurship Division

OTHER SKILLS

Language Competence: Chinese (native) and Japanese (intermediate)

Software Packages: Stata, SPSS, HLM, LEM, and MAXQDA

Programming Languages: R and Python

REFERENCES

Elisabeth Clemens (dissertation co-chair)
William Rainey Harper Distinguished
Service Professor of Sociology
University of Chicago
clemens@uchicago.edu

Amanda Sharkey (dissertation co-chair)
Associate Professor of Organizations
and Strategy
University of Chicago Booth School of
Business
Amanda.Sharkey@chicagobooth.edu

Dingxin Zhao (dissertation committee
member)
Max Palevsky Professor of Sociology
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