



Education of Values: Marketizing the Aging Population in Urban China

Yifan Wang

Rice University
yifanwang@rice.edu

Abstract

In this article, I examine some of the marketing and sales strategies at Gardenview, a newly established eldercare company that ran a few residential eldercare facilities in Nanjing, China. There, like elsewhere in urban China, the projected aging demography was mobilized to push for an industrialization (*chanyehua*)—marketization and professionalization—of eldercare, transforming ideas and experience of eldercare by putting forward a new set of knowledge of aging. To this end, I first ground the rising eldercare industry in the transitioning paradigm of conceptualizing China's population from population control to demographic aging. Then I explore ethnographically how Gardenview participated in the eldercare industry in a rapidly aging China. In particular, I look at the floorplans and the marketing stories as devices of the education of values—as prices, the good and desirable, and differentiators—to understand the social, economic, and ethical dynamics instigated by a transitioning demography. These values, as I show, are crucial in linking everyday life and choices with the paradigmatic shift of China's population. Finally, I discuss how understanding the very processes of marketing and sales as an education of values could shed further light on what anthropologist Michael Fischer calls "literacies of the future" as a socially and economically elaborated and contested world of an aging China.

Keywords: eldercare; marketization; population; ethics; development; values

Anthropology & Aging, Vol 42, No 2 (2021), pp. 36-51

ISSN 2374-2267 (online) DOI 10.5195/aa.2021.305



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

This journal is published by the [University Library System](#) of the [University of Pittsburgh](#) as part of its [D-Scribe Digital Publishing Program](#), and is cosponsored by the [University of Pittsburgh Press](#).

Education of Values: Marketizing the Aging Population in Urban China

Yifan Wang

Rice University
yifann.wang@gmail.com

Introduction

In May 2018, not long after settling in the city of Nanjing for a short research trip, I came across a poster of a campus recruitment event by a corporation known for its real estate enterprise. The highlight of the event, according to the poster, would be a keynote speech by Mr. Liu, the Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Liu would introduce the college audience to the corporation's wide range of businesses, including Gardenview, the sector that was focused on residential eldercare.¹

When I arrived early on the day of the event, the auditorium was already half filled, and it looked like the other half were just queuing in line outside for souvenirs. The majority of the hundreds of attendants were finishing college or graduate school and had just entered the job market. Those who scanned the company's QR code and followed its social media account would be gifted a customized planner notebook—a taste of the corporate culture perhaps—filled with inspirational quotes and blank space for writing down daily, monthly, and yearly goals for personal and professional growth.

A charismatic speaker, Mr. Liu won waves of applause and laughter before the talk even began. The hour-long speech, titled “An Idealist Venturing into Reality,” weaved together Mr. Liu's personal, successful, and idiosyncratic career path with the expansion of the corporation. Messages of passion, ambition, and entrepreneurship filled the room, promising to set a course for the future where individual and corporate interests would simply coincide. After another round of applause, the host opened the floor for questions. Following two rather congratulatory inquiries (How did you find such courage to change your life path? Would students of entrepreneurship find themselves to be a good fit for your company?), a graduate history student was selected by the host. He challenged Mr. Liu's portrayal of the newly established eldercare business, Gardenview, and asked, “Hello Mr. Liu, sending parents to nursing homes is contradictory to the traditional Chinese ethics and culture. How can you guarantee your eldercare model works in China?”

“I disagree with you,” Mr. Liu quickly responded, as if he had been waiting for an opportunity to elaborate on a theory of eldercare,

First, ethics is historical. What you said might be the view of a certain time, but as time passes and the environment changes, what used to be unethical and immoral in the past could be transformed into the ethical standards of another time. Second, aging is also an economic problem. [...] With the aging of the parents of the only-child's generation, only corporate interventions with professionalism and efficiency will be the optimal solution for society.

Sounding almost unsettlingly familiar, Mr. Liu's answers echoed all too many enduring anthropological conversations about contemporary China, touching on the transformation of filial ethics (Ikels 2004),

the drastically reshaping landscape of residential eldercare (Chen *et al.* 2016; Harper 1992; Zhan *et al.* 2008), and a localization of corporate social responsibility that is deeply rooted in a post-socialist modernity (Chong 2018). While aging has become an increasingly prominent topic in China's social and natural sciences (for a reivev in the latter, see O'Meara 2020), Mr. Liu's response showed that these insights were by no means bound to scholarship—they are fully operational within business practices and feed into foundational corporate stories.

In this article, I join the conversation surrounding transitioning eldercare ethics in China by turning to the less examined sphere of the corporate. While filial piety, or *xiao*, remains the center where eldercare is conceptualized, anthropologists have shown that, since the economic reform and following the birth planning policies, this traditionally male-based virtue of reverence towards the parents has been variously interpreted, cultivated, and mobilized (Harrell and Davis 1993; Ikels 2004; Shi 2009; Sun 2017; Yan 2003; Zhang 2006; Zhan and Montgomery 2003).² In what follows, I push this insight further by looking at how my corporate interlocutors treated filial ethics as something malleable and capable of being acted upon. Whether Mr. Liu is an opportunist or not, the fact that corporations ground their market activities on premises of ethical transformation merits a close examination of how business practices such as marketing and sales shape and are shaped by moral codes and social values (Zelizer 1979). For instance, how do marketing and sales professionals make something sellable and valuable? How do they find consumers, and how do consumers know what they want? And what is the role of corporations or of the market at large in the transformation of the social and the ethical? Put differently, instead of seeing the market solely as a reaction to underlying social transformation, what might we be able to see when we understand corporations as agentive forces that actively seek to transform the social and the ethical?

To begin to address these questions, in this article, I look at some of the sales practices and marketing narratives deployed by Gardenview (one example among many similar new eldercare entities). Specifically, I examine the processes and devices of what I call an “education of values” to understand the social, economic, and ethical encounters that are brought forth by the state's call for societal responses to population aging. Here, population aging is understood to be more prescriptive than descriptive. A politically contested arena, the official narrative of the population in China comes with national policies that directly impact ordinary people's lives and figure into popular perceptions of the future (see also Aulino 2017). Demography, therefore, needs to be understood as a strong state presence channeled in the naturalized language of demography when the state shifts away from its previous concern with overpopulation to population aging. By turning to these emerging values, I especially pay attention to how—all at once as economic prices, the social good and desirable, and differentiators (Graeber 2001, 1–2)—these values are packaged and marketed and link everyday life and choices with this politically charged demography. Together, I explore how companies participated in and shaped the eldercare industry that the state actively fosters (Chen 2016; Feng *et al.* 2011).

Towards a Known Future of Aging

After a series of communications following the campus event, Gardenview's human resources department and the sales director allowed me to conduct ethnographic research about the company's daily operations by working as an intern. Therefore, this article is mainly based on my research-internship in the summer of 2018, with corresponding moments drawn from my year-long fieldwork in 2019-2020 conducted in the same department. While I was based at Gardenview's head office, I frequently visited the company's care facilities to conduct unstructured interviews with staff members from all posts. My work in the head office included attending various training sessions, translating materials between English and Chinese, and writing conference summaries, through which I

familiarized myself not only with the company's work routines but also various corporate research projects. At the facilities, I assisted social workers as they organized activities and helped with the kinds of miscellaneous tasks that are common in scenes of caregiving. At times, I also joined managers to check the interior decorating progress at the then soon-to-be opened facilities, where I learned how the space—as a room for care and a floorplan for business—was operated and evaluated in the eyes of sales supervisors.

Like many Chinese real estate and insurance corporations, along with a number of state-owned enterprises, Gardenview's parent company began to explore the largely uncharted waters of commercial eldercare around the early 2010s, citing the year 2013 as "Year One" (*yuannian*) of the Chinese eldercare industry. In June 2013, the Ministry of Civil Affairs issued Order No. 49, *Measures for the Administration of Elder Care Institutions*, which was the first national regulation governing the operation of eldercare facilities (Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China 2013). More significantly, in September, the State Council issued *Several Opinions on Accelerating the Development of the Elderly Service Industry* (State Council of People's Republic of China 2013). Commonly referred to as "Document No. 35" (*Sanshiwuhao Wenjian*) by entrepreneurs, this piece was held to be the milestone of China's eldercare industrializing (*chanyehua*).

Like many ensuing policies, *Document No. 35* sets the tone by prefacing that "China's population has entered the stage of rapid aging" (2013). With "194 million" older adults above 60 years of age, it continued to project that "this number will be 243 Million by 2020 and over 300 million by 2025" (2013). As the full title suggests, *Document No. 35* accentuated the prospect of marketizing eldercare in China, presenting the notion of an eldercare industry (*yanglao chanye*) as an economically promising and socially imperative response to the "rapid aging stage" of China's demography. In November of the same year, the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee released an economic reform guideline, *The Decision of the Central Committee of the CPC on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reforms*. Among the measures, it proposed to relax the long-standing "one-child policy" and open foreign investment in eldercare. All of these were read as indicators of the state's efforts in fostering an eldercare industry in the face of rapid population aging.

China saw a surge of eldercare service expansion in the following years. In 2013, for example, there were 42,475 residential eldercare institutions in China with a total of 4,937,000 beds (Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China 2014). By 2018, the number of institutions had nearly quadrupled to 168,000 with 7,271,000 beds (Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China 2019). An analysis of the main Chinese stock markets (known as the A-share and H-share markets) shows that as of 2018, 82 listed companies extended their business into the eldercare sector. While nearly 40% of this group are real estate companies, the rest are mainly composed of establishments in pharmaceuticals, information technology, finance, and insurance (Liu 2018). Gardenview, among these self-identified "pioneers," ran several residential care facilities in Nanjing and neighboring cities in the Yantze River Delta region, one of the wealthiest as well as the earliest demographically aging regions in China.

Although mobilizing the market to salvage population aging was not ostensibly advocated by the state until the 2010s, population aging and its socio-economic consequences were not new to China's political discourse. Shadowed by the concern of overpopulation and population growth, the question of population aging was more of a footnote and a secondary problem in the state's "longest campaign" (White 2006) of birth planning since the late 1970s. For example, economist and demographer TIAN Xueyuan, popularly known as the "father of the birth planning policy" (*jihuashengyu zhifu*), voiced a concern that strict birth planning could lead to major side effects, especially population aging.³ In his 1980 *People's Daily* article, titled "On the Problem of 'Population Aging,'" Tian specifically addressed

the challenges that scholars raised against the implementation of birth planning policies. He acknowledged that curbing the birth rate could indeed lead to population aging, a problem that had already emerged in North and West European countries. Yet he argued that in China, the potential transformation of the age structure of the population *in the long run* would not cancel out the benefit of suppressing population growth.

By foregrounding the temporality of demographic transition—that is, by noting that demography entails not only the present but also the viability of the future—Tian Xueyuan presented birth planning policies as a social mathematics that games with time, addressing the policies as only a temporary and imperfect but manageable experiment that tackles the imperative of “reducing natural birth rate.”⁴ In particular, he argued that aging was a problem in Europe only because of the resulting labor shortage and the burden of “social labor,” (meaning, the labor of eldercare) both of which he dismissed in the context of China. When it comes to labor shortages, Tian believed China’s billion-plus population—compared to the few millions in most European countries—coupled with technoscientific development *in the long run* would ease China’s transition to an aging society. For eldercare provision, Tian again emphasized that the policy itself was only temporary and would be modified to encourage childbirth again soon enough.

In a 2015 interview, published just a few months before the official termination of the one-child policy, Tian admitted that he should have addressed population aging more in depth (Feng and Xiao 2015). Retrospectively, he deemed the one-child policy as a “solution of no solutions” (*meiyou banfa de banfa*) in the face of China’s population growth, and said its modification had been long overdue.

The resulting demographic transformation has become what the World Health Organization (2015) deemed “dramatic” population aging in China. In the decades following the implementation of the one-child policy, China has grown to be the quintessential site of what is now called “global aging” (United Nations 2015; Zeng 2012). To put the numbers evoked in *Document No. 35* on a global scale, in 2012, 13.3 percent of China’s 1.4 billion people were older than 60, nearly 2 percent above the global average of 11.5 percent (UNFPA and HelpAge 2012). Demography, moreover, always entails a narrative of the future. Demographic models projected that by 2050, the population over the age of 60 in China will have doubled to 33.9% of the total population, significantly higher than the projected global average of 21.8% (2012). These numbers are evoked to entail a near future of labor shortage, pension deficit, and insufficient social services among other social consequences of aging, a future that anthropologist Lawrence Cohen has called “aging’s premature facticity” (1992), pointing to the telos of development in the conceptualization of aging.

It is precisely against such a fate that in 1980 Tian Xueyuan imagined an alternative course of aging. In his ideal, aging in China would not necessarily be a tragedy of development because of China’s own path to modernization, its sheer population size (when understood as an abundance of human labor power), and vastly improved social reproductivity. Yet, the progress of population control did not naturally solve the potential problems of population aging; what has been called upon as the solution is not so much a totality of national economy—the “social productivity” as a whole—but instead a resort to a state-fostered market mechanism. In other words, what now allows a reconceptualization of population aging, from a burden on resources to a future of long-lived and fulfilled life, is no longer a national allocation of resources that tilts towards eldercare but instead individual market participation.

By participating in the eldercare industry, Gardenview distinguished itself as a professional service-oriented company against its competitors, who had found their niche markets elsewhere by targeting luxury living environments, professional medical care, or designed social activities among others. As

my corporate interlocutors taught me, in this formational stage of the eldercare industry, Gardenview's expectation was not—at least not entirely—immediate profit, but instead to “occupy the market” (*zhanyou shichang*), which, in practice, meant being known among potential clients and to be on their mind *when the time comes*. The prospect of growth in the eldercare industry, in some ways, runs parallel to the temporality of what medical anthropologist Sharon Kaufman calls “longevity making,” that is, a constellation of concerns and calculations—from the framework of prognosis and insurance policies to ordinary ethical imperatives—that makes aging thinkable in a particular course and in a given society (Kaufman 2011; Kaufman and Fjord 2011). For Gardenview, maximizing profit at the moment is certainly important, but focusing only on that would be shortsighted. The goal was to be a major player once the market matures. My corporate interlocutors viewed the eldercare market as something in formation and something that would develop into a fully-fledged industry in the near future.

To say that companies like Gardenview seek to “occupy” the market is perhaps not accurate; it might be more appropriate to say that the process of industrializing eldercare is one where the state and companies co-create the market. On the macro level since 2013, China has modified policies on foreign investment, land use, and preferential tax rates in favor of eldercare-related investments and construction to encourage market participation. More directly, China issued a series of regulations seeking to standardize everything from the quality of texture-modified food marketed for the elderly to the educational background of professional caregivers. In 2019, China also published recommended standards for ranking eldercare facilities on a one-to-five-star scale. Numerous policies at the provincial, municipal, and district levels sometimes work as procedures for localizing national guidelines and other times as pilot programs before national implementation. Corporate actors have kept close track of the constant modifications in local and national policies while actively forming industrial alliances to advocate their interests, coming to shape a future of aging by drawing the landscape of eldercare.

A Floorplan of Care

Rather than ask me questions during my initial internship interview, Eric (then head of the sales department) gave a lecture on the history of Gardenview and the state of the industry. An eloquent and athletic Chinese man in his early 40s, Eric had previously worked in the foreign trade business and kept the habit of going by his English name. In the search for a suitable business model, he explained to me, Gardenview drew most of its lessons from the “Japanese experience,” given that Japan has the world's highest aging rate. Yet, this turn to Japan was far from intuitive. According to Gardenview's foundational story, the company's research team had examined a number of experienced eldercare provision companies based in North America and western Europe, where population aging had been underway for decades. All of those partnerships eventually fell through because, as Eric and many of my interlocutors often told me, “Chinese people are not ready” and hence “their models of eldercare wouldn't sell.”

The idea that Chinese people are “not ready” resonates with Mr. Liu's public speech and is part of a common sentiment that traditional Chinese views of eldercare are too “behind” (*luohou*) in the face of the reality of population aging. For example, when Mr. Liu said that “what used to be unethical and immoral in the past could be transformed into the ethical standards of another time,” he meant that sending parents to residential care facilities, though deemed unethical in the past according to the decree of filial piety, would—and should—be considered in a new moral regime today. And more importantly, as I will show, it is being filial itself—the offering of *good* care—that should be thought anew.

One would not be wrong to read the temporal-spatial metaphor of being “behind” as a cousin of the prevailing “catching-up” narrative that animates the global telos of development. Yet, it would be misleading to assume that Gardenview’s project was at best a replica of “leading” Western practices. Eric, for example, compared China’s burgeoning eldercare industry to the manufacturing industry. While the latter had been known by the slogan “made-in-China”—an infamous label now more and more advocated by Chinese companies as a source of pride—Eric said what inspired him and Gardenview was instead the pursuit of “living-in-China.” In the leap from made-in-China to living-in-China, Eric echoed the nationalist longing for an industrial revolution that could transform China’s labor and resource-intensive economy to a knowledge economy. For Eric, the ultimate goal of an economy is a transformation of living.

“Western” eldercare models, through this lens, provided little space to address the moral demands occasioned by outsourcing familial care for elders in China. Gardenview’s market research thus pointed to something more nuanced than imported business models and lifestyles; it was, from the beginning, a commercial project that was intended to yield social, cultural, and ethical impacts. At the same time, this project would only be commercially viable once it was also socially, culturally, and ethically acceptable.

Gardenview eventually settled on what they called the “Japanese model,” which included forming strategic collaboration with a Japanese eldercare company and the active recruitment of Chinese managers who were educated in Japan and had worked there. What Gardenview’s executives and leaders meant by ‘Japanese model’ landed as a series of spatial, temporal, and affective arrangements that were most visible in the company’s aesthetic appeal. Gardenview’s nursing home rooms were extremely compact, optimizing space to meet the density of demand. Moreover, in the face of the rapidly aging population structure Japan also provided an ideal model for China to explore how the minimum number of personnel could cover the widest possible service area.

Anthropologists, once again, are no strangers to this appeal of Japan—one of the most studied sites in the anthropological scholarship of aging (Danely 2015; Lock 1993; Lock and Kaufert 2001; Thang 2001; Traphagan 2000, to name a few). Margret Lock’s now-classic notion of “local biologies” (1993), for example, emerged from a comparative study of Japanese and North American women’s differing experiences of menopause. It became one of the most important and timely anthropological contributions in resistance against a universalizing discourse of aging. More recent scholarship looks at new forms of social ties and care configured by rapid population aging and technological innovation in contemporary Japan (Allison 2017; Danely 2016; Wright 2018). Population aging, as anthropologists show, has become foregrounded in how everyday life is experienced in Japan.

For my Chinese corporate interlocutors, Japan, a “Western” economy coupled with Confucian cultural roots, was simultaneously far enough away to distance from and close enough at home to inspire.⁵ It was assumed by my interlocutors that Japan had much to offer when it came to social and corporate responses to the categorical transformation of eldercare, from a private, filial duty to a public, societal affair.

The “Japanese model” is a shorthand term for marketing that verbalizes and enacts a set of images that include homeliness, simplicity, professionalism, efficiency, and an eye for detail, among others. To this end, one of the main things that Gardenview borrowed was the layout of its senior care centers. Each floor of Gardenview’s facilities was split into discrete modules that were enclosed as a singular environment, while sliding doors between each helped to create a smooth connection when needed.

Modules could house a dozen residents, who were grouped according to the level of care they required. In the middle of each module was a service station, which typically included a front desk area, a preparation room, and a small room dedicated to medicines and file storage. The area near the service station was a common space used for dining and activities, while individual rooms were arranged in a circle along the walls. Each module also included a few shared bathrooms (though half-bathrooms were available in some rooms as well), and each floor shared a common shower room. Most rooms were compact—especially in the dementia wing, where rooms barely had enough space to fit in a twin-size bed, a closet, and a chair. All of these settings were geared towards one goal: to encourage the residents to leave their rooms and socialize in the common area.

As the interface between care provision and demand, floorplans were a crucial site of representation and the imagination of care itself. Central to this “Japanese model” was the idea of “self-supporting care” (*zili zhiyuan*), which, ideally, prioritized life experience, capacity enhancement, and the dignity of the resident over concerns for safety and efficiency (Lin and Huang 2018). In practice at Gardenview, the essence of self-supporting care was interpreted as maximizing the residents’ own capacity in daily activities by minimizing intervention. Gathering in the common room on the one hand encouraged the residents to participate in public activities, and on the other hand greatly facilitated caregivers’ work. With the service desk in the middle creating a panoptic view, caregivers could monitor the entire floor from the desk without constantly interrupting their daily activities.

Aiming at the higher-end market, Gardenview charged a monthly rate starting at roughly \$1,286 (CNY 9,000) before discounts, which included a single room, meals, and basic assistance (such as distributing prescription medicine) for a resident whose “care level” was deemed to be low. This basic fee was nearly twice as much as the average monthly income of the city’s urban residents, which is about \$706 (CNY 59,308) (Nanjing Municipal Human Resource and Social Security Bureau 2019) and nearly four times larger than the average pension for local retired employees at \$426 (CNY 2,984) per month (2019).

Although this high price tag means that only a fraction of the population could actually afford such services, at the first glance, Gardenview’s floorplan and service did not confer the privileges that typically come with such price, be it larger spaces, private access, or all-round assistance. One day during a casual chat in 2020, Xiao Lu (a top salesperson who began at Gardenview as a caregiver) joyfully brought up the new client she signed the day before. “I felt like I met our soulmate (*womende zhiyin*),” she said, after which she mimicked the middle-aged son who had just signed the contract on behalf of his elderly father: “The small single room is just perfect! I like it that it doesn’t have a [private] bathroom. What’s good about a bathroom (*yao cesuo you shenme yong*)? We need help with toileting anyway!”

We all laughed because such smooth transactions did not happen very often. It was such an ideal encounter between the buyer and the seller that it became comical. In Xiao Lu’s daily work, sales involved the major work of convincing—not only by making explicit the whole set of eldercare ideologies embedded in the floorplan, but also by assuring potential clients that the floorplan was *good* for the older residents. In this rare case, however, none of this pedagogy was needed. The client was perfectly attuned to the values that were introduced and sold. Xiao Lu’s joke thus highlighted the widespread dissonance in her work. More often than not, as an employee of Gardenview she occupied a drastically different set of assumptions and knowledge about eldercare than her potential clients. By referring to the client as “our soulmate,” Xiao Lu made explicit an alliance among “us,” who possessed the knowledge of good care, against the uninformed “them.”

As I worked side by side with the sales specialists, I came to understand a kind of double vision that such positions cultivated. Sales employees were paid on commission, mostly based on the number of beds they sold and the deposit they were able to generate. Their job was miscellaneous at best, ranging from distributing handouts on the streets, to curating the facilities for individual and group visitors, to picking up calls at midnight to handle emergencies or mediating between clients and the company in the event of a complaint. Experienced sales specialists like Xiao Lu could tell a potential client from a general inquiry within a matter of seconds. The cost of Gardenview itself already implied a certain class background, often made visible through a client's occupation, car, or neighborhood among other traces that sales specialists would sharply but quietly collect at the first meeting. In the meantime, as they responded to inquires of all kinds on a daily basis, sales specialists were also constantly exposed to the ways of calling Gardenview's market ideology into question. Criticisms that rooms were too small, daily activities too centralized, or caregivers' responsibilities too vague were all questions of the value—both in terms of worth and quality—of Gardenview's eldercare.

The salesperson as a position was therefore sandwiched between a duality: a corporate vision from training and working and a vision of the clients from the company's marketing activities. On the one hand, as illustrated by Xiao Lu's "our soulmate" anecdote, sales specialists believed that Gardenview's service model was morally good and identified with these values. They believed that this model provided sustainable care and promoted the health and personal growth of the elder residents. They also embraced a carefully worded corporate culture of anti-ageism by maintaining a set of vocabularies such as "*renzhizheng*" (literally meaning cognitive illness, a new word for dementia, as opposed to "*laonianchidai*," senile insanity) and "*zhangzhe*" (senior persons, as opposed to "*laoren*," the old), among others, while the more common Chinese expressions were deemed discriminatory. On the other hand, also exemplified by Xiao Lu's pleasant surprise by the rare consensus with her client, the everyday work of sales was not always successful and hence frustrating. In their communications with clients, sales specialists came to see how these provisions were not self-evident, and that what is sold is not simply service, but a whole new understanding of what counted as a 'good service' in the first place. It is then perhaps not so surprising that many of the salespersons would joke about their work as "brainwashing" (*xinao*). They were acutely aware that this emphasis on the Japanese model and professional care was at the same time underplaying the shortcomings of these facilities, such as the price, location, and the lack of medical licenses (which most often cause inconvenience for prescriptions and pharmacy pick-up). After all, marketing and sales are about strategizing profit-making and maximization.

The Values of Professional Care: the Story of "Grandma Li"

To turn the knowledge-imbued floorplan into a desirable space of later life, Gardenview's marketing and sales department identified and devised a series of "selling points." One of them is the notion of professionalism (*zhuanaye*). Like many eldercare companies, Gardenview formed partnerships with vocational schools and encouraged graduates in relevant majors to intern at the company's facilities. These graduates comprised the main body of the workforce. The division of labor between care workers, dietitians, nurses, social workers, and rehabilitation physicians was made visible through color-coded clothing.⁶ For office-based employees, Gardenview also ran a vast training program that introduced basic medical knowledge and first aid practices. The idea is that everyone, especially those in the marketing and sales department, should at least acquire elementary familiarity with professional knowledge about eldercare. To encourage participation, the training program also included quizzes and a ranking mechanism that could translate into an internal reward system.

Professionalism, moreover, is a prevailing technique of storytelling in Gardenview's marketing discourse. It helps shed light on the kind of values that professionalism generate if we recall the

“distinction work” noted by Amy Hanser (2008) in her study of China’s then rising retail service industry. Drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, Hanser argues that in the context of post-socialist China, distinction—to be understood as the work of making relational difference—is grounded in a neoliberal transition where the legitimization of private ownership and rapid economic growth not only led to rising inequality and social stratification, but also created a symbolic field of meaning (2008, 11). To invert this insight and see it from the corporate perspective, Gardenview’s service in fact carried dual missions: to be sellable and to cultivate a class of clients. While Gardenview’s marketing strategies packaged categories of professional care into a bundle of priced services, it is another process, which I will call the education of values, that imparts the knowledge of professionalism to the clients and the broader aging population.

In this section, I will focus on the story of “Grandma Li,” one of the many stories in Gardenview’s sales repertoire, to show how an individual’s experience was mobilized to generate meanings and values that would help sell eldercare service. Grandma Li’s story was also repeated internally within staff trainings, marketing brainstorm sessions, and numerous promotional materials. The company also produced a short film about Grandmi Li, which played during breaks at various public events showcasing the Gardenview culture of care.

Grandma Li’s experience was first noticed by the caregivers working around her, and eventually it was packaged into a story that was circulated across departments. The story went that before Grandma Li was admitted to Gardenview, she was assisted at home by a domestic aid. As her state deteriorated to the point where it was not safe to keep her at home anymore, Grandma Li’s daughter decided to try institutional care. Upon admission, she received a full physical assessment and was placed at a more intensive care level, which meant she needed assistance with performing major daily tasks like eating.

Although for years Grandma Li had been fed by her aid, caregivers and nurses at Gardenview did not think she needed to be. Instead, they believed that with training and practice, Grandma Li’s physical condition could still allow her to eat by herself. From here, the story took on a different, much more positive tone. At every meal, the caretakers would first encourage her to use the spoon by herself before helping her finish the dishes. While she initially needed help to grip the spoon, Grandma Li took her first bite on her own within a few weeks, and finally, after a few months, she could eat a whole meal by herself. Her daughter, who lived abroad (like many other children of Gardenview residents), could not believe her eyes and burst into tears when she first witnessed her mother’s transformation.

Grandma Li’s story became the definitive narrative of the type of professional care promoted at Gardenview. But what makes the story so compelling is its success in conveying many of the ideas that Gardenview’s (as well as many other similar companies’) marketing specialists struggled to concretize. It is just counterintuitive enough, educational enough, and mundane enough to be perfectly relatable. It is counterintuitive because, for many Chinese families, care for elders means to liberate them from house chores and daily tasks—the kind of tasks expected from the domestic aids that Grandma Li had. Similarly, “respecting the elderly” (*zunlao*) as a “traditional Chinese virtue” is often associated with making seats for elders on public transportation. Helping elders eat, especially in institutional settings, is a common index of meticulous care within this framework.

Yet, it is precisely in challenging these assumptions that Gardenview invited the audience to rethink the values of care. In the story of Grandma Li, the value of feeding is inverted. Typically, feeding is associated with a paradigm of eldercare in which care is equated with performing tasks, and in this case, a matter of ensuring food consumption. In contrast, the story of Grandma Li seeks to promote a new approach to eldercare—self-supporting care—in which care means restraining the impulse to

intervene. As a story of learning to eat independently, Grandma Li's story nudged the audience to picture a different kind of aging, a utopian one no less, of old age where learning is not unique to younger people. It is through learning bodily functions such as eating that the elders' vitality is best maintained.

By defending self-supporting care against claims of negligence, sales specialists performed the education of values: What appeared to be negligence is in fact exemplary of something categorically different. It can no longer be assessed by the virtue of filial ethics; filial ethics itself is transformed as a product of its time, as Mr. Liu theorized in his talk. Eating independently is now an exemplar of professional eldercare. The education of values is crucial because it enables this relocation of the value of care from the filial to the professional.

Moreover, the achievement of independent eating falls in the ambivalent space between cure and care (Mol 2008). Although the visibility of Grandma Li's change suggests an objective improvement of her physical condition, it is not quite the kind of medical miracle that often redefines personhood. It hardly suggests a medical "recovery," nor of going back to a fuller state of life. And yet, this rather ordinary miracle exemplifies the values of self-supporting care that Gardenview marketed: to care is to make the resident self-supporting.

The full value of self-support is only visible when another set of values related to personhood is in place. The scene was so emotional for her daughter because Grandma Li was enabled by such care to demonstrate her agency, and this agency transformed her into a newly recognized—and recognizable—subject, a subject who strives for a better, high-quality, more dignified, and most importantly, independent life. Eating by oneself is thus a mundane yet foundational signal of being oneself: a baby step towards being self-sustaining, literally and symbolically. The value of not feeding is thus embedded in the larger values of care and eventually the values of personhood.

As Timothy Diamond (1992) argues, tacit knowledge about food plays a central role in organizing life in institutional care, both for caregivers and residents. By studying in residential care settings, anthropologists have shown that the treatment of food takes on multifaceted meanings, whether as nutritional values (Mol 2010), structures of time (Savishinsky 2003), and signs of expertise in care (Buch 2013). The value of food itself is also widely recorded and acknowledged across anthropological scholarship. Highlighting food's perishability (see also Munn 1992) in her study of the meaning of food in rural China, anthropologist Ellen Oxfeld highlights food's capacity of containing and evoking actions, showing that "while food is perishable, the actions surrounding it can create connectedness and sharing, debts and obligations, even resentments and recriminations" (2017, 31). By attending to what people *do* with/around food, Oxfeld traces how, through actions, values are generated and tie together the social world of a village. In all of these studies, food is mobilized to enable and mediate other actions that are beyond food, while the simplest consumption of food, eating, is curiously taken for granted. Grandma Li's story is therefore unique in that it provides an opportunity for us to understand *action* in its most mundane, biological way, and to see how value is generated in the very action of eating.

The transformation from feeding to the pursuit of independent dining is crucial. The self-supporting care offered by Gardenview is not to be thought of in terms of checking off tasks or serving elders, but instead as the cultivation of new values related to what it means to age. Gardenview's marketing and sales practices show how marketing and sales are vital linkages that enable the making of a market subject—a consumer of valuable eldercare. Importantly, this narrativization of Grandma Li's case was not only significant as marketing material. The fashioning of the story from just one of the many in the rather enclosed space of care into a public figure mobilized to incite emotional resonance and bring in

profit also further transformed the work of caregiving itself. As Eric always said and as Xiao Lu's own professional trajectory embodied, caregivers were the best salespersons. The industrialization of eldercare therefore not only seeks to capitalize on the relations of care, but also re-invents the work of care itself as one integrated in the culture of entrepreneurship.

The irony is obvious, too. On the one hand, self-supporting care at Gardenview costs four times the average pension income for Nanjing urban retirees, and the cost rises with the intensity of care a resident requires. On the other hand, it should also be pointed out that new care paradigms such as self-supporting care are not free from economic calculations. One day, for example, I was helping prepare for an activity. When I asked the social workers how they felt about independent eating, to my surprise, their emphasis was not at all on the ethical implications. Instead, they asked me in reply,

Yifan, you think, only one or two of us will be looking over the floor during dining hours. How long would that take if we feed them one by one? And how can we look over other people if we are focused on feeding one person? It would save us so much effort if they could eat by themselves.

Rather than denying the efficacy of self-supporting care, the staff's comments revealed the logic of cost-efficiency that ran parallel to the ideas of good care. That is, instead of seeing economic rationale as the sole determinant of the form of care, the economic and the social are both indispensable in making the desirable way of care.

Conclusion: Education of Values

In this article, I examined some of the marketing and sales strategies at Gardenview, a newly established eldercare company in Nanjing, China. There, like elsewhere in urban China, the projected aging demography was mobilized to foster an eldercare industry, transforming ideas, paradigms, and experience of eldercare by putting forward a new set of knowledge of aging.

This intimate knowledge about the values of aging embedded in the floorplans and services echoes what Karl Marx called the "commercial knowledge of commodities," which Marx introduced in the very beginning of the first volume of *Capital*. For Marx, this knowledge is intrinsic to the use-value of a commodity, that is, the knowledge about what human needs the commodity could satisfy (1976).⁷ Marx offered his last contemplation of this curious gap of knowledge in a footnote, writing that: "In bourgeois society the legal fiction prevails that each person, as a buyer, has an encyclopedic knowledge of commodities" (1976, 126). In other words, capitalist circulations and transactions presume universal knowledge about the values imbued in the commodity for everyone involved. This insight is perhaps becoming especially true when it comes to the service industry and its immaterial product. Knowledge about the service is always a prerequisite. In an industry as new as eldercare in China, as I showed in this article, the work of marketing and sales thus becomes a crucial site where such knowledges are produced, packaged, and disseminated.

Seeing advertisement as the conveyor of such knowledge, anthropologist William Mazzarella analyzes the advertising industry in India and shows how the transformation of social-economic life needs to be understood through the making and propagating of values in a time deemed to be of "value crisis" (2003, 250–51). For Mazzarella, aesthetics, or the form of advertisement, links culture with capital, gives commodities meaning, and functions as "a project of education" to "transform the 'first nature' of subjective desire into the 'second nature' of objective social truth" (2003, 105). In his case, the image of "aspirational Indianness" being advertised carries both the social value and the aesthetics of living in

postcolonial India—of how one relates to the surroundings—and importantly, the advertising industry is central to the production of such values (cf. Fischer 2014, 17).

Similarly, as Xiao Lu joked at Gardenview, the consumers rarely come to the market with the “encyclopedic knowledge of commodities;” the encyclopedic knowledge of value does not precede the market encounter. Rather, knowledge of eldercare is produced and enacted through the work of marketing and sales. Whether by selling the floorplan or packaging Grandma Li’s story into marketing materials, marketing and sales operations coalesce with the making of values. Even as eldercare industry professionals make “the market,” the market cannot predate the knowledge of value.

In the marketization of residential eldercare, professional care is promoted as an answer to the transition of filial ethics. Here, instead of arguing that filial ethics is obsolete in the rise of market choices, it is by the creation of new values of care that the filial is “subcontracted” (Lan 2002) and reinterpreted. Ethical and economic values are co-produced, and it is by the co-production of values in both realms that a market is cultivated. The floorplan and Grandma Li’s story are both pedagogical devices; at the same time, they are also both stories of economic rationale where all kinds of values become priced. The lesson behind this pedagogy is that it should not be assumed that monetary value and ethical value are contradictory in the first place. Rather, the creation of both are central to what we think of as “marketization.” Marketization is not only a process in which services and products are sold but also one in which consumers become a suitable consuming subject (Dunn 2004). In the case of eldercare, these processes and transformations are made possible by a historic moment in which population aging has come to be framed as the population paradigm in China.

Finally, we should also keep in mind that Gardenview, like many other similar rising eldercare companies in China, consider themselves to be the driving force as well as future profiteers of ethical transition in contemporary China. When they stepped into the business of eldercare, they were in fact entering into projects of future-making. My interlocutors shifted between schemes of time seamlessly as the work of marketing and sales linked together the present and the future of aging. In his reflections on the social transformation that population aging brought forth in Singapore, anthropologist Michael Fischer argued that as aging becomes the predominant way through which the future unfolds, knowledge of aging “provides a kind of template for literacies of the future, not just of death to come but of worlds opening up to discovery” (2015, 209). Understanding the very process of marketization as an education of values sheds further light on these literacies as a socially and economically elaborated and contested future of aging in China.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank Dr. Andrea Ballesterio, Dr. Svetlana Borodina, and Dr. Nathanael Vlachos for their comments and edits on earlier iterations of the manuscript. A section of the manuscript was presented on the panel I co-organized with Zihao Lin, titled “Engineering Markets: Ethics, Entrepreneurship, Experimentation” at the 2019 American Anthropological Association/Canadian Anthropology Society Annual Meeting in Vancouver, BC. I am grateful to Dr. Andrea Muehlebach for her insightful comments and the wonderful discussion. I also want to thank Dr. Tannistha Samanta, Janis G Woodward, and the anonymous reviewers for their generous feedback and careful edits. The research was financially supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation Dissertation Fieldwork Grant (#9934) and various Rice University institutions, including Wagoner Foreign Study Scholarship, the Social Science Research Institute, and the Department of Anthropology. Finally, I wish to thank all my interlocutors for sharing their time and insights with me.

Notes

1. All names of companies and individuals are pseudonyms. Due to confidentiality reasons, at a few places I

slightly altered the otherwise directly identifiable details, which should not interfere with the presentation of the cases here. Though readers familiar with the field might still be able to narrow down the scope, I hope they agree that this article is not so much about presenting a singular case as illustrating some of the common sentiments, vocabularies and discourses shared by the broader industry.

2. Historians and philosophers, on the other hand, have also aptly argued that the meaning of filial piety has never been stable in history to begin with (see Chan and Tan 2004).
3. For a much-detailed account of Tian Xueyuan's controversial role in the making of birth planning policy, see Greenhalgh 2008. The point here is less concerned with the technicalities of policy making. Instead, I contrast two statements made by the prominent scholar to demonstrate how discussions of population aging was peripheral during the implementation of the birth planning program.
4. It should be noted that the imperative of reducing the birth rate was simply assumed rather than demonstrated in Tian's article. For the purpose of this essay, it should be sufficient to say that the population was predominantly conceptualized as the antithesis of natural resources. This conception, however, was only temporary.
5. Francis L. K. Hsu's comparisons of filial piety between China and Japan, and why it was not a "stumbling block" but "assets for [Japan's] industrialization and modernization" (1971) would have been a favored argument by my interlocutors.
6. The professionalization of care work is at the same time an exclusion of some position that are not considered professional enough. Cleaners, for instance, wore different clothes and largely remained anonymous on the floor.
7. Economist Bertram Schefold points out that the "commercial knowledge of commodities" was a rather misleading translation of the original German word *Warenkunde*, which is a discipline in business that deals with "their origins, denominations, compositions, manufacturing processes, properties, kinds, trading marks, indications of genuineness and adulteration and the methods to recognize [commodities]" (2005, 117).

References

- Allison, Anne. 2017. "Greeting the Dead: Managing Solitary Existence in Japan." *Social Text* 35 1 (130): 17–35. <https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-3727972>.
- Aulino, Felicity. 2017. "Narrating the Future: Population Aging and the Demographic Imaginary in Thailand." *Medical Anthropology* 36 (4): 319–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2017.1287181>.
- Buch, Elana D. 2013. "Senses of Care: Embodying Inequality and Sustaining Personhood in the Home Care of Older Adults in Chicago." *American Ethnologist* 40 (4): 637–50. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12044>.
- Chan, Alan K. L., and Sor-hoon Tan, eds. 2004. *Filial Piety in Chinese Thought and History*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Chen, Lin. 2016. *Evolving Eldercare in Contemporary China: Two Generations, One Decision*. New York: Springer.
- Chong, Kimberly. 2018. *Best Practice: Management Consulting and the Ethics of Financialization in China*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Cohen, Lawrence. 1992. "No Aging in India: The Uses of Gerontology." *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 16 (2): 123–61.
- Danely, Jason. 2015. *Aging and Loss: Mourning and Maturity in Contemporary Japan*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press.
- Danely, Jason. 2016. "Affect, Infrastructure, and Vulnerability: Making and Breaking Japanese Eldercare." *Medicine Anthropology Theory* 3 (2): 198–222. <https://doi.org/10.17157/mat.3.2.363>.
- Diamond, Timothy. 1992. *Making Gray Gold: Narratives of Nursing Home Care*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

- Dunn, Elizabeth C. 2004. *Privatizing Poland: Baby Food, Big Business, and the Remaking of Labor*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Feng, Chen, and Hang Xiao. 2015. "‘Father of Birth Planning’ Tian Xueyuan: Having Only One Child Is the Solution of No Solution (‘Jihuashengyu Zhi Fu’ Tian Xueyuan: Zhi Sheng Yige Haizi Shi Meiyou Banfa de Banfa)." Accessed May 5, 2019. <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/zg/jpm/2015-06-23/16491168.html>.
- Feng, Zhanlian, Heying Jenny Zhan, Xiaotian Feng, Chang Liu, Mingyue Sun, and Vincent Mor. 2011. "An Industry in the Making: The Emergence of Institutional Elder Care in Urban China." *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 59 (4): 738–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-5415.2011.03330.x>.
- Fischer, Edward F. 2014. *The Good Life: Aspiration, Dignity, and the Anthropology of Wellbeing*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Fischer, Michael M. J. 2015. "Ethnography for Aging Societies: Dignity, Cultural Genres, and Singapore’s Imagined Futures." *American Ethnologist* 42 (2): 207–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12126>.
- Graeber, David. 2001. *Toward An Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams*. New York: Palgrave.
- Greenhalgh, Susan. 2008. *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng’s China*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press.
- Hanser, Amy. 2008. *Service Encounters: Class, Gender, and the Market for Social Distinction in Urban China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Harrell, Stevan, and Deborah S. Davis, eds. 1993. *Chinese Families in the Post-Mao Era*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press.
- Hsu, Francis L. K. 1971. "Filial Piety in Japan and China: Borrowing, Variation and Significance." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 2 (1): 67–74. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.2.1.67>.
- Ikels, Charlotte, ed. 2004. *Filial Piety: Practice and Discourse in Contemporary East Asia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kaufman, Sharon R. 2011. "Making Longevity in an Aging Society: Linking Medicare Policy and the New Ethical Field." *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 53 (3): 407–24. <https://doi.org/10.1353/pbm.0.0164>.
- Kaufman, Sharon R., and Lakshmi Fjord. 2011. "Medicare, Ethics, and Reflexive Longevity: Governing Time and Treatment in an Aging Society." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 25 (2): 209–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1387.2011.01150.x>.
- Lan, Pei-Chia. 2002. "Subcontracting Filial Piety: Elder Care in Ethnic Chinese Immigrant Families in California." *Journal of Family Issues* 23 (7): 812–35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019251302236596>.
- Lin, Yen-Chun, and Lian-Hua Huang. 2018. "Self-Supporting Care Model for Older Adults." *The Journal of Nursing* 65 (2): 20–26. [https://doi.org/10.6224/JN.201804_65\(2\).04](https://doi.org/10.6224/JN.201804_65(2).04).
- Liu, Jing. 2018. "End of year review: listed companies going through trials and turbulence (Nianzhong pandian: shangshi gongsi fengyu ruhui, jiming buyi)." 60 Plus. Accessed August 23, 2020. <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/LFkumdjTxXFQ0KEYThkyZA>.
- Lock, Margaret, and Patricia Kaufert. 2001. "Menopause, Local Biologies, and Cultures of Aging." *American Journal of Human Biology* 13 (4): 494–504. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajhb.1081>.
- Lock, Margaret M. 1993. *Encounters With Aging: Mythologies of Menopause in Japan and North America*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press.
- Marx, Karl. 1976. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Translated by Ben Fowkes. Vol. 1. New York: Penguin books.
- Mazzarella, William. 2003. *Shoveling Smoke: Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 2013. "Measures for the Administration of Elder Care Institutions (Yanglao Jigou Guanli Banfa)." 2013. Accessed August 20, 2020. http://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2013/content_2496403.htm.
- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 2014. "Statistical Communiqué of the 2013 Social Service Development (2013 Nian Shehui Fuwu Fazhan Tongji Gongbao)." Accessed August 20, 2020. <http://www.mca.gov.cn/article/sj/tjgb/201406/201406156561679.shtml>.
- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 2019. "Statistical Communiqué of the 2018 Social Service Development (2018 Nian Shehui Fuwu Tongji Gongbao)." Accessed August 20, 2020. <http://www.mca.gov.cn/article/sj/tjgb/201908/20190800018807.shtml>.
- Mol, Annemarie. 2008. *The Logic of Care: Health and the Problem of Patient Choice*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Mol, Annemarie. 2010. "Care and Its Values: Good Food in the Nursing Home." In *Care in Practice: On Tinkering in Clinics, Homes, and Farms*, edited by Annemarie Mol, Ingunn Moser, and Jeannette Pols, 215–33. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.
- Munn, Nancy D. 1992. *The Fame of Gawa: A Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim Society*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Nanjing Municipal Human Resource and Social Security Bureau. 2019. "Announcement of Publicizing 2018 Nanjing Municipal Social Security Information." Accessed August 5, 2020. http://rsj.nanjing.gov.cn/zwgk/shbxxxgk/201905/t20190509_1533205.html.
- O'Meara, Sarah. 2020. "How Health Research Will Support China's Ageing Population." *Nature* 578 (7793): S1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-020-00279-y>.
- Oxford, Ellen. 2017. *Bitter and Sweet: Food, Meaning, and Modernity in Rural China*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Savishinsky, Joel S. 2003. "'Bread and Butter' Issues: Food, Conflict, and Control in a Nursing Home." In *Gray Areas: Ethnographic Encounters with Nursing Home Culture*, edited by Philip B. Stafford, 103–20. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Schefold, Bertram. 2005. "Use Value and the 'Commercial Knowledge of Commodities': Reflections on Aristotle, Savary and the Classics." In *Value, Distribution and Capital: Essays in Honour of Pierangelo Garegnani*, edited by Gary Mongiovi and Fabio Petri, 109–29. New York: Routledge.
- Shi, Lihong. 2009. "'Little Quilted Vests to Warm Parents' Hearts': Redefining the Gendered Practice of Filial Piety in Rural North-Eastern China." *The China Quarterly*, no. 198: 348–63. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741009000344>.
- State Council of People's Republic of China. 2013. "Several Opinions on Accelerating the Development of the Elderly Service Industry (Guanyu Jiakuai Fazhan Yanglao Fuwuye de Ruogan Yijian)." Accessed August 20, 2020. http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2013-09/13/content_2487704.htm.
- Sun, Yuezhu. 2017. "Among a Hundred Good Virtues, Filial Piety Is the First: Contemporary Moral Discourses on Filial Piety in Urban China." *Anthropological Quarterly* 90 (3): 771–99. <https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.2017.0043>.
- Thang, Leng Leng. 2001. *Generations in Touch: Linking the Old and Young in a Tokyo Neighborhood*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Traphagan, John W. 2000. *Taming Oblivion: Aging Bodies and the Fear of Senility in Japan*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- UNFPA and HelpAge. 2012. *Ageing in the Twenty-First Century: A Celebration and A Challenge*. New York: United Nations Population Fund.
- United Nations. 2015. "Global Issues Overview." Accessed September 18, 2018. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/global-issues-overview/index.html>.

- White, Tyrene. 2006. *China's Longest Campaign: Birth Planning in the People's Republic, 1949–2005*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- World Health Organization. 2015. *China Country Assessment Report on Ageing and Health*. Geneva: WHO Press. <http://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/194271>.
- Wright, James. 2018. "Tactile Care, Mechanical Hugs: Japanese Caregivers and Robotic Lifting Devices." *Asian Anthropology* 17 (1): 24–39. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1683478X.2017.1406576>.
- Yan, Yunxiang. 2003. *Private Life Under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949–1999*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Zelizer, Viviana A. Rotman. 1979. *Morals and Markets: The Development of Life Insurance in the United States*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Zeng, Yi. 2012. "Towards Deeper Research and Better Policy for Healthy Aging --Using the Unique Data of Chinese Longitudinal Healthy Longevity Survey." *China Economic Journal* 5 (2–3): 131–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17538963.2013.764677>.
- Zhan, Heying Jenny, and Rhonda J. V. Montgomery. 2003. "Gender And Elder Care In China: The Influence of Filial Piety and Structural Constraints." *Gender & Society* 17 (2): 209–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243202250734>.
- Zhang, Hong. 2006. "Family Care or Residential Care? The Moral and Practical Dilemmas Facing the Elderly in Urban China." *Asian Anthropology* 5 (1): 57–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1683478X.2006.10552560>.