

Wei N. Gan

Department of Anthropology
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EDUCATION

(expected) 2025 Ph.D., Anthropology
Princeton University
Dissertation: *Funding Asian America: Philanthroactivism, Racial Empowerment, and the Price of Justice*
Committee: Julia Elyachar, João G. Biehl, Elizabeth A. Davis

2009 B.A., Cultural Anthropology, Psychology, Human Development
Duke University
Graduation with Distinction; *cum laude*

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Philanthropy; social impact; nonprofit organizations; advocacy and activism; humanitarianism; economic anthropology; anthropology of ethics; memory; citizenship; speculative futures; Asian America; United States; China

PUBLICATIONS

2019 Xing, J. and Wei N. Gan. “China’s *Shan’erdaī*: The Formation and Transformation of Philanthropy.” *China Nonprofit Review* 11, no. 2 (2019): 235-257.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Princeton University

2020-2023 Doctoral Dissertation Field Research, supervised by João Biehl and Julia Elyachar

- Conduct ethnographic fieldwork in Washington, D.C., among Chinese American and Asian American philanthropic, nonprofit, social justice, and advocacy organizations
- Conduct ethnographic fieldwork via digital and virtual platforms with philanthropic, nonprofit, and other organizations in the social and impact sectors

2018-2019 Pre-Dissertation Field Research, supervised by João Biehl and Julia Elyachar

- Conducted ethnographic fieldwork in New York, NY; Beijing, China; Nanjing, China; and Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, among Chinese and Chinese American philanthropic, nonprofit, and civil organizations

Duke University

2008-2009 Senior thesis, “‘Conspiracy Theory’: Ethical Projects and Orders of Truth,” supervised by Katherine Ewing, Elizabeth Davis, and Heather Settle

- Produced ethnography of conspiracy theorists using participant-observation, interviews, and digital and archival research
- Conducted fieldwork in Austin, Dallas, and Houston, TX

2008 Final project, “North Carolina Stop Torture Now: To the Community of Humanity”

- Conducted ethnographic research with NCSTN, a Raleigh, NC, activist organization fighting and raising awareness of extraordinary rendition

2007 Final project, “Negotiating Uncertainty”

- Conducted ethnographic research at John Umstead Psychiatric Hospital in Butner, NC

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Princeton University

Assistant Instructor

Fall 2024 Introduction to Anthropology (Instructor: Glenn H. Shepard, Jr.)

Fall 2022 Ethnography, Evidence, Experience (Instructor: Durba Chattaraj)

Spring 2021 The Ethnographer’s Craft (Instructor: Laurence Ralph)

Fall 2020 Introduction to Anthropology (Instructor: Agustín Fuentes)

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Princeton University

2023 Dean's Completion Fellowship
2017-2020; Princeton University Fellowship in the Humanities and Social Sciences
2021-2023
2020-2021 Mr. and Mrs. Yan Huo *94*95 Graduate Fellowship

Duke University

2009 Judith McDade Prize for the most distinguished record in the major of Cultural Anthropology
2005-2009 University Scholars Program

CONFERENCES AND PAPER PRESENTATIONS

2024 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, Tampa, Nov 22
 "Soliciting Sentiment: Between Anthropology, Philanthropy, and Racial Justice"
2023 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, Toronto, ON, Nov 18
 "Funding racial justice: philanthroactivism in Asian America"
2023 *Society for Economic Anthropology, Annual Meeting*, Northwestern University, May 20
 "Claiming Power: Philanthropy and Asian American Activism"
2023 *American Ethnological Society, Annual Spring Conference*, Princeton University, March 25
 "Philanthropy, Asian American Activism, and the Moral Indeterminacy of Capital"
2022 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, Seattle, Nov 10 & 11
 "“Sponsor-ability:” Corporate Philanthropy and Fundraising for Asian American Nonprofits"
 "Conversations across generations: Anthropology in times of crisis, then and now" (Roundtable Discussant)
2022 *European Association of Social Anthropologists, Biennial Conference*, Queen's University Belfast, July 27 (Virtual)
 "“Claiming Power:” The Asian American Foundation and Political Empowerment through Philanthropy"
2021 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, Baltimore, Nov 18 & 17
 "“From Being Marginalized to Being the Margin of Victory:” Becoming (Asian) American Through Legislation and Policy"
 "Philanthropy and Social Finance in China" (Organizer/Chair/Discussant)

2019 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, Vancouver, BC, Nov 20
 “Chinese “public interest:” social value and the emergent political”

2018 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, San Jose, Nov 15
 “Spirit of Charity: The Moral Economy of Chinese Philanthrocapitalism”

2009 *American Anthropological Association, Annual Meeting*, Philadelphia, PA, Dec 4
 (Invited) “First Rites: Innovative Undergraduate Research in Anthropology”

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

2009-2010; American Anthropological Association

2017-present Society for Economic Anthropology

NONPROFIT AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION EXPERIENCE

2022-2023 **Deputy Executive Director**
2021-2022 **Project Director**
 1882 Foundation, Washington, D.C.

2021-2023 **Vice President of Education and Cultural Affairs**
 OCA Greater Washington DC – Asian Pacific American Advocates, Washington,
 D.C.

WORK EXPERIENCE

2022-present **Tutor**
 Mentors for International Young Scholars [Online]

2014-2017 **Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder**
 three little birds nyc, LLC, New York, NY

2011-2014; **Bartender**
2016-2017 *Bar and Restaurant*, New York, NY

2011-2014 **Writer and Editor**
 Freelance, New York, NY

2011-2012 **Writer**
 Coats, New York, NY

2009-2011 **Research Coordinator**
 University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

LANGUAGES

English: Native

Chinese (Mandarin): Native