



Chinese Entertainment

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Scholarly studies of Chinese culture, history and society, both within and outside of China, generally pay little attention to leisure, entertainment and amusement, though it has long been known that this aspect of life gives a deep understanding of the psyche and soul, and the hopes and fears, of a person. Leisure is a less coerced-upon, mandatory human conduct than work; certainly leisurely conduct is more voluntary, expressive and creative. But when seen as human behaviour, leisure and entertainment cannot be separated from history, heritage, ethnicity, the community, family and kin, rituals and customs – thus a collective activity and its constraints on the person.

This book examines a variety of genre of Chinese entertainment, from singing clubs, Cantonese opera and film, to Chinese rock and tourism. Though formally voluntary, Chinese entertainment, when entangled with ethnicity, heritage and history, is ironically a site of both enjoyment and struggle, both pleasure and suffering.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *Visual Anthropology*.

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