



Changing Media, Changing China

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Thirty years ago, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) made a fateful decision: to allow newspapers, magazines, television, and radio stations to compete in the marketplace instead of being financed exclusively by the government. The political and social implications of that decision are still unfolding as the Chinese government, media, and public adapt to the new information environment.

Edited by Susan Shirk, one of America's leading experts on contemporary China, this collection of essays brings together a who's who of experts--Chinese and American--writing about all aspects of the changing media landscape in China. In detailed case studies, the authors describe how the media is reshaping itself from a propaganda mouthpiece into an agent of watchdog journalism, how politicians are reacting to increased scrutiny from the media, and how television, newspapers, magazines, and Web-based news sites navigate the cross-currents between the open marketplace and the CCP censors. China has over 360 million Internet users, more than any other country, and an astounding 162 million bloggers. The growth of Internet access has dramatically increased the information available, the variety and timeliness of the news, and its national and international reach. But China is still far from having a free press. As of 2008, the international NGO Freedom House ranked China 181 worst out of 195 countries in terms of press restrictions, and Chinese journalists have been aptly described as "dancing in shackles." The recent controversy over China's censorship of Google highlights the CCP's deep ambivalence toward information freedom.

Covering everything from the rise of business media and online public opinion polling to environmental journalism and the effect of media on foreign policy, *Changing Media, Changing China* reveals how the most populous nation on the planet is reacting to demands for real news.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The Chinese and foreign contributors to this book provide a nuanced, clear analysis of the fluid relationship among the Communist Party, the media, and the public."--*Foreign Affairs*

"Susan Shirk has been at the forefront of Western academics explaining the constant changes and contradictions inside China. This collection sheds very useful light on one of the most important--and sometimes most contradictory--of those changes: the evolution of the Chinese media as a tool for addressing the problems created by China's nonstop economic growth. This is a varied and stimulating range of views."--James Fallows, National Correspondent for *The Atlantic Monthly* and author of *Postcards from Tomorrow Square*

"Contemporary China is best understood by those capable of embracing contradictions. Nowhere is this more necessary than in understanding Chinese media today. Some aspects of it are more open and flexible than ever; others have become even more rigidly controlled. In *Changing Media, Changing China*, Susan Shirk has gathered together a thoughtful array of essays that will help readers grasp the paradox of dynamic openness and retrograde Leninist control being played out across China in a truly fascinating manner." --Orville Schell, Arthur Ross Director of the Center on US-China Relations, Asia Society

"In her edited volume "Changing Media, Changing China" Susan Shirk gives us a rich and in-depth panorama of the previously understudied realms of China's media policies. This book will be a real boon to the student of modern China." --Jonathan Spence, author of *The Search for Modern China*

"Free from academic jargon and providing ample historical and institutional background information, the book is highly accessible as intelligent reading for those who are not China-watching specialists. Students of Chinese studies, particularly of the media, will find the multiple cases documented in the book a useful resource." --*China Review International*

About the Author

Susan L. Shirk is Director of the University of California's Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, and Professor at University of California, San Diego. A leading authority on China, she has written numerous books and articles on the subject, including *China: Fragile Superpower* and pieces that have appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*.

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