Diamond in the Field: The Life and Work of Norma Diamond

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Are you a fan of postmodernism? I asked.
“Well, let me put it this way. In my lifetime, I have not only of course learned to speak English; I can speak some French; I can speak Mandarin… I was able to speak a rather primitive Taiwanese in the field. I think I have learned enough languages.”

She walked out of a recent conference talk on the rosy economic prospects of China. “It was the paper which was about the advantages of under-employment in the rural areas because it frees people up so that they can go and help in urban development… That was the point at which I walked out: When I was told that under-employment in the rural areas was actually good for China.”

If you’re in business, I’m sure that’s very helpful, I said.
“Yeah, or if you’re selling body parts.”

Her voice slow and deep, sounding like Lauren Bacall as she gets ready for the punchline, Norma Diamond gently mocks everyone. In her mockery, she speaks the unspeakable truth. In that voice we have a treasure of academic wisdom.
Diamond, who taught at the University of Michigan from 1963 to 1996, made an indelible mark on the field of China studies. Very much a generalist in the China field, she is also very much an anthropologist, trained by sociologists in the Marxian tradition. Her research, writing, and teaching range across topics of work, economic justice, women, peasants, the family, agriculture, political policy, ethnic minorities, and Christian missionaries, in both China and Taiwan. In the story of her work, we can identify many themes of social change and intellectual transformation, while also tracing the consistent threads of humor, clarity, honesty, and pursuit of justice.

**Childhood, college, and graduate school**

Born in 1933 in New York, Diamond grew up the only child of Eastern European immigrants in New York. Her father, who migrated to the U.S. at 17 from Romania, graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and became a dentist and a liberal Democrat. Her mother came from Odessa when she was four, went to college for two years, and worked in the public relations and publicity department of a large architecture and construction firm. After marriage she was a housewife and community volunteer. Norma was precocious and skipped two grades; at 16 she went to Queens College, where as a freshman she read *Patterns of Culture* by Ruth Benedict in a general social sciences course. She thought “this was the most extraordinary thing I had ever read and if that was what anthropologists did which was, essentially, questioning things we take for granted and trying to understand other cultures, maybe that’s something I should be doing.” Two years later, her protective parents deemed her mature enough to live away from their guidance, and she went to the University of Wisconsin. This proved to be pivotal in her academic and intellectual development; there she studied in the anthropology/sociology department with Hans Gerth, who introduced her to the ideas of Max
Weber and other intellectuals, including the ideas of the Frankfurt School. André Gunder Frank, who was to become a renowned Marxist economic historian, was a visiting graduate student from the University of Chicago while Diamond was an undergraduate. The atmosphere was irresistible; faculty joined students regularly over lunch at the Student Union. Graduate students spoke seriously to undergraduates. This intensity of interaction was probably never replicated anywhere, she feels.

At Wisconsin, a student in Norma’s dorm was crazily enthusiastic about a course called “Chinese Literature in Translation,” so Norma took it the next time it was offered. She was introduced to Lu Xun and the May Fourth Movement (the 1919 movement advocating mass literacy through changing the literary language), which she then wrote about in her class with Professor Hans Gerth on social movements. He was fascinated, and thus she became an anthropologist with an interest in China.

She stayed at Wisconsin for a year after she graduated to absorb more of the offerings than she’d been able to take during her two years there.

For graduate school Diamond picked Cornell University, which not only admitted her to anthropology and Chinese studies but paid for her to study Chinese intensively at Yale University for the summer. This was 1956. At the time, pioneering anthropologists Bernard and Rita Gallin and Margery and Arthur Wolf were in the field in Taiwan. She chose Cornell because it offered intensive Chinese as well as economic anthropology. Diamond’s teachers were Lauriston Sharp, a specialist on Thailand; Morris Opler, a specialist on Apache and on people of India, as well as a strong supporter of the legal rights of Japanese Americans; and Robert Smith, a Japan expert. When she was in the field, the prominent China anthropologist G. William Skinner arrived at Cornell and became her advisor. She spent two and a half years in Taiwan studying language doing fieldwork. After a further year at Cornell, she got her first and only
academic job, at the University of Michigan. It began the way jobs used to begin: with a personal connection. At a dinner at the annual Asian studies meeting, she sat near Alexander Eckstein and other Michigan China Studies faculty. They asked what she did, and when she told them, they explained that they were trying to expand their Chinese and Asian Studies program and that at the time nobody in anthropology worked on China. A few weeks later she was invited to give a talk for the Department of Anthropology and was hired. Several academics she affectionately and collectively termed “the Harvards” reassured her that after a few years she could probably get a job on the East Coast and wouldn’t have to stay in the Midwest for too long. In fact, she stayed for over thirty years, thoroughly enjoying Ann Arbor’s increasingly excellent Asian food, its intellectual vibrancy, its social activism, and its manageable size. Concerning the climate, however, Norma was less enthusiastic. In 2004 she moved to another college town—Gainesville, Florida—to enjoy many similar features in a more hospitable climate, though lamentably without Michigan’s superb Asia Library.

**Climate at Michigan**

Diamond arrived at Michigan as the first tenure-track female professor in anthropology. There were other women there but they were adjunct lecturers. Women married to academics could not expect a regular position. The second woman hired was Gloria Marshall, later Niara Sudarkasa (a name she adopted after marrying an African)—who is now (2005) president of Lincoln University and the first African-American awarded tenure in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA) at Michigan. Linguist Penelope Eckert was hired in 1974 but was not tenure-track until 1978. Susan Harding was hired as a tenure-track assistant professor in 1978, jointly with the Residential College. Then more women were hired, including archaeologists and finally physical anthropologists.
In 2005 the department had 38 professors (not including joint appointments); of these, 16 were women, though of 21 full professors only six were women.

At the time Diamond arrived, the department was about a third the size it is now (2005). Many were skeptical about her—and all women’s—seriousness, expecting all women to leave for children or spouses. Norma said some students didn’t believe women could be professors in serious fields, other than foreign language, art history, or English. When she first started teaching and wrote her name and title on the board, students laughed. She was a young 30 at the time, and students were not used to young women as professors. She suspects that some of her colleagues hoped she would marry and go away. She was always outspoken and refused to accept sexist treatment.

I spoke with Norma’s former student Rayna Rapp, now Professor of Anthropology at New York University and author or editor of many important works on reproductive technology. Rapp remembers Norma as enormously supportive, and a true pioneer. When Rapp was a junior and senior at Michigan, she realized that Norma was a smart, accessible woman with an acerbic sense of humor. As a graduate student in the late 1960s and early 1970s (she finished her Ph.D. in 1973), Rapp appreciated Norma’s position as the only woman in the department. Like many other anomalous individuals, she was excluded from casual interactions such as “the guys” (male colleagues) going out for a beer. She recalls Norma’s seminar, “The Second Sex in the Third World,” including its precise title (thirty years later) even though she is not sure if she ever took it. She recalls the beginning of women’s studies at Michigan, the third in the U.S. (all at large public universities, she notes), which had been militated for by graduate students. Diamond had already, quietly, worked for this on her own, in what Rapp characterizes as “pre-feminist” times. Rapp was already working on peasants in southern France, under the guidance of Eric Wolf, but when she approached Norma, the latter had wonderful
information to add. Norma also told great fieldwork stories of what it was like to be a single woman in village Taiwan.

Diamond continued her interdisciplinary involvement in China through the very active Center for Chinese Studies, though some of those colleagues were very conservative—never a trait of Norma’s. She characterizes the general attitudes toward both China and Taiwan as cautious. The China scholars included Al Feuerwerker in History, Yi-tsi Feuerwerker in Chinese Literature, Michael Oksenberg in Political Science, Martin Whyte in Sociology, Charles Hucker in Far Eastern Languages and Literatures and History, and Rhoads Murphey in Geography. Harriet Mills was the first tenured woman in Chinese Studies (Far Eastern Languages and Literatures, now Asian Languages and Cultures); modern literature scholar Yi-tsi Feuerwerker was allowed to teach only in the Residential College, because of anti-nepotism rules. The University of Michigan lost many scholars because of its unwillingness to hire women married to other faculty. Historians Louise Tilly and Charles Tilly, for example, were enticed away to universities that were able to employ them both in regular positions.

Marilyn and Earnest Young arrived a few years after Norma, but like Yi-tsi Feuerwerker, Marilyn had to teach in the Residential College, because her husband taught in LSA. Young was a feminist historian of Asia (China and later Vietnam) who left in the 1980s to go to NYU. She calls Norma a “central figure” in their “common anti-war politics [and] efforts to understand the ever changing, ever amazing People’s Republic of China.” Young also says, “The main point about Norma is how direct she was and is and how funny. She cut through every sort of bullshit—academic, bureaucratic, political….She just has this extraordinary eye that goes right underneath the surface and emerges many yards further on.”

Over time, Diamond intersected with many of the significant people in women's studies, in China studies, and in anthropology. There was no formal women's studies at all until the 1970s, by which point Norma was
quite well established as an expert on Chinese society, especially with regard to the position of women.

**The field in the 1960s**

In 1963, the year that Diamond began her first appointment as an assistant professor, anthropology was in some ways at its height: optimistic that it could make the world better, adding to the fund of knowledge every year. Articles in *American Anthropologist*, such as “Pregnancy Cravings (Dola-Duka) in Relation to Social Structure and Personality in a Sinhalese Village” by G. Obeyesekere, show that there was still much basic ethnographic information to be collected and conveyed, but at the same time it was connected to more general theorizing. The optimism one senses in looking back at old issues of the journals was connected to the post-war expansion of the U.S. economy, to the growing numbers of students entering college, to the availability of teaching jobs in universities, and to neo-Enlightenment faith in science and universal reason. Anthropology would be at the forefront of a new, more equitable world, providing the knowledge that would inspire social change at home. Relativism was not seen as contradictory to universal reason and truth, but would be a way to attain truth. Science was admired, and anthropologists wrote books such as *The Science of Language: An Introduction to Linguistics*, by John P. Hughes, and *Toward a Science of Mankind*, by Laura Thompson.

Book titles did not all have colons and subtitles. There was a simplicity about topics that did not have the sense of limitation and qualification that contemporary works have. Village studies were still desirable and feasible. Books could be comprehensive: *Marriage and the Family in North Somaliland* by I. M. Lewis, *The Ethnobiology of Northern Luzon* by Felix M. Keesing, *The Anatomy of Dirty Words* by Edward Sagarin, and *Cooperation*
and Competition among Primitive Peoples by Margaret Mead, to name a few reviewed in American Anthropologist in 1963.

Social trends such as the civil rights movement, the women’s movement, decrease in traditional religion, and experimentation with other cultural traditions—Zen Buddhism, Native American ritual, African musical forms, South and Central American textiles and foods—all relied on people who had themselves lived in such exotic places. The Peace Corps began in 1960; drugs, music, dance, and vision all blended into a counter-cultural mix of elements from the whole world.

But China was vastly different from most of these other cultures. In 1963 the Chinese were only 14 years past their communist revolution. In 1966 the Cultural Revolution began, with its radical egalitarian campaigns. Swept up in the anti-materialist questioning of the time, a student could easily find hope in what little was known about the Chinese solution. Nonetheless, while some celebrated, others reviled the distant socialist revolution from its onset in the 1950s.

Not only were the Chinese questioning matters of ownership and production, but they were also questioning the very building block of human society: the family. Women were to have new roles, equal to those of men, and authority was no longer to be absolute along age and gender lines. Hence the radical nature of family accusations, as when children—always susceptible to mass movements—turned in their own parents for counterrevolutionary tendencies. The slogan “Women Hold Up Half the Sky” appeared to be borne out by women working on electric lines, driving tractors, and serving in the army. For anthropologists interested in economic equality in general or in women’s issues, China was the place to be.

But there was also the question of access. In the late 1950s, when Norma began her graduate studies and contemplated doing fieldwork, mainland China was effectively closed to Americans. Some social scientists such as sociologists Martin Whyte and Jonathan Unger studied China
through interviewing refugees in Hong Kong, developing quite sophisticated methods for understanding the nature of what they were told, given refugees’ social positions and biographies. Most social scientists, however, did two other things: they went to Taiwan, and they pored over Chinese newspapers and Foreign Broadcast Information Service translations of radio material. Whether Taiwan could indeed represent China was often glossed over (though two more recent books address that question [Brown 2004; Murray and Hong 1994]). Some anthropologists merely called the object of their study “Chinese,” while others were more explicit about it being “Taiwan.” And once China “opened” in the late 1970s and early 1980s, most anthropologists immediately rushed to the mainland to pursue ethnographic studies; a minority retained their focus on Taiwan.

Diamond herself did fieldwork in Taiwan in the early 1960s, 1969, and 1971, read mainland materials, called her studies “Taiwan,” and as soon as possible (1979) did fieldwork in the People’s Republic of China. She returned in 1985–1986, and continued to write on both Taiwan and China. Trained in the broad field of China studies, and influenced by the broad questioning of Frankfurt School sociology, fieldwork was not her sole method; she always kept in mind the historical context of the issues under consideration. She was especially inclined to examine material factors.

Also contributing significantly to the sociopolitical context of the time was the activity opposing U.S. intervention in Vietnam. She was involved in the teach-ins, as were a number of others in the Department of Anthropology. Her political sympathies fit well with many of the students and teachers at Wisconsin. During the growing anti–Vietnam War protests in 1967, when she was already an assistant professor at Michigan, a small note announcing a meeting of the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars was posted at the Asian studies meetings and many people attended, some just to see what was going on. John King
Fairbank went at least once. The group examined U.S. policy and the importance of cultural knowledge such as that possessed and generated by social scientists, and began publishing the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars in 1968 to serve as a public voice for this knowledge. Graduate students and assistant professors risked their careers to publish the journal (recently renamed Critical Asian Studies). The Founding Statement of the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, passed in 1969, reads as a manifesto opposing “the brutal aggression of the United States in Vietnam and to the complicity or silence of our profession with regard to that policy” and seeks “to function as a catalyst, a communications network for both Asian and Western scholars, a provider of central resources for local chapters, and a community for the development of anti-imperialist research” (BCAS 2005). The fledgling Committee held a meeting in Ann Arbor, convened a symposium on Vietnam, and Norma was involved in the Committee and the journal from the very beginning.

Career

Professionally, Diamond’s career advanced smoothly and steadily. She earned her Ph.D. in 1966, but had already become an assistant professor at U of M in 1963. By 1969 she was tenured as an associate professor, and in 1975 she became a full professor. She retired in 1996 as Professor Emerita. Few people nowadays have such efficient careers.

In many ways academia was less “professional” than it is now. Diamond’s first and only single-authored volume was the revision of her dissertation, K’un Shen, published in the Holt Rinehart series of case studies (1969). It is solid, interesting, accessible, and timeless in the best sense of the term, with hints of issues she would take up later, though the foundational book dutifully examined each topic in turn, in the style of the day. Still, we can see concern about women and their place within the family,
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economic issues including agriculture, fishing and the struggles of fisherfolk, and the question of identity—in this case Taiwanese identity—in the context of Chinese domination.

Diamond’s work was based not only on fieldwork; because her interest was in China, generally speaking, she was less wedded to a particular methodology than to pursuit of relevant sources, whatever they were, including archives and newspapers. This provides a historical depth that has made her work useful and attractive to scholars outside as well as inside anthropology.

After publishing her dissertation as a monograph, Diamond wrote only articles. She co-edited the impressive sixth volume of the Encyclopedia of World Cultures, the volume on Russia and Eurasia/China, with Paul Friedrich (Friedrich and Diamond 1994); she ended up writing nine of the entries in addition to a clear, informative introduction. A terrific writer from the start who only improved over the course of her career, she wrote high-quality, creative essays and articles, each with an important theme, published in good journals and with wide readership.

Diamond’s article on women under Kuomintang rule was the first one in the first issue of Modern China. She interacted significantly with scholars from China, meeting them in China and in Ann Arbor, and corresponding regularly in writing. Beth Notar, assistant professor of anthropology at Trinity College whose work has focused on the Bai ethnic group, was quite impressed by the degree of respect Norma commanded in Yunnan and in China in general. When Beth went to China to do fieldwork in Yunnan province, she went to Beijing first. Norma told her to wait until she had written to the pre-eminent ethnographer of minorities, Lin Yaohua. When Beth called, Professor Lin said, “Of course I’ll see you. Professor Diamond wrote a letter.”

Teaching Diamond taught at Michigan for nearly 40 years. Her courses ranged from women’s issues to basic China courses to economic
Norma Diamond

anthropology to psychological anthropology to classic monographs to the history of anthropological theory. She taught a two-semester course on China (traditional and modern). Her favorite courses were the first years of those in women’s studies, and seminars toward the end of her tenure on Chinese religion, the counterculture, and minorities.

Women’s Studies Norma ran into her department chair in 1969 and told him that she wanted to teach a new course called “The Second Sex in the Third World.” “He looked at me blankly and said, ‘What is the second sex?’ I said, ‘Women.’” She indeed taught it (with the official title, “Women in Traditional and Modernizing Societies”) with what has become a very prominent roster of former students: Rayna Reiter (now Rapp), Susan Harding, Christine Gailey, Irene Silverblatt, Gayle Rubin, Karen Sacks, and others. There was very little course material at the time, but they read Engels’s *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, good work being done by primatologists and physical anthropologists, large chunks of materials from various ethnographies, and a large volume on matrilineal societies by Kathleen Gough. “And then everybody went off and did far more things than we had ever dreamed were possible.”

When Rapp and a fellow graduate student (Lembi Speth) wanted to teach a course on women’s studies in the anthropology department, there was almost nothing to read, except “something like three paragraphs in Malinowski.” So they invited people to come give papers on women. These eventually became *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (Reiter 1975), published at nearly the same time as Michelle Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere’s work *Women, Culture, and Society* (1974).

It is easy to imagine the intensity of those early courses, with young Diamond leading a group of passionate women to think through the causes and cures of patriarchy and sexism. Inequality of any sort has always been anathema to her. Salvation might lie in revolution, but so many of the revolutions were known to be dishonest excuses for the
perpetuation of power difference, a fact that became clearer as the 1970s and 1980s unfolded.

Though Norma was not a central figure in women's studies, she contributed a typically anthropological and critical analysis of women's policies in her article “Collectivization, Kinship, and the Status of Women in Rural China,” first published in the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (1975a), in Rapp's book. While many other “lefties” wanted to believe in the Chinese revolution, Norma renounced the romance and coolly assessed the actual achievements and failures of the Chinese policies on women. This often-cited paper was based on observations and interviews done in eastern China during a two-month period in the summer of 1973 when a number of American and Canadian scholars were invited to China during a mini-thaw in the Cultural Revolution.

Graduate Mentoring Diamond began to train a cohort of China anthropologists and also served on dissertation committees of students studying women and peasants. Between her own training in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the 1980s when it became possible to do fieldwork in China, interest in the anthropological study of China was relatively low. Anthropologists wanted to go out and mingle with the people they were studying, and studying “at a distance”—or in Taiwan—was a clear second choice. By the time of her retirement in 1996, there was a dynamic and devoted group of young students—mostly female—who picked up one or another of the pieces of her work.

As a teacher and mentor, Diamond is professional and inspiring, if very private. As students, we did not ask about her personal life, and she did not ask about ours, though when major life events occurred, she took them in stride and helped us navigate the road between personal and professional matters. She had to be out of town during my wedding and was very sad (and gave us a marvelous Miao embroidery that still is proudly displayed in our house—actually in my study), but I had been a
bit sheepish about even letting her know about my upcoming marriage. I remember that a few years later when I told her that I was pregnant, just before making applications for my doctoral fieldwork, she seemed a bit startled, then recovered, and very sensibly said, “Well, then, you need to be in a place with a reliable milk supply,” and talked about Yunnan province’s capital city, Kunming, rather than suggesting that I go to rural settings. She has continued to be curious about my two daughters, giving gifts from time to time, such as a book on Chinese writing for children, and hoping to see them at Asian studies meetings when they attend. Her evident interest is, however, shy and understated.

Hill Gates, Professor Emerita from Central Michigan University and retired lecturer at Stanford University, who is a specialist on political economy and gender in China and Taiwan, finished her degree in 1973 under Norma. Gates had had only two women professors throughout her undergraduate and master’s education; when she began her doctoral work at Michigan, Diamond was the only woman in the Department of Anthropology. She recalls Norma as the ideal model of “what a woman had to do to stay in the game.” She appreciated Diamond’s style of dress (“simple suits in strong colors, with turtlenecks in Ann Arbor’s endless winters”), her good working relations with male colleagues, and her “no-nonsense approach to China and Taiwan:”

A government that did positive things for people was a good government, regardless of the position the US government had toward those authorities. When socialism worked, explain how. Where it failed, analyze the failure. Norma’s knowledge of reality under the Kuomintang sent me to anthropology fieldwork in Taiwan with a healthy skepticism toward “Free China” propaganda. Later, her criticism of the Chinese Communist party to meet its initial goal of gender equality was equally honest and direct.
Gates once was able to house-sit Norma’s apartment, “a generous gift for a starving student,” and got “an essential education from her splendid China library.”

More recent students reflect similar experiences. Beth Notar most appreciated Norma’s close and unfailing reading of her writing, whether it was a paper, an outline, or the draft of a chapter, always with written comments. Norma wrote letters to her when Beth did fieldwork.

Notar’s favorite interactions with Norma were in the latter’s smoky office, where Norma made wry and cynical comments. Books were piled everywhere—evidence of Diamond’s broad and vast reading. This was an advantage to her students, Beth feels, as Norma could place students’ work within a hugely broad context. (“Norma reads more than anyone I know, in a context where we all read,” said Notar.) Beth appreciates Norma’s training of two generations of women scholars and of China anthropologists.

Another student who finished her degree after Norma’s retirement, Charlene Makley, is an assistant professor of anthropology at Reed College and specializes in Tibetans. She recalls Norma as a very supportive teacher and mentor, who was acerbic and blunt but never devastating. When Charlene wrote her final examination for a class in Anthropological Traditions (having been out of school for three years and never having studied anthropology), one of the questions was “What was the agenda of the writer?” Apparently Charlene used the word “agenda” so often in her response that Norma wrote in her comments, “I’m sorry I ever mentioned the word ‘agenda.’” But Norma’s ability to cut through nonsense and tell the truth made her a model for Char when there were very few senior women; Char calls it “a huge gift for a woman to be a mentor to a younger woman.” Though there was a kind of female solidarity, Char feels gratitude to Norma for her professional approach, never blurring the line between personal and professional. (Beth Notar calls Diamond “private.”) Like Notar, Makley brought up the visits to
Norma’s office, where Norma reclined in a lawn-chair-like chaise longue and smoked. (The chaise longue was there on her doctor’s orders, only from the late 1980s.) Each time Makley visited, Norma would give her the gift of a book from her collection.

Norma was, Char says, “the best of advisors,” who wrote letters, read drafts, and cheered her up when she felt beleaguered. Norma refuses to use e-mail, and Char says Norma is the only person to whom she still writes letters. She also sees her regularly at the Asian Studies and American Anthropological Association meetings.

Her influence was crucial. She was a pioneer, according to Makley. Her work on gender and development influenced many people, as did her ability to look at China with ever-new eyes. She was honest enough not to keep illusions. Diamond’s 1950s excitement switched to disillusionment in the 1970s and 1980s, but she never flinched from writing what she believed to be true. Makley believes that Diamond’s foundational Marxism and her ability to think about class never wavered, and that her lack of sympathy for bourgeois thinking inspired her and many others.

Erik Mueggler, who was hired in anthropology at Michigan as the China expert (himself a specialist on a subgroup of the Yi nationality), became good friends with Norma after he arrived at Michigan. She became a mentor of sorts; he says that she always treated him very comfortably, even though when he arrived he hadn’t even finished his dissertation, not to mention never having taught before. She continued to work with students during her retirement, and he saw nothing but “golden-hearted kindness” with students. He and Norma had lunch together regularly until she retired to Florida—a decision that he says she considered carefully, for years, after weighing many options.

Mueggler, like most anthropologists of China, uses several of Norma’s articles in his teaching. He especially considers “Collectivization, Kinship, and the Status of Women in Rural China” (1975) and “The
Miao and Poison” (1988) to be pioneering articles, which enabled others to build on them and do important subsequent work.

In addition to the training of students, Diamond’s most lasting contribution is indeed in her published work.

**Her work**

*Economic Anthropology* Diamond’s work is unified by a Marxist, Frankfurt School-style sociology as in Hans Gerth’s work. Many of her articles concern the basic question of distribution of resources—the classic Marxist question. Who owns the means of production? Who profits? How does social class affect interaction and belief? How does oppression occur? Is liberation possible? How do ideologies cause suffering?

Diamond wrote several significant pieces of economic anthropology. Anyone studying China had to come to terms, one way or another, with the political economic revolution being carried out, and in the 1960s and 1970s it was in its heyday. Ever alert to the events around her, Diamond attempted to assess the changes underway.

In her monograph *Kun Shen* (1969), economic issues were central. In her articles on gender, rather than take as causal some vague notion of “tradition” and “culture,” she attempted to assess the specific political and economic structures that accounted for the more cultural attributes (as base determines superstructure—classically Marxist). For example, in her study of women in Taiwan (“under Kuomintang rule”), she rejects “culture” as explanatory. “A working assumption of this line of inquiry is that economic and political developments impinge on and reshape culture and ideology” (Diamond 1975b:4). She also rejected the catch-all categories of “acculturation” and “modernization.”

Economic issues could not be separated from government policy, as Diamond makes clear in “Taitou Revisited: State Policies and Social Change” (1984). The village of Taitou (at that time termed a “brigade”
in the militaristic language that accompanied some of the collectivist reorganization of China during the Great Leap Forward, 1958) in the northern province of Shandong (Shantung) was the subject of an important village ethnography done by sociologist Martin Yang in the 1940s, just before the Communist revolution. Diamond was given permission—one of the western pioneers—to conduct first-hand research there in 1979–1980, by collecting oral histories, conducting interviews, and getting economic information. She compared the current situation in Taitou both with its neighboring villages, including a “model” village, and with its own past. All this was done in the service of answering the question about what policy decisions went right or wrong at various levels. Ultimately she lays the blame on government policy for Taitou’s failure to expand economically and agriculturally. “It was not the failings of village leaders and the peasants at large that explained Taitou’s modest growth but particular state policies and the interpretation of these policies by county and prefectural officials” (1984:78). (“Peasants” was the term preferred at the time—politically correct in this context—though in the 21st century the preferred, less class-invoking term is “farmer.”)

Diamond has great faith in the peasants, very little in officials. She points out, for instance, that the state mandated the planting of varieties of corn and wheat unsuited to Taitou’s particular coastal location. Initial gains in productivity enabled by massive use of fertilizer were unsustainable. Peasants had previously allowed the land to sometimes lie fallow, but this was forbidden. Growing of millet—a preferred food for the elderly and very appropriate for local conditions—was not permitted. Peanuts and soy, which added variety and protein to the diet, along with vegetables, were replaced with mandated grain production. Until 1966, peasants in Taitou were able to maintain “sideline” production such as carpentry and masonry, as well as household raising of pigs and chickens. Such activities were allowed to resume in the late 1970s.
Throughout her work on economics, she is clear to distinguish between men's and women's activities. For instance, women in households tended to concentrate on sideline production, by 1979 adding 250 to 500 yuan a year income for sale of pigs raised. At least a third of household gross income—350–400 yuan a year—came from the crafts, vegetables, animals, and other activities undertaken by women. Though these contributions did not earn work points and were omitted from official statistics, it is clear that they were considerable.

Always skeptical and willing to question authorities who mislead, her 1983 article “Model Villages and Village Realities” compares Taitou with the neighboring village of Gangtouzangjia Brigade, which was permitted greater flexibility, had better irrigation, had higher grain production, and since it exceeded its grain quota, was permitted to produce vegetables. It received more technological innovations, mechanization, and industrialization. Per capita gross production in 1978 was only 188 yuan for Taitou and 257 yuan for Gangtouzangjia. A second contrast is with Guangting Brigade, a model village and “advanced” unit, a “Dazhai-type model,” with per capita production value of 279 yuan. This village has its own reservoir and has a series of pumping stations. Another model village is Zhuchadao Brigade, a fishing village, with around 1500 yuan production value per person. Though only four percent of its gross income came from agriculture, it was touted because it was self-sufficient in grain. When income was distributed to individuals, Zhuchadao people received a level about double (380 yuan) that of neighboring agricultural villages. Though Taitou was instructed to learn from the three models, restrictive policies controlled irrigation, choice of crops, access to new machinery, use of chemicals, and permission to obtain purchase contracts. For Taitou—as is true for a majority of China’s villages—such “learning” from models had severe limitations.

[A] unit with a potentially high production value can achieve that potential if it is assisted with loans, technical advice,
and purchase requisitions for the needed technology, not to mention the added input of high morale that comes with continuous encouragement and public praise for each economic advance that is made. [Diamond 1983:177]

Her conclusion is clear: the whole model village approach was misleading. Diamond wrote:

Model villages in China are something other than what they are intended to be. They are not examples for other communities to imitate. They are not even social laboratories in which technicians and social scientists plan for change, guide change, and overcome the supposed problems of peasant conservatism, backwardness, and resistance to innovations. Neither are they...Potemkin villages in the sense of being fraudulent. They are functioning collectives with real people benefiting from them. But they resemble the pilot projects one finds in a number of Third World countries. They are demonstration models, funded sometimes by their own governments, sometimes by international development agencies or private foundations...or combinations thereof...They are good places to bring foreign visitors to, but I think most Third World governments recognize the futility of bringing the surrounding peasantry to look at them and the frustration that might be aroused by urging other communities to emulate them. [Diamond 1983:179]

She uses her carefully collected data—which she sometimes explicitly admits are boring—to make the point that the policies were wrong and unfair, and that China’s peasants could have done better if the authorities would only listen to their wisdom.

Her book-length monograph on Taitou was rejected by a university press because it did not want competition for Martin Yang’s book (1945). She says now that it was boring because it had a lot of economic data about mistaken government policies and the plight of villagers. What frustrated her so much was that this average village, described so carefully
by Yang, could have been so much more prosperous had policies been better.

If the Marxist assumption of equality among all peoples holds for social class, for Diamond and many others, it held with equal obviousness for the gendered division of labor.

**Feminism** A good portion of Diamond’s research, like her teaching, was explicitly feminist. Feminists in the United States in the 1970s were focusing on matters of equality, and anthropologists were searching for hopeful examples. Sherry Ortner’s 1974 piece “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” seemed to settle the matter, concluding that despite feminists’ hopes, all societies thus far studied displayed gender inequality. Diamond and other feminists were hopeful that the People’s Republic of China—still off-limits in the 1970s—could live up to its claims of gender equality. Indeed, in her 1975 article “Women Under Kuomintang Rule” and her 1973 article “The Status of Women in Taiwan: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back,” she addresses issues of education, work outside the home, the roles of women, responsibility for housework and childcare, female friendships, relations with spouses, and other pressing issues. The Kuomintang (KMT) (ruling party) comes across as retrogressively anti-feminist, and she explicitly writes that “[b]oth the government of the People’s Republic of China and the Kuomintang government in Taiwan officially claim that men and women are equal in their societies: the statements of the PRC come much closer to the truth” (Diamond 1975b:5).

Even in unequal Taiwán, peasant women fare better than do their educated middle-class counterparts, who are isolated in urban Taiwan without family members or even domestic servants, confined in their large houses. (There is an implicit critique here of the similar plight of middle-class suburban housewives in the U.S.) Many knew no neighbors, had no friends, never went anywhere with their husbands, and saw
extended family only once or twice a year. Television became their only refuge; rates of mental illness for urban Taiwanese females rose during the primary years of domestic life (between 30 and 60) (Diamond 1975b:40). She explicitly aimed to “inject a feminist consciousness into the analysis of the position of women in modern Taiwan [meaning] a heightened awareness of problems shared by women across cultural boundaries and class lines, at different stages of economic development and under differing political systems” (Diamond 1975b:4–5).

The sexual division of labor is the oldest and most persistent…division in human society as a whole. It becomes oppressive at that point in social development when women’s share in the total social endeavor is denigrated and given lesser rewards and when gender is taken as the decisive indicator of talent, ability, and expectable personality traits. [Diamond 1975b:5]

Her treatment of the KMT’s brutal and fascist attitude toward women is frank and clear. This misery contrasted with what Diamond observed about young women in the mainland, especially those who stayed within their villages after marriage or were fortunate enough to be in “model brigades.”

One of her most often cited and influential articles was published in the Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars. In “Collectivization, Kinship, and the Status of Women” (1975a), she examined the feminist dogma that since China proclaimed women as equal to men (“Women Hold Up Half the Sky”), it could be viewed as a model for western societies. Diamond showed that the observable current organization of society, not some indelibly entrenched ideology, accounts for the continued oppression of women. With a political, engaged hope, she asks, not only rhetorically, “Must we assume that the male oppression of women is so deeply rooted in the human species that even revolution and major restructurings of society are insufficient to abolish it?” (Diamond 1975a:25). She hoped the answer was “no.”
Ethnicity and Christianity  By 1979, mainland China had “opened” and it was possible for western scholars to do fieldwork there, even though there were strict limits on their interactions, speech, and activities. Norma went to Shandong University in 1979–1980 to teach about American society and American literature and to conduct research. One of the items in her “dossier,” the secret files that exist for foreigners as well as PRC citizens, was that she was Jewish. This qualified her, according to her recruiters at the Chinese consulate, to teach Jewish–American literature at the Institute of Modern Literature in Shandong. That unit was working hard on translating the works of Saul Bellow. Diamond is a voracious reader, and though her training is largely social scientific, she has a true feel for great literature. When asked how graduate students can prepare themselves for careers, she mentioned—only half-jokingly—that they should read the works of great writers, regardless of style. So when she found herself in China as an English teacher, it was not too daunting a task. She asked only to be allowed to study peasant life during the summers and spring break, and specified Taitou.

At the time of this visit, religion was still effectively suppressed. Nobody revealed their Christianity to her. The Catholic cathedral just off campus had become a glass factory. She had to explain the Biblical references in the literature her students were reading: What are the Ten Commandments? What is Christmas? What is Easter? A Red Guard didn’t understand what was wrong with “bearing false witness:” the Cultural Revolution was built on this! After a series of such lectures, one day she took a walk and came upon a completely walled-off Protestant church. An older woman approached Norma and asked, “Are you here to open the Church for us?” Two years later the cathedral on campus was reopened. She is fairly certain that the small Protestant church must also be reopened by now.
Diamond became interested in the minorities of the southwest in China through her interest in Christianity, which began when she studied several missionaries. There is a small missionary section in the U of M Graduate Library, and she was looking at a book about Christianization in the Shandong area of China, because she knew (after her second trip, in 1985) that Taitou had a large Christian population. As apples fell for Newton, a “funny” book fell off the shelf for Diamond. She picked it up, noticed that it was Samuel Pollard’s *The Story of the Miao*, and started reading. The word *Miao* leapt out at her because a friend at the Religions Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in Beijing had sent her an article about religion in China, with a throwaway line that she thought was an error. It said, “Many if not the majority of the Miao [minority group] are Christians.” She wrote back about this being a mistake, and her friend said no, actually, that’s true. “I was very interested and I decided that I should go out and find out more about it ’cause…in a society which did not welcome foreign religions after liberation/the communist takeover…if in 1984–1985 the Miao were still insisting in various parts that they were Christian it’s worth…looking into.”

The poorest of the poor, the Miao were so thoroughly missionized that contemporary accounts classify them, as several other minority groups (such as the Yi), as having Christianity as their indigenous religion. As Norma learned more about the remarkable Reverend Pollard, Christianity in China, and the minorities, she began her third stage of scholarly work, her most accessible and passionate. Her best writing and greatest acclaim came from this period. She was both the catalyst and beneficiary of burgeoning interest in China’s minorities.

She was interested in religion and socialism. Pollard, according to a Miao cadre, like Jesus, walked among the poor. (Half-jokingly, she says that it’s a pity that Marx and Engels didn’t go to religious services more, because they could have worked the socialist message of the Gospels
into their own writing.) Diamond considers Pollard a premature liberation theologian.

When she returned from China she joined St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Ann Arbor. She was drawn to its music and social welfare activities: breakfast program, homeless shelter, battered women’s shelter, Alcoholics Anonymous, and in general community good works.

One of Diamond’s clear heroes, the one whose story fell at her feet, was Samuel Pollard, the English missionary who established the church in Shimenkan, at the poor western edge of poor Guizhou province, and created a script for the Hua Miao language spoken there. In one of her favorite articles, “Christianity and the Hua Miao: Writing and Power” (1996), Diamond describes how Pollard attracted a following and was drawn into the creation of a script:

Samuel Pollard’s mission to the Miao began in the summer of 1904 when four Miao men arrived unannounced at the CIM (China inland mission) compound in Zhaotong City in northeastern Yunnan. They spoke some Chinese, and explained that they came seeking “instruction” from Mr. Pollard. They brought with them a food supply sufficient for a week’s stay and their return journey, and a letter of introduction from another CIM missionary, James Adam, whose station was at Anshun in western Guizhou. He had sent them on to Pollard, whose station was much closer to their home villages.

Pollard’s diary entry for 12 July 1904 notes, “They were very much in earnest in learning to read.” He was not sure whether it was that or the Christian message that had drawn them. However, he welcomed them, and housed them in an empty classroom, realizing that they would be unwelcome at Chinese inns even if they had the money to pay for lodgings. With the Zhaotong mission school on holiday, Pollard and his wife Emmy set to work teaching the four “scouts” (as he dubbed them) to read from the Chinese version of the Gospels. He preached to them in simple Chinese, taught them a few hymns, and they left at the end of a week when their food supply began to run
low. To Pollard’s surprise, five more “scouts” arrived in the following week, and after that a group of thirteen, all asking for “instruction.” They told Pollard that thousands more were waiting in the hills “to see the missionary and hear le-su [Jesus].”

By mid-August, the number of visiting Miao had risen to over 100. [Diamond 1996:142]

She describes approvingly the good works of the Methodists, their introduction of tools of production—better potatoes, apple orchards, smallpox vaccinations, work in the school system, training of teachers for the far-flung villages, and ultimately the script that the Miao eventually considered their own (always carefully contrasting “the Chinese” and “the [Hua] Miao”). In a society where literacy is the primary hallmark of the coveted classification as “civilized,” the fact that the Hua Miao could read the Bible, write letters, and receive an education in their own language was a great source of pride. The Pollard script was banned in 1949 but continued in private use into the 1980s, when a new romanization was proposed (Diamond 1996:154). Diamond is clear that “the issue here (of claims of the inadequacy of local dialects for modern life) is not linguistic flexibility but rather national unity and national policy” (Diamond 1996:155).

Diamond’s most widely known article, and the one she thinks is her best (“Always the youngest child is the favorite among them,” she intones gravely) is probably “The Miao and Poison: Interactions on China’s Frontier” (1988), winner of the G. P. Murdock prize. The article focuses on the Han Chinese myth of Miao mastery of a particularly efficacious poison called gu, which is made by collecting poisonous spiders and putting them into a jar. They eat one another and the last remaining spider is supposed to be the most poisonous of all. The alleged effect of this poison is to cause Han men to fall in love with Miao women. Diamond collects contemporary and classic stories of gu poison and of Miao witches, demonstrating the misogynistic and xenophobic beliefs about
minority (Miao) women—the most powerless of the powerless—having a terrifying power over people who should be dominant. The article begins with personal experience, inspired by the best reflexive writing of the 1980s, and connects themes of representation, empowerment, and many other theoretical concerns of the period but without using jargon or even explicit theorizing. It exemplifies the best of Diamond's style: clear, persuasive, sensible, compelling, understated, accurate, and taking the position of the oppressed. She relies on writings of Christian missionaries, on the earliest China anthropologists such as de Groot, on Ming and Qing gazetteers quoted in Feng and Shryock, as well as on newspapers and observations.

The descriptions of gu among the Miao, from Tang times on, are a Han fantasy about these groups...The allegations about lack of sexual morality are also a Han fantasy for the most part. They confuse unbound feet with wild, undisciplined behavior, premarital sex with promiscuity, choice of one's marriage partner with total absence of family or community control over marriage, delayed coresidence of spouses with illegitimate births, singing and dancing with orgies, and so on. They are horrified by the economic and social roles of the tribal women, and the general respect that is accorded them. In Han eyes, it was the world turned upside-down, the exemplification of what it means to be uncivilized. Worst of all, the barbarians were in the majority, despite all the armed encounters and all the migration of Han soldiers and civilians. [Diamond 1988:23]

Clearly this article unifies her concerns with gender, economic inequality, and ideology. The writing shows a long and broad view of a complex subject, informed by general anthropological knowledge and understanding of social structure, but without the off-putting specialized language that characterized much writing at the time.
Reviews and the Voice of Reason

Norma Diamond

Diamond published 34 book reviews, according to her curriculum vitae; two of her articles were also book reviews. To get a sense of her sensible attitude about books, I focus on two of them. In a review of Richard Solomon’s Mao’s Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture, a national character study that contrasts China’s traditional “oral” culture with Mao’s “anal” culture, she says:

Why doesn’t the author interview some people who really come from peasant and worker backgrounds and who have not been exposed to formal education? Granted, such a process is a bit more time-consuming. The illiterate can’t fill out the questionnaires by themselves, and they may need more persuading and encouragement in order to go along with the odd requests and queries of a Western social scientist asking questions about things beyond their experience. Solomon’s reason for this obvious weakness in his study is really extraordinary. He explains that the illiterate lack the “sufficient social poise” for being interviewed…Solomon has thus introduced a new dimension into the criteria for the selection of informants and at one stroke has absolved researchers of any need to learn to communicate in new ways with those of different educational backgrounds. The burden is on the informant to be literate and sophisticated—to have ingratiated him/herself in the ways of the interview world. It is an elitist approach that insults not only unapproached informants, but the reader’s intelligence as well, and ignores the technique of such important works as Myrdal’s Report from a Chinese Village or Hinton’s Fanshen—not to mention the past hundred years of anthropological research. [Kagan and Diamond 1973:64]

Clearly, she finds almost everything wrong with Solomon’s book, from his focus on elites to methodological lassitude. It would be nearly impossible to read her review and then admire the book.

In 1985, by which time China had begun to dismantle its earlier collectivist experiments and replace them with “traditional” household-
based contracts, Diamond reviewed four books that staked out a clear position on the socialist phase in China (this phase had by then been uniformly blasted by Chinese writers who were ecstatic about the opportunities for getting rich): *Chen Village: The Recent History of a Peasant Community in Mao’s China*, by Anita Chan, Richard Madsen, and Jonathan Unger (1984), was the least wedded to a particular position. *Shenfan: The Continuing Revolution in a Chinese Village*, by William Hinton (1983), “reappraise[s] and consolidate[s] his own political stance” (Diamond 1985:786). Jan Myrdal criticizes “current policies for moving away from socialist ideals” (Diamond 1985:786) in *Return to a Chinese Village*.

Most objectionable, Steven Mosher in *Broken Earth* “finds little he can approve of in the ongoing culture, and he is critical of the revolution for destroying some imagined perfect world that existed prior to 1949” (Diamond 1985:786). She was especially harsh in her criticism of Mosher, then notorious as the Stanford University anthropology student expelled from its graduate program for ethical and legal violations while doing fieldwork in southern China. Diamond wrote a six-column letter to the editor of the journal *Society* about Mosher and was involved in assessing the facts of the case. They have never been fully made public.

When the Mosher case began in 1983, the anthropology of China as much as anthropology in general was in a state of turmoil. Diamond acknowledges that:

> [E]ven at their best, ethnographic accounts are never unbiased, free of the researcher’s own values and judgments, and for those writing about China, the problems of maintaining objectivity seem intensified. We come to contemporary China with social values and political positions that intrude on our work more so than when we researched among the Andamans and the Trobriands.

[1985:786]

Diamond’s close reading of Mosher’s *Broken Earth* through the lens of her own detailed economic knowledge makes his work appear
ludicrous. He makes claims about how the village he calls Sandhead Brigade is miserable, but “no hard data are presented to substantiate Mosher’s views” (Diamond 1985:787)—and then Diamond shows what hard data would look like. She compares the portrayal of this area with that of others who saw multiple rice cropping and a plentitude of other products: mulberry, silk, fish, vegetables, and small industry. The per capita income was more than twice the national average. Yet Mosher insists that “the collective years were a failure in every regard” (Diamond 1985:788). He despairs about many features of rural Chinese life, whereas Diamond shows that many of these things—a monotonous diet, drab wardrobe—have little to do with socialism. “The reader hears the voice of a conservative middle-class American explaining why he would not want to live in China” (Diamond 1985:788). She mentions Myrdal’s critique of the family-planning guidelines and compares his to Mosher’s; Myrdal uses peasant concerns as the basis for the criticism, while Mosher describes unbelievable and atypical zealous over-application of the policies.

She applauds other books for their even-handedness and conviction. She shows how Myrdal and Hinton mourn the retreat from socialism, while the authors of *Chen Village* present a clear sense of excesses and accomplishments.

Norma was also often called on to review manuscripts for publication. Stevan Harrell captures her style perfectly:

She was a wonderful critic for two of my book manuscripts. At that time she used an old-fashioned word-processing machine, and a printer with a distinctive typeface. Since my editor was sworn to confidentiality about the identity of the referees, and I knew damn well who it was from the typeface and the sardonic but meticulous comments, we referred politically correctly to the referee as “the anonymous person who uses Norma’s word processor.”
Present views

Of China When I asked in 2004 about contemporary China, Diamond said that China has “thrown out the baby with the bathwater so many times that I don’t get upset anymore about it.” She is glad that the Cultural Revolution is over—at least its excesses, since some of its policies benefited those who had had nothing before it—and that the emphasis on growing grain everywhere is over. She is “totally horrified” at the government’s refusal to look at growing rural poverty and the plight of the working class. The migration of vast numbers of people into cities, working in deplorable conditions for long hours, living in squalor, alone, away from families, is dreadful. Contemporary China is great for those with good connections and good educations. The gulf between the rich and poor—in terms of education, health standards, living conditions—is probably greater than before the Revolution. And women? What happened to the optimism reflected in her article on collectivization and kinship, showing that women who stayed in their home villages after marriage had greater status? “I was optimistic because they were being optimistic…They thought, ‘Oh, all this Confucian crap is gonna go down the tubes, once and for all.’ It didn’t, it didn’t, it didn’t.” She is clear-eyed about the disastrous situations that many young women find themselves in, hoping to evade the lack of opportunity in the countryside: work in factories, in brothels, as maids to wealthier families.

Of Anthropology Diamond loves writing. She reads much less anthropology than she used to, in part because the style is so disappointing. The use of terminology fails to communicate; it is simply bad prose written to impress readers with what authors the writer has read. For her part, she loves the style of anthropologists such as Clifford Geertz and Valentine Daniel, and admires the work of Eric Wolf, Melissa Brown, Stevan Harrell, and Dru Gladney.
Anthropology can still serve as an interpretive voice. Though we may not be subalterns, we are the best the subalterns have got. Even among “natives” there is a class bias. We must train our students to portray our informants with dignity, to convey their style and voice. She would rather read well written travelers’ accounts from the 19th century than the narcissistic writing about the contemporary anthropologist’s feelings. She is interested in the culture, the economy, etc. of the people under study. Graduate students should read a large number of well written works, especially ethnographies—and they should look words up! She only trusts words in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and has no patience for the postmodern jargon that fills many contemporary works.

She reads voraciously. In terms of periodicals, she reads *The New York Times*, *The Ann Arbor News* (and now *The Gainesville Sun*), *The New Yorker*, *New York Review of Books*, and *Newsweek*. She goes to the public library once a week, and currently especially likes modern Indian writers and the British minorities who are starting to write a lot. At her new retirement home she has undertaken the organization of the “library,” where people discard a lot of their old books, not foregoing the chance to voice a bit of disdain for their literary choices. She does the *New York Times* crossword puzzle frequently. She has become quite adept at editing manuscripts for non-native graduate students, and plans to continue that activity as a volunteer at the University of Florida.

**Diamond in the field**

Norma Diamond’s career traces the simultaneous contours of anthropology. In the 1960s she wrote with hope of revolutions that would liberate peasants and women from unjust positions. In the 1970s she focused on women and economic issues. In the 1980s she began to focus on yet more downtrodden groups—ethnic minorities in poor rural areas—and the later-forbidden efforts of missionaries to assist them, where the
government had failed to do so, and whom most Chinese scholars still saw as “uncultured,” “living fossils” of premodern forms of society.

Diamond’s interests arose from a sense of intellectual curiosity, integrity, and engagement with her subjects’ world. In her writings’ every page one senses passion and commitment to getting the story right, for the people whose lives she analyzes and for readers who need to know. Of course, passion alone is insufficient; it must be supported by deep and broad knowledge well presented, all of which she has generously provided.

Throughout her entire career Norma has shown courageous commitment to fairness, speaking honestly even against the currents of government or fashion. As a strong, compassionate, and eloquent writer and teacher, she provides a model for all students of China and anthropology.

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Endnotes

1. The Frankfurt School is the informal name of the Institute for Social Research centered in Frankfurt, Germany. This influential group of social analysts included such scholars as Herbert Marcuse, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and Jürgen Habermas. They took a generally Marxist approach, using class analysis to examine issues of mass media, popular culture, bourgeois life, art, politics, and other social topics, expanding the range of topics usually analyzed by Marxists. Their thinking evolved into what is called Critical Theory.

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