CEAPS Speakers Series

CEAPS — Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
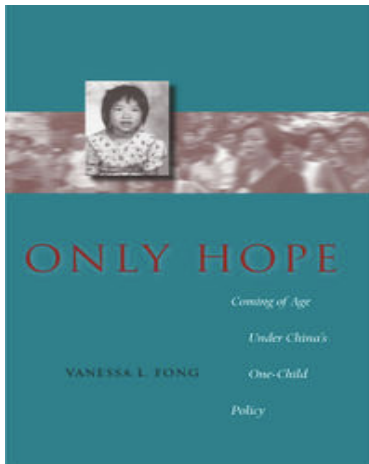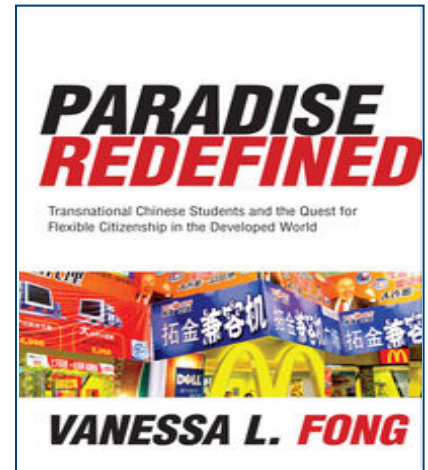
October 13, 2014(Monday)
Noon - 1 p.m.
Urban Outfitters Building
Conference Room 411 (IPS),
507 East Green Street.

ONLY HOPE
Coming of Age Under China's One-Child Policy
VANESSA L. FONG

PARADISE REDEFINED
Transnational Chinese Students and the Quest for Flexible Citizenship in the Developed World
VANESSA L. FONG

Causes and Consequences of Transnational Migration from China to Other Countries and Back to China

Vanessa Fong
Associate Professor
Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Amherst College

Based on surveys, interviews, and participant observation conducted for a longitudinal study of 1,559 Chinese citizens and their families from ages 13-20 (in 1999) to ages 28-34 (in 2014), this talk examines how and why 19 percent of them studied in Australia, Canada, Europe, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, the United States, or Singapore as young adults, what they experienced abroad, and how and why they decided to stay abroad or return to China for permanent residence, and what those who returned to China experienced after they returned. While earning a prestigious college education in China is the main path to elite status, study abroad provides an alternative channel by offering a particularly flexible "developed world" citizenship. This flexible citizenship promises the potential for greater happiness and freedom afforded by transnational mobility, but also brings with it unexpected suffering, ambivalence, and disappointment.

Speaker Bio

Vanessa Fong is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Amherst College, in Amherst, Massachusetts. She is the author of *Only Hope: Coming of Age under China's One-Child Policy* (Stanford University Press 2004), which won the 2005 Francis Hsu Book Prize from the Society for East Asian Anthropology, and *Paradise Redefined: Transnational Chinese Students and the Quest for Flexible Citizenship in the Developed World* (Stanford University Press 2011). She has been engaged since 1998 in a longitudinal project that will follow a cohort of Chinese only-children and their families throughout their lives. Information about her publications can be found at www.vanessafong.blogspot.com.