

Vice President

Deborah Davis

PhD; Sociology, Yale University **Area of Interest:** East Asia (particularly China); contemporary Chinese society, culture, and politics **Publications:** *Creating Wealth and Poverty in Postsocialist China*, co-edited with Wang Feng, Stanford University Press (2009); "Gendered Pathways to Rural Schooling," (with Pierre Landry, Yusheng Peng, Jin Xiao) *The China Quarterly*, No. 189:60–82 (2007); "Urban Consumer Culture," *The China Quarterly* No.183: 677–694 (2003) **Service to the Profession:** Associate Editor (China), *Journal of Asian Studies* (currently); Trustee, program committee, legal education exchange, former vice-president, Yale China Association; ACLS Joint Committee on Chinese Studies (1992–97), Chair (1990–92)

Personal Statement

Throughout my career, collaboration with colleagues outside my discipline of sociology has supported me intellectually and personally. Faced with the enormity of trying to understand broad social trends in a huge society with thousands of years of recorded history, I created reading groups as a graduate student that explored both historical texts and statistical yearbooks, and once in the field, I repeatedly relied on multi-disciplinary and multi-national research teams. Over time, the teams assembled for one project created networks across generations, disciplines, and nationalities that supported me professionally long after the initial projects were complete. Intergenerational and interdisciplinary collaboration has defined my entire scholarly career and AAS has been one of the most important locations where those synergies have multiplied. Yet today even as every college and university administrator lauds initiatives to explore the impact of globalization, those of us who are identified as Asianists often struggle with departmental structures that impede the hiring and promotions necessary to advance cutting-edge interdisciplinary scholarship. In my own experience, the community created and sustained by AAS has repeatedly supported me when I turned to questions that my discipline ignored, and as Vice-president I would encourage programs and initiatives that support cross-discipline and cross-regional collaboration throughout all stages of members' careers so that Asianists continue to be among the most creative and original scholars in academia.

I also am particularly interested in furthering AAS leadership as libraries, public archives, and media organizations work to incorporate Asian language materials in print, digital, and video formats. Finally, I would give renewed emphasis to keeping AAS a critical institutional location for debates of pressing issues of public policy. The expertise of our members provides unique resources and through our national meetings and regional seminars AAS is ideally positioned to reach both the general public and leaders in Washington. While the current financial crisis imposes serious constraints, it also has created new urgency for more effective cooperation and coordination. No organization is better prepared than AAS to take leadership in this new environment over the next five years.

Gail Hershatter

PhD; History, UC-Santa Cruz **Area of Interest:** China; modern history **Publications:** *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century*, University of California Global, Area, and International Archive, http://repositories.cdlib.org/gaia/gaia_books/1/. Print ed., University of California Press (2007); *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai*, University of California Press (1997); "Birthing Stories: Rural Midwives in 1950s China," in Jeremy Brown and Paul G. Pickowicz, eds., *Dilemmas of Victory: The Early Years of the People's Republic of China*, Harvard University Press, 337-358 (2007) **Service to the Profession:** Chair, Executive Committee, Pacific Rim Research Program, University of California (2004-10); Co-Director, Center for Cultural Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz (1995-2007); China and Inner Asia Council, Association for Asian Studies (1992-95, vice-chair 1994-95)

Personal Statement:

I came into "the China field" in years marked by the Vietnam War and the antiwar movement, Nixon's China visit and the late Cultural Revolution, the move toward people's history and the feminist imperative to "make the invisible visible." Research interests first formed in that era have engaged me for many years, even as political and academic contexts have changed my approaches to them. In writing about early twentieth-century workers, young women in the reform era, prostitutes before and after the 1949 revolution, and rural women's memories of collectivization, I find myself circling back to certain formative questions: what counts as an event? Who gets to decide? How is the historical record shaped in interactions with the present moment? What are the obligations of a scholar working in North America to her own students, to the people she studies, and to the larger world beyond?

The AAS has taken encouraging steps to draw scholars from Asia into more sustained conversations with those in Europe and North America, increase intellectual support for graduate students, assist faculty working in relative isolation, and put the organization itself on a firm, member-supported financial footing. I would like to continue that work, and also to think hard about what kinds of cross-disciplinary, transnational collaborations work best, and how the AAS might help to encourage and develop them. At a moment when many universities are sustaining what looks like permanent damage, including cuts to Asian language offerings, we also need to make the case that scholarly attention to Asia—not as object but as interlocutor(s)—is essential to how we imagine a sustainable future.

I would bring to this post twelve years of experience co-directing an interdisciplinary humanities-based research center on my own campus, five years at the helm of the University of California Pacific Rim Research Program, which supports research across areas and disciplines, and experience in collaborative work with scholars in China and the United States. I am honored by the invitation to serve a community that has been enormously important to me.