

Department of Sociology

Seminar

Dr. Xiaoli Tian

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The University of Hong Kong**

**Space and Personal Contacts: Cross-Group Interaction
between Mainland and Local University Students in Hong Kong?**

Date : 26 October 2017 (Thursday)
Time : 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Venue: Room 1045, Academic and Administration Bldg.,
15 Baptist University Road, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon
Language: English

Abstract

Despite sharing physical space which supports contact with out-group members and institutional arrangements that encourage cross-group interaction, many university students still congregate within their own groups. To explain this phenomenon, this study examines the micro-level social processes that prevent or facilitate intergroup interaction. A qualitative study of Mainland Chinese and local university students in Hong Kong reveals that students lack opportunities for mutually engaging experiences across multiple points in time due to fragmented daily living space, defended interpersonal space, and politicized online space, which contribute to the absence of cross-group interactions. Cross-group friendships depend on external forces to remove inhibitions, which then allow emotional bonding. This study contributes to the understanding of cross-group interaction by pointing out the importance of daily routine activities and mutually engaging experiences in influencing cross-group interaction among students.

Biographical note

Xiaoli Tian is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Hong Kong. She received her Ph.D. from Department of Sociology, The University of Chicago. Her research interests include how preexisting knowledge paradigms and cultural norms influence the way people respond to unexpected transformations of their everyday routines. This interest is reflected in her two main lines of research: medical knowledge as situated practices and social interaction. Her writings have been published in American Journal of Sociology; Modern China; Information, Communication and Society; Journal of Contemporary Ethnography; Media, Culture and Society; Studies in Media and Communications; Chinese Sociological Review, Symbolic Interaction, Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, among others.

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