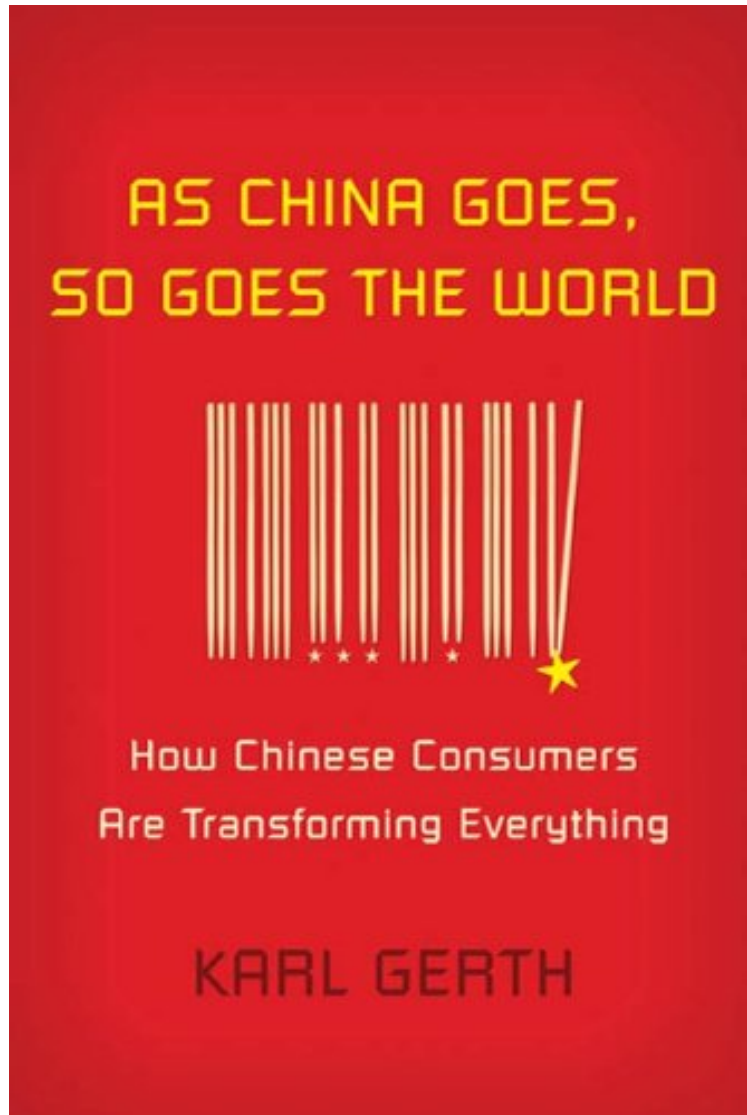


# As China Goes, So Goes the World: How Chinese Consumers Are Transforming Everything

*Karl Gerth*

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**Karl Gerth : As China Goes, So Goes the World: How Chinese Consumers Are Transforming Everything** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised As China Goes, So Goes the World: How Chinese Consumers Are Transforming Everything:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fresh Hot Bear Bile hereBy A CustomerAn important subject for the vast number of Human lives that will be and/or have been directly or indirectly altered by China's Mega-Economic Tsunami. The Author does an admirable job of touching on different parts of this modern day phenomenon but in the

end just scratches the surface. This book needed additional depth and refinement, and at a little more than 200 pages those qualities certainly aren't easy to find. Furthermore, the middle chapters are repetitive even gobbledygook-ish (WTO this, WTO that and so on). While this book is not perfect if you're interested in enlightening yourself a little, reading this book can only help. Who needs adequate oxygen, potable water, and fertile soil anyway, next on the list India; with all the babies you can birth. Read Instead: *Life and Death in Shanghai*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Capitalism from the ground up By Jim Manis The title of the book ought to be "As China's Consumers Go ...." This is a very readable book and informative. In 1989, Chinese friends informed me that the situation in China really wasn't about "democracy," as the western press would have it. It was about money and financial opportunities. Unfortunately, they couldn't make it clear to me what they meant. "As China Goes" does that job. And in a highly readable style. I found the book informative enough to make it part of the curriculum in the advanced business writing course I teach at the university where I'm a professor. My students enjoyed the book too, and six of them gave an excellent presentation of it over two class periods. The book's argument is that change has come to China from the ground up. As events have played out over the past few years, the argument is sound. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Observation By eh791114I grew up in Taiwan and I didn't find anything that struck me as incorrectly described. Gerth went to school in China in the 1980s and he was able to observe the old China and identify the changes that have been going on. A very good book for someone who wishes to understand the consumer culture of China and how it has transformed its economy and lifestyle.

In this revelatory examination of the most overlooked force that is changing the face of China, the Oxford historian and scholar of modern Asia Karl Gerth shows that as the Chinese consumer goes, so goes the world. While Americans and Europeans have become increasingly worried about China's competition for manufacturing jobs and energy resources, they have overlooked an even bigger story: China's rapid development of an American-style consumer culture, which is revolutionizing the lives of hundreds of millions of Chinese and has the potential to reshape the world. This change is already well under way. China has become the world's largest consumer of everything from automobiles to beer and has begun to adopt such consumer habits as living in large single-occupancy homes, shopping in gigantic malls, and eating meat-based diets served in fast-food outlets. Even rural Chinese, long the laggards of consumerism, have been buying refrigerators, televisions, mobile phones, and larger houses in unprecedented numbers. *As China Goes, So Goes the World* reveals why we should all care about the everyday choices made by ordinary Chinese. Taken together, these seemingly small changes are deeper and more profound than the headline-grabbing stories on military budgets, carbon emissions, or trade disputes.

From Publishers Weekly Although China remains nominally socialist, consumerism has become deeply entrenched, the ramifications of which will be considerable--and global--according to Gerth (*China Made*), Oxford University professor of modern Chinese history. He paints a vivid picture--and historical context--for the waning of frugality and the traditionally high rates of saving and the rise of pop culture, luxury-brand consumption and car culture, a burgeoning advertising industry, the ubiquity of Chinese counterfeits, and--more sordidly--the development of the largest commercial sex work force in the world, the theft of baby girls for adoption export, and the sale of essential organs. Gerth makes an arresting argument that Chinese consumption may be the panacea for the scabbling economies of the West; Chinese demand for American and European high-tech goods, financial services, and other products might create jobs and economic growth and, in turn, lead to a stable, increasingly capitalistic, and eventually democratic China. Required reading for those interested in shifting global power dynamics and current consumption patterns. (Nov.) (c) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist The austere China Gerth experienced as a 1980s student contrasts with the economically charging country he teaches today as a professor in Britain. Interested in consumerism, Gerth delves into the effects individuals' purchasing preferences are producing on China; the domestic and international political impact of Chinese growth is not addressed--for that, see *The Beijing Consensus*, by Stefan Halper (2010). To initiate his observations, Gerth typically seizes on something that didn't exist in his student days: for example, beauty salons, private automobiles, or disposable chopsticks. Businesses and entire industries that have arisen to meet consumers' desire for such products and services generate Gerth's discourse, which he researched from Chinese media and discussion with his contacts. Mao's China recedes to distant memory in the resulting depiction of capitalistic construction, ubiquitous advertising, and status-conscious shopping. Certain consequences of Chinese consumerism do not escape Gerth's acuity: he spots social resentments, piracy of intellectual property, pollution, and "extreme markets" (trade in sex, human organs, and adoptions) as problems. Describing the present, Gerth will sensitize business or tourist travelers to Chinese markets. --Gilbert Taylor "Due to the very nature of China--huge, complicated, full of historical nuance--picking up a book that attempts to explain even a fragment of it can be downright daunting, even to the China enthusiast. But in this shrinking world, China is a country worth understanding and Gerth provides a wealth of information in a digestible, provocative format . . . As

China Goes, So Goes the World is an important read. — Jenna Fisher, The Christian Science Monitor