

[Get free] Consumers and Individuals in China: Standing Out, Fitting In (Chinese Worlds)

# Consumers and Individuals in China: Standing Out, Fitting In (Chinese Worlds)

*Michael B. Griffiths*

*DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



## CONSUMERS AND INDIVIDUALS IN CHINA

Standing out, fitting in

Michael B. Griffiths



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#2934450 in eBooks 2013-01-03 2013-01-03 File Name: B00AYILJSK | File size: 69.Mb

**Michael B. Griffiths : Consumers and Individuals in China: Standing Out, Fitting In (Chinese Worlds)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Consumers and Individuals in China: Standing Out, Fitting In (Chinese Worlds):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Exceeding ExpectationsBy JOHN L.MCCREERYAnyone who reads Michael Griffith's Consumers and Individuals in China expecting to find the rule-bound marching morons of Confucian or Maoist stereotypes or the soulless search for niche markets presented "scientifically" is in for a big

surprise. The book begins with a profound critique of both these intellectual postures and goes on to develop an argument rooted in post-structuralist social theory that is ethnographically focused on culture as a fluid and changing environment within which individuals must struggle to position themselves. The method is daring, yet simple. Talk to Chinese individuals with whose lives you are familiar and take seriously what they say as they tease out the ambiguities, conflicts and contradictions with which they wrestle. Do not explain away what they say. Do not swallow unthinkingly the stereotypes that the language they use may suggest. Listen and think about what you are hearing and what it might mean to someone who is living those lives, rural, urban, immigrant, young, old, entrepreneur, punk-styled beautician, nervous intellectual, retired factory worker...whatever the situation in which you find them. Listen and reflect on what they say in light of critical theory that suggests new questions unasked by other Sinologists and treat what these Chinese individuals say as part of the conversation instead of just grist for the theorist's mill. The result is not at times an easy book to read, but it is an important one and well worth the effort it takes to join these conversations.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Consumers and Individuals in China By Holger Lindberg Joergensen With his book "Consumers and Individuals in China - Standing Out and Fitting In" Michael B. Griffiths has done an outstanding job and the research documented here is indeed one of a kind. Reading Dr. Griffiths' book - being a foreigner myself with, so far and still counting, 5 years of hands-on living and working experience in China - took me through lots of "Spot on" and "Yes, I have seen/met that too" moments, but also quite a few "why didn't I think of that?" when I read about reactions and comments that I too in my own way have come across. The book in many ways made me think closer about what I have experienced myself during my time in China and it definitely made my eyes open wider. I am quite sure that I can't be the only reader left with that impression. So true when, as part of the book's conclusion, Dr. Griffiths points to the fact that "individualism" versus "collectivism" just doesn't cut it. How nice it would be if more of the abundant number of outside China experts - many of whom also frequently happen to be intercultural consultants, trainers and coaches - would come to realize that and then begin to dig a bit deeper in order to better understand the Chinese and life in China as it is today. An excellent place to start would be by reading Dr. Griffiths' book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Consumers in China given their rightful place as individuals By Matthew Crabbe I read through Michael's book in a chapter hopping manner. A good test of a non-fiction book is that it makes sense even if you read it backwards, and his book does. For someone who has dealt with China, and the Chinese, for a long time, I would say there are no great revelations in this book (for me), but what it does very well is to identify and explain the key societal factors shaping the way people behave, both as individuals and as groups. This would be the perfect book for many foreign business types to read and get to know who the bloody Hell they are supposed to be selling their products and services to in China. The problem is that most of the execs who ought to read this book will not because it is an erudite and exhaustive study. It does not come in sound-bite-sized, bulleted, easy-to-digest gobbets of marketing speak, or guided by primary school poster-like "infographics" and "edgy" design tags to hammer-in the leitmotiv of each section. Such a very scholarly work should be read by smart execs, but I fear that many who should won't because it requires the reader to exert some concentration. However, those who do read it will learn a lot about many key aspects of what it is like to be Chinese and live in China now, much of which otherwise either goes largely unreported or glossed over. That said, the book is full of personal anecdotal illustration which speaks volumes both about the subject and the author's hands-on experience. Michael's concluding remarks are that he hopes his book would be the spark that ignites further research and better understanding about Chinese society and how it is changing. Given that I continue to have eyebrow-raising revelations about different aspects of China even after having spent far too many years researching and writing about China's society and consumer markets, I heartily agree that such continued study will remain very necessary. I think the legacy of this book will be that it will stand as a primary reference on this subject for a long time to come, and a benchmark for the way research in this field should be conducted in the future. It helps to prove that what you get from consumer surveys cannot reflect or replace the reality gained from first-hand, meet the people, experience. Among the myriad of books on China's consumer economy, this is one to keep on the corner of your desk, within easy reach for a reality refresher.

Breaking new ground in the study of Chinese urban society, this book applies critical discourse analysis to ethnographic data gathered in Anshan, a third-tier city and market in northeast China. The book confronts the still widespread notion that Chinese consumers are not "real" individuals, and in doing so represents an ambitious attempt to give a new twist to the structure versus agency debates in social theory. To this end, Michael B. Griffiths shows how claims to virtues such as authenticity, knowledge, civility, sociable character, moral propriety and self-cultivation emerge from and give shape to social interaction. Data material for this path-breaking analysis is drawn from informants as diverse as consumerist youths, dissident intellectuals, enterprising farmers, retired Party cadres, the rural migrant staff of an inner-city restaurant, the urban families dependent on a machine-repair workshop, and a range of white-collar professionals. Consumers and Individuals in China: Standing out, fitting in, will appeal to sociologists, anthropologists, and cultural studies scholars, China Studies generalists, and professionals working at the intersection of culture and business in China. The vivid descriptions of living and doing fieldwork in China also mean

that those travelling there will find the book stimulating and useful

"an extremely valuable and important contribution to studies of Chinese consumer culture. It achieves its aim of providing detailed anthropological insight into individuality and consumption in China, and thus stands as an important contrast to marketing literature that is interested primarily in Chinese consumers as a (mass) market. The qualitative, reflexive and descriptive approach favoured by Griffiths is certainly more likely to be an important reference point to any scholars of consumption, media and culture seeking a deeper insight into everyday life, subjectivity and consumer agency in contemporary China, for several years to come." - Mehita Iqani, University of the Witwatersrand (Consumption Markets Culture) "the ethnography is extraordinarily good, and makes the book worth reading [hellip;]definitely read the other chapters of this book, for they offer considerable depth of insight; I would recommend assigning them to students as well, for their fine and detailed analysis of Chinese pursuits of social distinction." - Gordon Mathews, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The China Journal "What is most pleasing is the sense that Griffiths really knows what he's talking about. Living in Anshan for several years conducting field research, he evidently engaged in local life in a real grassroots manner. Too often talk of 'Chinese consumers' has referred to the high-end, high net-worth end of the market, omitting the lives and cultures of the 99%. Griffiths' book however sets itself squarely within the migrant workers, low-scale entrepreneurs, farmers and former factory workers of Anshan." - Michael Cormack, managing editor of Agenda magazine; Agenda February 2013.

About the Author Michael B. Griffiths is Director of Ethnography at Ogilvy & Mather, Greater China. He is also Associate Research Fellow, White Rose East Asia Centre; and External Research Associate, Centre for International Business, University of Leeds, UK.