ELI FRIEDMAN

Cornell University
368 Ives Faculty Wing
Ithaca, NY 14853

edf48@cornell.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Cornell University

Professor, Department of Global Labor and Work	2024-present
Associate Professor, Department of Global Labor and Work	2017-2024
Assistant Professor, Department of International and Comparative Labor	2011-2017
Graduate Field of Sociology	2012-present
Graduate Field of Development Studies	2013-present
Graduate Field of Asian Studies	2023-present
Chair, Department of Global Labor and Work	2020-2023
Director of International Programs, ILR School	2018-2020

Brown University

Visiting Fellow, International Studies	Spring 2015

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA	2011
M.A.	Sociology, University of California, Berkeley, CA	2007
B.A.	Asian Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY	2002
A.A.	Liberal Arts, Bard College at Simon's Rock, Gt. Barrington, MA	2000

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Development, China and Sinophone Asia, Social Movements, Urbanization, Work and Labor

BOOKS

China in Global Capitalism: Building International Solidarity Against Imperial Rivalry. Haymarket. 2024. [co-authored with Kevin Lin, Rosa Liu, and Ashley Smith]

The Urbanization of People: The Politics of Development, Labor Markets, and Schooling in the Chinese City. Columbia University Press. 2022.
Chinese Translation: 人的城鎮化：中國城市的發展，勞動市場，和教育. National Taiwan University Press. 2024.

Insurgency Trap: Labor Politics in Postsocialist China. Cornell University Press. 2014.

EDITED VOLUMES & TRANSLATIONS

Involution: A Worker Inquiry Amid the Youth Unemployment Wave in China. [Translation from Chinese. Forthcoming with Verso]

The China Question. Verso. 2022. [co-editor with Ashley Smith & Kevin Lin]

China on Strike: Narratives of Workers' Resistance. Haymarket. 2016. [co-editor of the English translation with Zhongjin Li]

Special Issue: Changing Work, Labour and Employment Relations in China. *Human Relations*. 68(2). 2015. [co-editor with Sarosh Kuruvilla]

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

"Faltering Standardization: Labor Conflict in China's Sanitation and Taxi Sectors." *International Labour Review*. 160(3): 363-385. 2021. [Second author, with Hao Zhang]

"Resistance Under the Radar: Organization of Work and Labor Conflict in China's Food Delivery Industry." *The China Journal*. 86: 68-89. 2021. [Second author, with Chuxuan Liu]
Chinese Translation: "隐蔽的反抗：中国外卖行业的组织形式和外卖员的集体行动. " *中国劳动趋势*. July 2023.

"Regimes, Resistance and Reforms: Comparing Workers' Politics in the Automobile Industry in China and India." *Global Labour Journal*. 12(1). 2021. [Co-author, with Manjusha Nair]

"Informality and Working Conditions in China's Sanitation Sector." *China Quarterly*. 238: 375-395. 2019. [Second author, with Hao Zhang]

"Just-in-Time Urbanization? Managing Migration, Citizenship, and Schooling in the Chinese City." *Critical Sociology*. 44(3): 503-518. 2018.

"Teachers' Work in China's Migrant Schools." *Modern China*. 43(6): 559-589. 2017.

"Experimentation and Decentralization in China's Labor Relations." *Human Relations*. 68(2): 181-195. 2015. [First author, with Sarosh Kuruvilla]

"Alienated Politics: Labour Insurgency and the Paternalistic State in China." *Development and Change*. 45(5): 1001-1018. 2014.

"Economic Development and Sectoral Unions in China." *ILR Review*. 67(2): 481-503. 2014.

"Insurgency and Institutionalization: The Polanyian Countermovement and Chinese Labor Politics." *Theory and Society*. 42(3):295-327. 2013.

"Getting Through the Hard Times Together? Chinese Workers and Unions Respond to the Economic Crisis." *Journal of Industrial Relations*. 54(4):459-475. 2012.

"Remaking the World of Chinese Labour: a 30-Year Retrospective." *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. 48(3):507-533. 2010. [First author, with Ching Kwan Lee]

"External Pressure and Local Mobilization: Transnational Activism and the Emergence of the Chinese Labor Movement." *Mobilization*. 14(2):199-218. 2009.

BOOK CHAPTERS

"Rethinking the US-China Academic Relationship." In *The China Question*. Verso. 2022.

Introduction, *A Questão Chinesa*. Contrabando Editorial. 2022.

"Rupture at the Center: Evicting Migrant Schools in Beijing." In *Proletarian China: A Century of Chinese Labour*. Verso. 2022.

"The Biopolitics of Urbanization in China: Managing Migration and Access to Education." In *Developmentalist Cities? Interrogating Urban Developmentalism in East Asia*. Edited by Jamie Doucette and Bae-Gyoon Park. Brill, 2018. (adapted from 2018 *Critical Sociology* article)

"Migration without Integration: Workers between Countryside and City." In *Factory Towns of South China*, edited by Stefan Al. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. 2012.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Shock, Boom, Bust: PRC Hegemony, Class Politics, and Labor in Sinophone Asia, 1980s-present

Worker Resistance in Postindustrial East Asia: Mobilizing Against Inequality Amid Political Change (co-edited volume with Ming-sho Ho) [under review with Cornell University Press]

TEACHING

Courses offered at Cornell
The Asian Century? The Rise of China and India (co-taught)
Empire of Migrants: Chinese People on the Move
Introduction to Sociology of Work and Labor
Labor Sociology (PhD Seminar)
The US-China Relationship: A Labor Perspective
Work and Labor in China
Work, Labor, and Capital in the Global Economy (team-taught)
Workers in the City: A Global Perspective

Course offered at Brown
Urbanization in China: Megacities, Mass Migration, and Citizenship Struggles

Awards
MacIntyre Award for Exemplary Teaching, ILR School, Cornell University (2013; 2024)

POPULAR WRITING

"The Cost of China's Prosperity." *Boston Review*. September 24, 2024.

"Eli Friedman on Workers' Struggle in China and Beyond." *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, *24*(2), 2023.

"What's Behind the Youth Unemployment Statistics Beijing Just Decided to Stop Publishing?" *ChinaFile*. August 17, 2023.
Republished as: "Why Are China's Job Numbers So Bad?" *Foreign Policy*. August 23, 2023.

"Labor Rights and the U.S.-China Relationship: From Neoliberal Consensus to Imperial Rivalry." *The Law and Political Economy Blog*. April 25, 2023.

"Labor Action Tracker Annual Report, 2022." *ILR Worker Institute*. February 2022. [third author, with Johnnie Kallas and Kathryn Ritchie]

"Escape from the Closed Loop." *Boston Review*. Fall, 2022.

"Foxconn's Great Escape." *Asian Labour Review*. November 8, 2022
Republished as: "Why Foxconn Workers in China Walked off the Job." *Jacobin*. November 13, 2022.
Turkish Translation: "'Çin İşçi Sınıfı İsyan Etmeyi Sürdürüyor': Foxconn'da Büyük Firar." *iLERi*. November 12, 2022.
Chinese Translation: "富士康工人的大逃亡." *做工台*. November 16, 2022.
Spanish Translation: "Huir del trabajo para escapar de la explotación." *Contexto y Acción*. November 24, 2022.

"The Real Numbers Behind the Labor Movement." *The Nation*. April 5, 2022. [second author, with Johnnie Kallas and Leonardo Grageda]

"Labor Action Tracker Annual Report, 2021." *ILR Worker Institute*. February 22, 2022. [third author, with Johnnie Kallas and Leonardo Grageda]

"Why China is Capitalist: Toward an Anti-Nationalist Anti-Imperialism." *Spectre*. July 15, 2020.
Spanish Translation: "Por qué China es capitalista." *Contexto y Acción*. September 16, 2020.
Chinese Translation: "為什麼中國是資本主義社會." *Lausan*. September 24, 2020.
Italian Translation: "Perchè la Cina è capitalista: Per un anti-imperialismo anti-nazionalista." *Dinamo*. October 1, 2020.
German Translation: "Warum China kapitalistisch ist: Für einen anti-nationalistischen Anti-Imperialismus." *Autonomie Magazin*. October 11, 2020
Portuguese Translation: "Por que a China é capitalista." *Esquerda*. July 15, 2021.

"Why Leftists Should Support Hong Kong's Fight for Democratic Rights." *Jacobin*. December 5, 2019.
Portuguese Translation: "Por que a esquerda deve apoiar Hong Kong na luta por direitos democráticos." *A Questão Chinesa*. Contrabando Editorial. 2022.

"It's Time to Get Loud About Academic Freedom in China." *Foreign Policy*. November 13, 2018.

"The Communist Party vs. China's Labor Laws." *Jacobin*. October 2, 2018. [second author, with Elaine Hui]

"The End of the 'End of History'." *Jacobin*. April 1, 2018.

"Evicting the Underclass." *Jacobin*. December 6, 2017.

"Collective Bargaining in China is Dead: The Situation is Excellent." *Made in China*. Volume 2.1. 2017.

"China Is Not to Blame for the Decline of the US Working Class." *Truthout*. February 10, 2017.

"Cruel Irony: China's Communists Are Stamping Out Labor Activism." *Washington Post*. January 3, 2016. [First author, with Aaron Halegua & Jerome Cohen]
Chinese Translation: "中国不应视公民社会组织为威胁." *Financial Times*. January 11, 2016.

"The Guest Worker – Use and Discard." *Pacific Standard*. November 13, 2015.

"Marketizing China." *Jacobin*. September 9, 2015.

"The Primary Contradiction." *Jacobin*. February 2, 2015.
Spanish Translation: ¿Una nueva izquierda en China?" *Nueva Sociedad*. 266. 2016.

"The Urbanization of the Chinese Working Class." *Jacobin*. 15/16. 2014.

"Why Hong Kong's 'Occupy Central' Movement has Beijing Very, Very Scared." *The Nation*. September 12, 2014.

"Outside the New China." *Jacobin*. 11/12. 2013.
Italian Translation: "I 'dannati della terra' nella nuova Cina." *MicroMega*. 9. 2013.

"China in Revolt." *Jacobin*. 7/8. 2012.
French Translation: "La Chine en révolte." *La Revue des Livres*. Jan-Feb. 2013.
Spanish Translation: "Las mutaciones de la resistencia obrera en China." *Nueva Sociedad*. 244. 2013.
Chinese Translation: "躁动的中国." *劳动世界*. March, 2013.

"In China, investors follow migrant workers from the coast to the inland region." *Quartz*. October 29, 2012.

"China Since Tiananmen: The Labor Movement." *Journal of Democracy*. 20(3):21-24. 2009. [second author, with Ching Kwan Lee]

BOOK REVIEWS

Byler, Darren. "Terror Capitalism: Uyghur Dispossession and Masculinity in a Chinese City." *Antipode*. June, 2023.

Hui, Elaine Sio-Ieng. "Hegemonic Transformation: The State, Laws, and Labour Relations in Post-Socialist China." *China Quarterly*. 234. 2018.

Kim, Jaesok. "Chinese Labor in a Korean Factory: Class, Ethnicity, and Productivity on the Shop Floor in Globalizing China. *Pacific Affairs*. 89(1):148-150. 2016.

Becker, Jeffrey. "Social Ties, Resources, and Migrant Labor Contention in Contemporary China: From Peasants to Protesters." *The China Journal*. 75:182-4. 2016

Zhang, Lu. "Inside China's Automobile Factories: The Politics of Labor and Worker Resistance." *ILR Review*. 68(5): 1229-30. 2015.

Chan, Anita. "Walmart in China." *ILR Review*. 66(5). 2013.

Kay, Tamara. "NAFTA and the Politics of Labor Transnationalism." *Social Forces*. 91(1). 2012.

Hurst, William. "The Chinese Worker after Socialism." *Enterprise and Society*. 11(3):672-674. 2010.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

National Science and Technology Council Taiwan Studies Program, 2026-29 (approved, final agreement pending)

Cornell Global Strategic Collaboration Awards (with National University of Singapore), 2024

Cornell Einaudi Center Faculty Seed Grant, 2023

Central New York Humanities Corridor, w/Darwin Tsen (Syracuse), 2022-25 (three separate rounds of funding)

Cornell University Institute for the Social Sciences Collaborative Project, 2016-19

Cornell University Institute for the Social Sciences Faculty Fellows Program, 2015-16

Jeffrey Sean Lehman Fund for Scholarly Exchange with China, 2013

Cornell Institute for the Social Sciences, Small Grants Program, 2012

University of California, Berkeley Department of Sociology Grant, 2010

Pacific Rim Research Program Advanced Graduate Student Research Fellowship, 2009

Global Scholarship Programme for Research Excellence – CNOOC Grant, 2009

University of California Berkeley Dean's Normative Time Fellowship, 2008

University of California Labor and Employment Research Fund Thesis Fellowship, 2008

Center for Chinese Studies Summer Research Grants, Summer 2007

Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarship, 2004-2005

INVITED TALKS

"A Class Perspective on Hong Kong Nationalism." Verso Books China Conference. London, UK. October 2025.

"Migration and Geopolitics in Asia: Contested Mobilities and the Politics of Statecraft." National University of Singapore. Singapore. March 2025. (panel presentation)

"Shock, Boom, Bust: How China's Rise Impacted Workers and Class Politics in Hong Kong and Taiwan, 1980s-present." SOAS. UK. February 2025.
Universitat Oberta de Catalunya. Spain. May 2025.

"China in Global Capitalism." York University. Canada. February 2025.

"Labor and Social Revolt in the Sinosphere: How China's Rise Impacted Workers and Class Politics in Hong Kong and Taiwan, 1989-present." University of California, Santa Barbara. February 2024.

"Protesting in Today's Authoritarian China." (panel presentation) *Roundtable on Dissent in China: From Housing Protests to the White Paper Movement*. China Dissent Monitor & Freedom House. Taipei. Taiwan. June 2023.

"Workers' Rights and US-China Economic Competition." Taiwan Academy for Labor Science (台灣勞動學會). Taipei, Taiwan. June 2023. (presented in Chinese)

"After the Lockdowns: Assessing the Present and Future of Social Resistance in China." University of Chicago. February 2023.

"Academic Freedom and Confucius Institutes" (panel presentation) The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Washington, D.C. August 2022.

"Labor Rights and Human Rights." University of Chicago. February 2022.

"Rendered Surplus: The Struggle for Schooling Amidst Anti-Migrant Policies in Beijing." Indiana University. September 2021.

"The Urbanization of People: The Politics of Development, Labor Markets, and Schooling in the Chinese City." (Book talk)
University at Buffalo. April 2021.
York University. Canada. February 2022.
Harvard University. March 2022.
Brown University. April 2022.
Simon Fraser University. Canada. October 2022.
University of British Columbia, Okanagan. Canada. October 2022.
University of Washington. October 2022.
Columbia University. November 2022.
Academia Sinica. Taiwan. December 2022.

MIT Sustainable Urbanization Lab/Harvard Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies/University of British Columbia's School of Community and Regional Planning (online speaker series). Feb 2023.

"The Pros and Cons of US Universities in Authoritarian Countries" (panel presentation) The New School. December 2019.

"University Engagement in China." Committee on Human Rights of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Washington, D.C. May 2019.

"Collaborating with China: Challenges and responsibilities of the academic community, professional associations, and universities" (panel presentation) Lund University. Sweden. April 2019.

"The Urbanization of People." Yale-NUS. Singapore. October 2018.
University of Pennsylvania. November 2018.

"Resisting the Worker-Citizen Rupture in Urban China: Parents and Teachers Fight Back." Pennsylvania State University. April 2018.

"The Inverted Welfare State: Urbanization, Citizenship, and Education in China." National Tsinghua University. Taiwan. May 2016. (presented in Chinese)

"Fractured Militancy: Labor Politics in 21st Century China." Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica. Taiwan. May 2016. (presented in Chinese)

"China on Strike." (Book talk)
Asian Pacific Studies Institute, Duke University. April 2016.
Global Labor Research Center. York University. October 2016.

"China's Growing Labor Turmoil." U.S.-Asia Law Institute, New York University. April 2016.

"Inverted Socialism: Urbanization, Education, and Segmented Inclusion in China's Megacities." China Economics Seminar, National Bureau of Economic Research. Cambridge, MA. February 2016.

"Insurgency Trap: Labor Politics in Postsocialist China." Harvard Trade Union Program, Harvard University. February 2015; February 2016.

"Alienated Politics: Labor Insurgency and the Paternalistic State in China." The Future of Democracy After Neoliberalism: Social Movements in a Globalizing World, University of Tokyo. Japan. July 2014.

"From Proletariat to Precariat: Changing Labor Relations in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries." Indiana University. September 2014.

"Inverted Socialism: Urbanization, Citizenship, and Education in China." Colloquium on Comparative Research, Brown University. April 2014.
China Social Policy Symposium, Harvard University. April 2015.

"Teachers' Work in China's Migrant Schools." Pembroke Center Roundtable, Brown University. March 2014.

"Economic Transition and Popular Resistance in China." Center for Social Theory and Comparative History, UCLA. February 2014.

"Capitalist Development and Postsocialist Labor Politics in China." Department of Sociology, Yonsei University. South Korea. October 2013.

"Appropriated Representation: Illegitimate Unions and Worker Unrest in China." The Rise of the South: Current Trends >> Future Possibilities. Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University. April 2013.

"What Are the Pressures on Supply Chains to Change?" The Transformation of Supply Chains. University of Washington. March 2013.

"Economic Development and Sectoral Unions in China: The Cases of Guangdong and Zhejiang." Institute for Work and Employment Research, MIT. November 2012

"Producing Social Reproduction: Teachers' Work in Beijing's Segregated School System." East Asian Studies Program, Johns Hopkins University. September 2012.

"Insurgency and Institutionalization: Countermovements and Chinese Labor Politics." Department of Sociology, University of Arizona. February 2012.

"Occupy the World: Labor, Global Insurgency, and Permanent Crisis." (presented in Chinese) Sun Yat-sen University. China. December 2011.

"The Development and Evolution of U.S. Labor Relations." (presented in Chinese) Chinese Institute for Industrial Relations. China. December 2011.

"Oligarchic Decommodification: Trade Unions and Sectoral Wage Negotiations in Zhejiang Province." Department of Sociology, Chinese University of Hong Kong. Hong Kong. December 2009.

"Dynamics of Representation and the Unionization of Wal-Mart in China." Work and Inequality in the Global Economy: China, Mexico, and the US. UCLA. October 2009.

"Transformations in US-Chinese Trade Union Relations." (presented in Chinese) Sun Yat-sen University. China. December 2007.

LANGUAGES

Chinese (Mandarin), near-native oral and written proficiency
Spanish, intermediate