

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My interest in dating apps started when I was an active user in the early 2010s. Back then, using dating apps was considered taboo. My friends often expressed serious concern (“Aren’t you scared of being murdered?”) or pity (“Oh, dear, you don’t need to use that to look for a partner”) and sometimes even ridiculed me (“You must be randy all the time!”). Almost a decade has now passed, and the situation has not really improved. Thus, researching and writing this book have perhaps been my way of justifying the social legitimacy of dating apps and users like myself.

I first conceived of this book in 2015 as my doctoral dissertation project when I was studying at the University of Southern California (USC). My dissertation advisor, Larry Gross, offered me the most generous and unconditional support from the very early stages of the project. I am extremely grateful to have learned from the wonderful faculty members at USC, including Mike Annany, Manual Castells, Christina Dunbar-Hester, Ange-Marie Hancock Alfaro, Katie Hasson, Yu Hong, Margaret McLaughlin, Patricia Riley, and Karen Tongson, who provided insights and challenged my thoughts in relation to this research. Outside USC, I also want to thank Cassidy Elija, John Erni, Jessa Lingel, Yuxin Pei, Aswin Punathambekar, and Cara Wallis, who on various occasions and in different capacities have given me invaluable advice on researching, writing, and publishing.

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Gender, Sexuality, and Emergent Publics in Urban China

By: Lik Sam Chan

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