ABSTRACTS

Anli Jiang, “Moral economy, liquid control and broken tacit agreement: A situational action perspective on chengguan violence in China”
Chengguan (urban management staff) violence has been widely reported in China. Based on extensive fieldwork and in-depth interviews with chengguan and street vendors, this research aims to explore micro-situational factors in shaping chengguan violence towards street vendors in Guangzhou. We argue that due to the nature of moral economy of street vending, local government adopts a strategy of a five-dimensional liquid control: liquid temporal control, liquid spatial control, liquid target control, liquid issue control, and liquid punishment. As a result of liquid control, a tacit agreement between chengguan and street vendors has been achieved, which can explain over 99 per cent of time there will be no violence during the interaction between chengguan and street vendors. We argue that chengguan violence tends to occur when the tacit agreement is broken. Factors in shaping the broken of the tacit agreement will further be examined in the research.

Lu Qiao, “Information or propaganda? An ethnographic examination of police banners/slogans in Guangzhou”
Based on five years ethnography and content analysis of over 3000 street banners/slogans, this paper examines the category and function of police banners/slogans in Guangzhou. We find that while some police banners/slogans are pure political propaganda, others contain useful information regarding crime prevention. We argue that the dual functions of information and propaganda facilitate the wide-spread use of police banners/slogans in public space. Compared with official crime statistics and media coverage on crimes, the content analysis of the banners/slogans reveals that some types of crimes are over-represented while others are completely absent from street banners/slogans. We further examine how the unique Chinese police banners/slogans in public space shape citizens’ perception of police and fear of crime.

Xuan Niu, “Police, media and social construction of child trafficking in China”
Child trafficking has been a serious problem in China. Drawing from official police statistics and content analysis of newspaper reports on child trafficking from 2000 to 2015, this research explores different roles of the police and the media in constructing the problem of child trafficking in China. It is found that while the police resort to periodical campaigns to crack down on this crime, the media may not follow these campaigns but adopt their own logic in covering the issue. It further reveals that the
availability of primary claim-makers such as public intellectuals and controversial claims such as adopting death penalty for traffickers play a much more important role than the putative condition itself in constructing the problem of child trafficking. In addition, this research examines the rhetoric of the claims regarding the reasons of this crime and finds that while the individual factors – such as victim family’s failed guardianship – are blamed for this crime, the structural factors such as inactive police during non-campaign periods are often out of media scrutiny.