

BOOK CLUB

A PRIMER for The **NEW China Playbook**

KEY IDEA

This book challenges Western perceptions of China, exploring its departure from traditional economic models, including the one-child policy's consequences, the government's complex relationship with entrepreneurs, the boisterous financial system, and the latest push in technological innovation. Keyu Jin reveals misunderstood dynamics in China's shift away from conventional socialism and capitalism, marking the emergence of a new dynamic between these systems as a younger generation reshapes the nation's future.

TERMS

State-led Capitalism

An economic system where the state guides and influences the direction of the economy, often through state-owned enterprises and government intervention.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

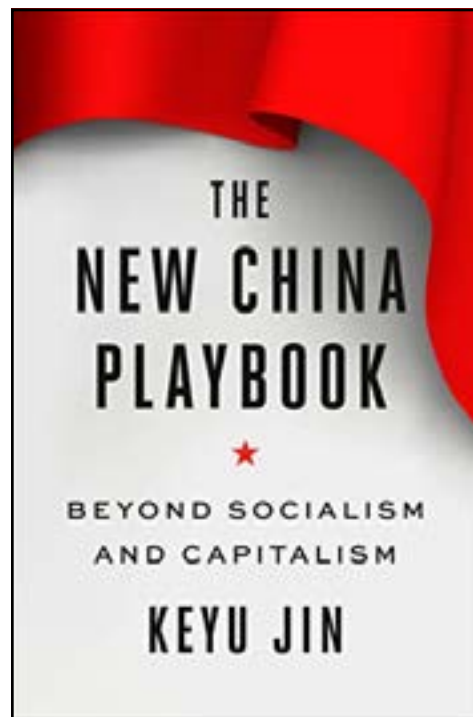
A Chinese infrastructure project aimed at connecting China to other countries through land and sea routes, building roads, railways, ports, and other infrastructure to facilitate trade and economic cooperation across Asia, Europe, and Africa.

Modernization (In the context of China)

The process of transforming society and the economy to meet contemporary global standards. This includes advancements in technology, industry, infrastructure, education, governance, and living standards, with the goal of achieving a more developed and globally competitive nation.

Communism & Authoritarianism

The political and economic systems typically ascribed to China, which Jin suggests is an oversimplification. This assumes Western norms/values should apply without considering China's distinct historical and cultural context.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Keyu Jin is an associate professor (with tenure) of Economics at the London School of Economics. She is from Beijing, China, and holds a B.A., M.A. and PhD from Harvard University. Jin's research is on international economics, trade, capital flows, global interest rates and saving, demographics, productivity and technology.



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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHILE READING

- What was Keyu Jin's motivation to write this book? What do you think she was reading in newspaper headlines? How do you think she felt reading those headlines?
- What was your understanding of China and its political / economic system before reading this book? Have any of your views changed after reading this book? How?
- Based on how Keyu Jin describes China's economic, social, and political structure, what are some strengths and weaknesses of China's model compared to the US?
- Keyu Jin describes the complex relationship government has with the private sector. What are your thoughts on whether government involvement in state-owned businesses has grown smarter in China after reading this book?
 - Do any recent developments make you re-think Jin's arguments?
 - How do you view this article in relation to Jin's description of government involvement in business? <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/17/business/china-xi-jinping-business-economy.html>
- Jin makes the argument for the US to distinguish national security concerns from what could potentially be a great, competitive collaboration model. Do you agree with this perspective? What do you think are examples when the US could have been more collaborative with Chinese businesses but enacted restrictions instead?
 - TikTok is mentioned as an example in the book. How correct do you believe the US government is in considering it a national security threat?
 - What are your thoughts on the following article: <https://apnews.com/article/tiktok-bytedance-shou-zi-chew-8d8a6a9694357040d484670b7f4833be>
- Jin takes an optimistic view of China's future, despite its current economic struggles. Do you agree with her perspective? Why? What measures would need to be in place for China's economy to bounce back successfully over time without collapsing?
- Reference articles:
 - <https://www.newsweek.com/china-economy-collapse-what-we-know-1821537>
 - <https://www.reuters.com/markets/asia/why-is-chinas-economy-slowing-down-could-it-get-worse-2023-09-01/>
- Isabel Hilton of The Guardian offers an interesting review/critique of "The New China Playbook." What are your thoughts on her review?
 - <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/jul/31/the-new-china-playbook-by-keyu-jin-review-the-bright-side-of-beijing>

VIDEOS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

- Keyu Jin's views and summary (30 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yf-MjCq0DGW>
- China and climate change (3.5 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIFF3xTUuSE>
- US-China Relations from US perspective (10.5 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwVKMkHFafE>



ABOUT THE CROSSING PARTY LINES BOOK CLUB

Our club's mission is simple: to explore profound opinions and accounts of our nation's and the world's most critical issues through in-depth books. But it's not just about reading - it's about embracing diverse perspectives, sparking discussions, and sharing thoughts with fellow explorers of knowledge.

What you'll get out of book club: our hope is for you to dare to dive deep, analyzing topics and navigating the twists and turns of politics together. If you share a passion for continuous learning and want to explore the intricacies of our world's challenges, then this club is your intellectual haven (or entry) into finding out more.

How it works:

- We will announce our book list 6 months in advance in the hopes of giving our members time to acquire, read, and consider the books prior to our meetings. We will start with an initial list of books that were hand-selected by the host and other members of the CPL leadership team. Three months into the initial list, members will propose and select the next 3 to 6 books to be read.
- One month before the club reads a book, we will publish a primer such as this one, providing information about the book and the author, plus questions to consider while reading the book.
- At our meeting, we'll spend about 15 minutes sharing thoughts as a group, then move into breakout rooms for a more intimate discussion of the book and the ideas it presents.

Where To Find the Books

We promise that all the books we will discuss will be available online, in bookstores and in most cases, in your local library. Most will be available in hardcopy, audiobook, and e-book. Please consider borrowing the books from your local libraries. If you find purchasing new copies of the books beyond your budget, we encourage you to look for used copies, which you are likely to find online at Powell's bookstore or on Amazon (listed below the hardcover or paperback prices.)



YOUR HOST

Your host is Dana Hochman. Dana feels that as our world gets more complex, political awareness becomes more and more paramount.

She has a professional background in pharmaceutical market research, delving into various disease areas and trends within the pharma industry. Her ability to pivot from studying business in school to actively engaging in science underscores her unwavering curiosity and perpetual desire to learn.

Through book club, her motivation goes beyond devouring books - it's about leading discussions, crafting compelling questions, and inspiring collective curiosity.