

Understanding Asia: Youth and Society

Parental migration and differences in families' treatment of boys and girls in rural China



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Parents' Differential Treatment of Boys and Girls in Migrant Families in Rural China
Based on my book, *The Children of China's Great Migration*, this talk explores the gendered distribution of resources and chores to children in rural families in China, and the children's perceptions of their parental distributional practices when their parents have migrated without them. Three topics are covered. One is the children's perceptions of how their gender impacted on what their parents aimed to provide for them. Second is children's perceptions of inequality in the adult caregivers' everyday treatment of them vis-à-vis an opposite-gender sibling or co-resident cousin, for instance, in the distribution of food and treats, access to the television remote control, and household chores. Third is children's views of gender inequalities in their parents' decisions about which sibling stays behind in the countryside and which sibling migrates with the parents. At the same time, though, the talk also notes that many left-behind children have benefited from wider processes favouring gender equality in certain distributional practices. But the effects of these processes have unfolded unevenly across localities, families, and individual children.

Rachel Murphy is Professor of Chinese Development and Society and Research Director in the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies and Senior Tutor at St Antony's College, Oxford. She obtained her PhD in Sociology at the University of Cambridge. Her recent most publications appear in *Geoforum*, *Comparative Education Review*, and *Journal of Rural Studies*. She is PI on a newly formed research hub on *Global Experiences of Gender in an Age of Care Crises and Transformations*.