

CFP: TikTok, Balloons and the Fear of a Rising China

Recently, the traditional simmering anti-Chinese sentiments common in the United States and other Western nations have increased to a near boiling point. Changing geopolitics and shifting economic trends have stoked intense anti-globalization politics on the right over the past decade since the rise of the Tea Party. While previous anti-globalization movements centered around workers' dignity, rights, and equity, many current right-wing movements emphasize nearly xenophobic nationalistic aspirations to keep "America First." On a policy level, this shift gained traction began with increasing Trump-era tariffs on Chinese imports and military assertiveness in the South China Sea. Rhetorically, Trump accused the Chinese government of bioengineering the COVID-19 virus and whipped up anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander animosities, summed up perhaps best in his race-baiting phrase "kung flu" for COVID-19. More recently, the Biden Administration and many states have moved to ban the TikTok and WeChat apps from government computers. Likewise, the US military recently took the unusual step of shooting down a Chinese Spy Balloon over American sovereign territory during peacetime, even though a number of such overflights went unnoticed during the Trump administration.

We are interested in publishing essays critiquing these developments by addressing such questions as:

- Why ban only TikTok and WeChat instead of other social media apps?
- How does a ban of TikTok or WeChat impact academic freedom?
- What are the privacy/security implications of American social media companies sharing user information with governments?
- How do we choose one set of privacy concerns over other alternative sets?
- How does the American government reconcile its protests against China limiting American technology companies (e.g. Google search results) as a hinderance of free speech with the closing of these Chinese-based social media apps in the United States?
- At what point do the assessments of routine spying change from a conventional activity that all countries actively pursue into to a serious national threat?
- How does shooting down spy balloons or closing social media sites feed broader anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander hatred?

We're interested in descriptive, analytical, polemical and/or critical article manuscripts of any length. Submit article manuscripts to <http://fastcapitalism.com> by May 1. Please contact David Arditi darditi@uta.edu with questions about this project.