

Communication Department Colloquium Series No. 5
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**Global Hollywood, Narrative Transparency
and Chinese Media Poachers:
Narrating Cross-cultural Negotiations of *Friends*
in South China**

19 May 2010 (Wed.)
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Room L307B

Abstract:

This paper offers a case study of the cross-cultural consumption of the US sitcom, *Friends* (1994-2004) with respect to Chinese media poachers in South China. It deployed the qualitative method of in-depth and focus group interviews, both face-to-face and online, and critically surveyed media reception theories, from the effects tradition to the active reader paradigm, with Scott Olsen's theory of narrative transparency (1999) grounding the study's theoretical premise; central to which is Olsen's notion of "mythotypes" —that which render foreign media texts transparent for indigenous decoding and recoding and which in correspondingly throwing affective hooks at foreign audiences, kept them engaged. The case study revealed that the affective impact was neither uniform nor universal, and indicated that varying degrees of transparency and opacity vis-a-vis *Friends* existed. This challenged Olsen's assertion that affects were universal and therefore escaped culturally coded constraints.

***** ALL ARE WELCOME *****