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More Last Minute Gifts: Books from China Beat Contributors

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December 21, 2008 in Holiday gifts, The Five-List Plan by The China Beat | No comments

Many of our regular contributors have recent books out on China as well. We highly recommend the following as gifts for those many China non-experts in your life.

1. Factory Girls, Leslie T. Chang
For: The Worldly Progressive
Chang’s book, published this year to positive reviews (including this one at the New York Times by Howard French, where Factory Girls was also recently named one of the Times’ 100 notable books for 2008), follows the lives of young factory workers in Dongguang. Read an excerpt, published earlier at China Beat, here.

2. Socialism is Great!, Lijia Zhang
For: The Memoir Maven
In this autobiography, Zhang tells of her young life working in a Nanjing munitions factory and how she eventually ended up leading worker demonstrations in 1989.
3. China’s Brave New World, Jeffrey Wasserstrom  
*For: The World Traveler*

In short vignettes, Wasserstrom delves into the quirks and contradictions of modern China, drawing out what “global China” means on the ground. To read more about the book, see Wasserstrom’s piece about it last spring in China Economic Review.

4. Forbidden City, Geremie Barmé  
*For: The Beijing Bound*

Travelers (of the armchair variety or otherwise) will find Barmé’s volume full of insights into the history of Beijing’s most famous site. China Beat ran a review of the book last June. For a book on Beijing outside the Forbidden City’s walls, Mike Meyer’s *The Last Days of Old Beijing* is also enormously entertaining (listen to a China Beat interview with Meyer here).

5. Beijing’s Games, Susan Brownell  
*For: The Sports Fan*

Brownell explores why this year’s Games were so important to China, and you could even print out a few of Brownell’s “as it happened” columns from China Beat to tuck in with it, likethis one or this one.
When we made up this list of books by *China Beat* contributors, for some reason we stayed in the realm of non-fiction books, but we’d be remiss not to mention two intriguing fictional works that China Beat contributors have published recently. Xujun Eberlein’s collection of tales set in the 1970s and early 1980s, *Apologies Forthcoming*, may be just the right thing for the Short-Story Fan on your list (see review [here](#)), while former China correspondent-turned-crime fiction writer Catherine Sampson’s *The Slaughter Pavilion* (her second mystery featuring Chinese private eye Song) could be a perfect gift for someone you know who is addicted to Whodunits (for review see [here](#); currently only available in the UK).