

## June Fourth

The Tiananmen protests and Beijing massacre of 1989 were a major turning point in recent Chinese history. In this new analysis of 1989, Jeremy Brown tells the vivid stories of participants and victims, exploring the nationwide scope of the democracy movement and the brutal crackdown that crushed it. At each critical juncture in the spring of 1989, demonstrators and decision makers agonized over difficult choices and saw how events could have unfolded differently. The alternative paths that participants imagined confirm that bloodshed was neither inevitable nor necessary. Using a wide range of previously untapped sources and examining how ordinary citizens throughout China experienced the crackdown after the massacre, this ambitious social history sheds fresh light on events that continue to reverberate in China to this day.

Jeremy Brown is Associate Professor of Modern Chinese History at Simon Fraser University.

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Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-04207-0 — June Fourth  
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# June Fourth

*The Tiananmen Protests and Beijing  
Massacre of 1989*

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Jeremy Brown

Simon Fraser University, British Columbia



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UNIVERSITY PRESS

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## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New  
Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107042070](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107042070)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781107323728

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First published 2021

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Brown, Jeremy, 1976– author.

Title: June fourth : the Tiananmen protests and Beijing Massacre of 1989 / Jeremy Brown, Simon Fraser University, British Columbia.

Other titles: Tiananmen protests and Beijing Massacre of 1989

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York : Cambridge

University Press, 2021. | Series: New approaches to Asian history |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020055138 (print) | LCCN 2020055139 (ebook) | ISBN 9781107042070 (hardback) | ISBN 9781107657809 (paperback) | ISBN 9781107323728 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: China—History—Tiananmen Square Incident, 1989. | China—History—Tiananmen Square Incident, 1989—Influence.

Classification: LCC DS779.32 .B77 2021 (print) | LCC DS779.32 (ebook) | DDC 951.05/8—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020055138>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020055139>

ISBN 978-1-107-04207-0 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-65780-9 Paperback

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## Preface

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I was twelve years old in 1989. Growing up in Iowa City, Iowa, I watched plenty of television, including many Chicago Cubs baseball games. Each evening my mother watched Peter Jennings on *ABC World News Tonight*. As tens of thousands of protesters marched to Tiananmen Square on April 21, 1989, to commemorate the death of former Communist Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang, the Cubs were playing a night game against the Mets in New York. The baseball broadcast clashed directly with my mom's nightly news fix. Peter Jennings did mention the protests on April 21,<sup>1</sup> but I did not care. I cared about the Cubs' 8–4 win against the Mets. When, on April 27, 1989, hundreds of thousands of Beijing citizens marched to protest the previous day's *People's Daily* editorial about taking a “clear-cut stand against turmoil,” the Cubs beat the Dodgers 1–0 in an afternoon game at home that finished well before Jennings spoke about the protests in Beijing at the top of the news. I might have started paying attention to China that day, although I had no inkling that I would ever learn Chinese, live in Beijing, and devote my career to Chinese history.

The date that most people remember about China in 1989 is June 4 (although the massacre of Beijing civilians by People's Liberation Army soldiers actually began on the night of June 3 and continued into the early hours of June 4). It was the weekend: June 3 was Saturday and June 4 was Sunday – a detail that Premier Li Peng would eventually reveal was central to the decision to forcibly clear Tiananmen Square by dawn on Sunday morning, to prevent massive crowds from hitting the streets on their day off.<sup>2</sup> Weekend afternoons were prime baseball-watching time for me. I could commandeer the television to watch the Cubs' important battles in St. Louis against the Cardinals (the Cubs lost on Saturday and won on Sunday), and a few hours later my mother could watch the news

<sup>1</sup> Vanderbilt Television News Archive, [tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/broadcasts/121680](http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu/broadcasts/121680).

<sup>2</sup> Zhang Ganghua, 李鵬六四日記真相 (The truth about Li Peng's June Fourth diary) (hereafter abbreviated as *LP*) (Hong Kong: Aoya chuban youxian gongsi, 2010), 292.



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unimpeded, preserving family harmony. I was sad that the Cubs had lost in extra innings on June 3, but I definitely paid attention to the news that evening, when American television began reporting on the shooting and killing in Beijing.

My point is that unlike most authors of books about the Tiananmen Square protests and Beijing massacre, I had no personal stake in the events at the time. I was not in China and had no special interest or expertise in China. My life and worldview were not radically changed by what happened in June 1989. I was a child halfway across the globe who cared more about baseball than about China. But like many American kids whose parents watched television every night, I was aware that something was happening. Something that, by June 3, 1989, was unequivocally very bad and sad. While I am approaching this topic from the useful position of a detached outsider – a professional historian describing distant events – I am not a blank slate. My assumptions and framework for understanding June Fourth began to be shaped in 1989. North Americans who watched television coverage of the protests saw scenes of hope and joy in May when students, workers, officials, and retirees marched in support of democracy. Then they witnessed an authoritarian dictatorship killing young people who wanted to be like “us.” Even though I paid no more than passing, preteen attention, my own view of China in 1989 was shaped by this melodramatic late Cold War framework provided by the American media. Only when I first went to Harbin, China, as a nineteen-year-old exchange student in 1997, did I begin to encounter different frameworks and to question my own.

I am writing this book because my students, many of whom were born in China, are fascinated by and obsessed with a months-long event that has come to be known as June Fourth. June Fourth can be divided into three parts: a nationwide democracy movement between April and June 1989, the Beijing massacre of June 3 and June 4, and a prolonged crackdown that persisted into 1990 and that in many ways has continued ever since. My students’ interest is infectious. Everyone who learns about June Fourth intuitively grasps that it was a major turning point in Chinese history, one that threw many lives off course and eventually contributed to the arrival of millions of Chinese students in North American, European, and Australian universities. But what kind of turning point was it? What small turning points can we identify in April, May, and June 1989 that contributed to the larger watershed? How might things have gone differently? The more the Chinese government censors discussion and restricts research about 1989, the more curious students and I get and the more we want to dig into the facts. Studying an event that has been covered up and obscured means that it is

necessary to start with the most basic questions of historical inquiry. What happened? What did it mean?

Viewing the Tiananmen protests and Beijing massacre as history is a new approach. It differs from the hundreds of previously published journalistic, memoir, and social science books about 1989. A historical approach allows for more comprehensive coverage of the protests, massacre, and aftermath in terms of focus, geographical space, and time. Many previous accounts have overemphasized the stories and influence of prominent student protesters, have focused on Beijing campuses and Tiananmen Square itself while downplaying what was going on in the rest of the city and the rest of China, and have stopped their story after the People's Liberation Army took control of the square as the sun rose on June 4, 1989. This has contributed to a skewed view that, pushed to its logical conclusion, blames students' arguments and missteps for provoking the authorities to order a military assault on Beijing.

Before I started doing research for this book, I shared this skewed view. When I received a promotional copy of Canadian author Denise Chong's book *Egg on Mao* in 2010, I had never heard of Lu Decheng. I was skeptical that a book needed to be written about Lu and two other working-class rabble-rousers from Hunan who threw eggs at Mao Zedong's portrait overlooking Tiananmen Square in May 1989. I was wrong. I had unwittingly internalized the Beijing-centric, student-focused narrative that saw the actions of nonelites as jeopardizing a protest movement led by students from China's elite universities. I overcame my reluctance and cracked open Chong's masterful book. It changed my mind and confirmed the value of looking beyond Beijing students. Chong's contribution greatly enriches the pages that follow.

A few years later, Chai Ling's publisher sent me a free copy of Chai's memoir. Like many people whose understanding of the history of 1989 comes from a Beijing student-centric view, I had an exceedingly negative impression of Chai, who was one of the most prominent student leaders in Beijing in 1989. My opinion was shaped primarily by the documentary *Gate of Heavenly Peace*, which depicts Chai as a selfish villain who recklessly tried to provoke the Communist Party to shed blood. Chai's book is as self-serving and defensive as most memoirs tend to be, but it is extremely revealing about what it was like to be a woman university student in the 1980s and how that experience could predispose someone to get involved in a risky protest movement. More crucially, it shows that no student leader deserves to be cast as a villain or blamed for a massacre.

My account recognizes the importance of Beijing students. But I see them as a diverse group living among an even more diverse mix of people

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whose actions and choices were far more significant than those of students from a few elite universities: ordinary residents of Beijing, worker activists pushing to establish independent unions, people outside China's capital, including Muslims and Tibetans, and the top Communist Party leaders who authorized deadly force against peaceful civilian protesters.

My inclination as a social historian is to focus on ordinary people instead of elite politicians. Plenty of regular people appear in this book. Their hopes and grievances created genuine possibilities for positive change during the spring of 1989. And most of the hundreds or thousands of people who died on June 3 and June 4 were ordinary residents of Beijing. Correcting the skewed student-centric view of 1989 and avoiding victim blaming, however, means paying significant attention to the people who could have prevented a massacre but instead caused one.

The top leader of China in 1989, the eighty-four-year-old Deng Xiaoping, decided to send in the army to forcibly clear Tiananmen Square by an arbitrary deadline. Contrary to accounts that portray Deng as unwilling, uninvolved, reluctant, or “manipulated” into imposing martial law by “hard-liners” who won a factional battle against “reformers,” it is clear that Deng himself decided that the student movement was turmoil that had to be crushed by force.<sup>3</sup> Because of his revolutionary seniority, Deng was the ultimate decider in China to whom all others had to bow down. Deng was the one who manipulated reluctant colleagues, not the other way around. Many of the high-level politicians and military leaders around him did not initially support imposing martial law in Beijing and using force to clear Tiananmen Square. But once Deng's views became clear, almost everyone else fell into line, pledging their loyalty and parroting the elderly leader's language.

In treating the Beijing massacre as history, I have adopted a victim-centered approach, naming the names of people who were killed, naming the perpetrators of the massacre, and drawing on the efforts of the Tiananmen Mothers to chart who the dead were and what they were doing when they died. Many of those who were shot and killed were on the streets of Beijing not to resist the army but to witness an atrocity or to help save others. Some civilians who died were trying to get to work, going out for breakfast, or hiding in their own homes. Their deaths were

<sup>3</sup> Michael Dillon's biography of Deng promotes the thesis that Deng was manipulated; Ezra Vogel's biography more accurately depicts Deng as the “ultimate decision-maker” in 1989. Michael Dillon, *Deng Xiaoping: The Man Who Made Modern China* (London: Tauris, 2015); Ezra F. Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 595.

senseless and totally unnecessary. Their loved ones, instead of receiving apologies and compensation, have been treated as criminals and dissidents.

Because of the Communist Party's censorship and falsehoods about what happened in June 1989, we do not know precisely how many people died in Beijing in early June. The number of dead could have been as low as 478, as high as 3,000, or somewhere in between, such as 727 (a number released by an insider in 2012). Any of these numbers is horrible and unacceptable. What is surprising is that they are not higher, knowing as we do now that more than two hundred thousand soldiers invaded and occupied Beijing. While two military units in particular, the 38th Group Army and the 15th Airborne, shot directly at civilians and strafed apartment buildings wildly as they approached Tiananmen Square from the west and south, many other soldiers – hesitant, scared, or unwilling to target civilians – did not shoot. The massacre was a terrible atrocity. It would have been far worse if dozens of other units had been as eager to shoot as the 38th Group Army and 15th Airborne were.

No history of 1989 would be comprehensive without looking beyond Beijing and chronicling the months-long nationwide crackdown that followed the Beijing massacre. Deng Xiaoping and Premier Li Peng had imposed martial law in Lhasa in March 1989 and considered it a success, making military action Deng's preferred option in Beijing a few months later. In April and May, protesters in every province and autonomous region of China emulated protesters in Beijing while also directly influencing events in the capital, either by capturing Communist Party leaders' attention or by traveling to Beijing themselves. After June 4, angry resistance and state violence ebbed for months.

Outbursts of resistance to violence were paralleled by a movement during the second half of 1989 to punish and purge people who had participated in the protests. People reacted as if they had been forced to live with a dangerously abusive partner: silently going through the motions, lying, protecting others who depended on them, and occasionally standing up to bullying. This dynamic continues through the present day. The abuser's enablers remain in charge of China thanks to Deng's decision to use military force against civilians. They mostly conceal the abuse, but if necessary, they defend it, saying that they had no choice. Sadly, the enablers have worked hard to teach young people who did not live through 1989 that what happened is best forgotten, that the victims deserved it, that it had been necessary to get rough to preserve China's stability.

The massacre was not necessary or justifiable. Each part of this book concludes with a special chapter examining alternative paths and

momentous turning points that Chinese people in China discussed during or after 1989. Because people had genuinely high hopes that China could become less corrupt and less repressive in April and May 1989, and because their aspirations were shattered so tragically by bullets and tanks, many survivors have obsessed over what could have been done to alter the course of history. Asking how things could have gone differently is a direct attack against the cynical argument that murdering civilians was an inevitable outcome or a necessary result.<sup>4</sup> It emphasizes agency and contingency. Agency means that individuals and groups were not passive pawns – they had the power to change history. Even though a diseased political system characterized by “old-man politics” facilitated Deng Xiaoping’s domination of his colleagues,<sup>5</sup> millions of people stood up and resisted Deng’s dictatorship. Their many successes should not be wiped away by the appearance of tanks and guns on June 3.

Contingency means that every action, choice, or event was dependent on countless other uncertain occurrences. For example, General Secretary Zhao Ziyang’s ill-timed departure to North Korea on April 23, 1989, and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s arrival in Beijing for a summit on May 15, 1989, initially had nothing to do with a democracy movement in China, but they became key turning points. Many other small decisions by relatively unknown people added up to contribute to outcomes that, at the time, were shocking, surprising, and never foreordained.

While my historical approach is an attempt to be comprehensive, it is not exhaustive. This is partly because of source limitations and partly because by emphasizing people, places, and events that have previously been neglected, I am making conscious choices to downplay things that I believe have been overemphasized. For example, Beijing students play a prominent role in the story but I refrain from giving a blow-by-blow account of their debates or of elite urban intellectuals’ theorizing. Nor do I dwell on symbols or symbolism. I will not be mentioning “tank man” or devoting more than a sentence to a statue called the goddess of democracy – these two symbols say more about North American and European observers’ imagination than they do about what happened in

<sup>4</sup> Political scientist David Skidmore cites Henry Kissinger’s statement that “no government in the world would have tolerated having the main square of its capital occupied for eight weeks by tens of thousands of demonstrators” as an example of the inevitability thesis as it applies to China in 1989. David Skidmore, “The 1989 Tiananmen Crackdown Was Not Inevitable,” *The Diplomat*, April 10, 2020, [thediplomat.com/2020/04/the-1989-tiananmen-crackdown-was-not-inevitable](https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/the-1989-tiananmen-crackdown-was-not-inevitable).

<sup>5</sup> Chung Yen-lin, “The Ousting of General Secretary Hu Yaobang: The Roles Played by Peng Zhen and Other Party Elders,” *China Review* 19, no. 1 (2019): 89–122.

China in 1989.<sup>6</sup> Focusing on an unknown man who bravely provided a dramatic photo opportunity by standing in front of a row of tanks on June 5, 1989, is an insult to the suffering of thousands of people who were actually injured by or literally fought back against the PLA's guns and tanks, but whose courage was not documented by cameras.

The hierarchies of Chinese society in 1989 were patriarchal, sexist, antirural, and Han supremacist (meaning that the dominant Han ethnicity had set up a system that treated non-Han people, including Tibetans and Uyghurs, as inferior). Existing histories of June Fourth reproduce these harmful hierarchies. They overemphasize Han men. They overlook rural people's experiences and treat non-Han struggles for autonomy as peripheral. They downplay women's participation and viewpoints or even misogynistically belittle Chai Ling's effectiveness as a movement leader and blame her for inciting a crackdown.

North American authors writing about June Fourth do so in a society that is patriarchal, sexist, and white supremacist, a reality that has also shaped scholarly decisions about what is worth writing about. It has been a prolonged and ongoing learning process for me to first recognize and then push back against hierarchies of exclusion and discrimination that I am personally enmeshed in as a privileged white guy. But it is crucial to do so. I have amplified previously marginalized voices and have consciously built on the paradigm-shifting contributions of such authors as Chai Ling, Denise Chong, Chung Yen-lin, Louisa Lim, Rowena Xiaoqing He, and Wu Renhua. Citations of their work can be found throughout the footnotes of the pages that follow and also in the suggestions for further reading provided at the end of the book.

Ten years ago, my original plan was to teach seminars about June Fourth as a way to prepare myself for the day – sometime soon, I hoped – when it would be possible to openly conduct interviews and read archives about 1989 in China. Instead, research about relatively innocuous topics has become increasingly difficult and dangerous after Xi Jinping became China's top leader in 2012. Sources about 1989 remain woefully limited. The Chinese Communist Party's repression of victims, its enforced amnesia about the inclusivity and scope of the democracy movement, and its dishonest characterization of the massacre itself make it more important than ever to forge ahead in telling the history of June Fourth in spite of source limitations. The student

<sup>6</sup> Michael Dutton writes that “the scene of the man and the tank” is the only “streetscene in China worth remembering in Western eyes ... The representation is so powerful that it demolishes other understandings.” Michael Dutton, *Streetlife China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 17.

movement in Beijing was well documented at the time and source collections are plentiful outside China. Put together with the revealing (but also defensive and self-serving) memoirs of Premier Li Peng, General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, and journalists Lu Chaoqi and Zhang Wanshu and others, they provide a fuller picture of the interplay between top leaders, student activists, and ordinary citizens.

Many secrets about the massacre and its aftermath remain locked in inaccessible archives inside China, but leaked collections of internally circulated military and Communist Party documents, the dogged work of the Tiananmen Mothers and independent scholar Wu Renhua, interviews by dissident writer Liao Yiwu, and my own conversations with survivors make it possible to provide the most comprehensive account to date of the events of 1989.

One source I have not used is *The Tiananmen Papers*, which for a time was considered an authoritative collection but has not stood the test of time and cannot be considered reliable. Most of the primary sources excerpted in *The Tiananmen Papers* come from other collections, in which case I have consulted earlier versions. The few original sources in *The Tiananmen Papers* are impossibly detailed, unverifiable transcripts of dubious provenance purporting to reveal conversations among top leaders.<sup>7</sup> Omitting *The Tiananmen Papers* as a source, while critically analyzing memoirs and other materials, is a necessary step in pursuing a more credible and inclusive history of 1989 that goes beyond the machinations of high officials and student leaders.

Some of the sources I cite are only available on the internet, meaning that they could disappear at any time because of censorship, technical obsolescence, or something as mundane as failing to renew a domain registration. To guarantee perpetual access to online sources, I have archived all web pages cited in the footnotes at the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine. If a page has already disappeared at the time of publication, I provide a link to the archived page. If an original link in

<sup>7</sup> Alfred Chan's critiques of *The Tiananmen Papers* remain convincing, especially when paired with Joseph Torigian's assessment of a more recent, more reliable collection of leaked documents – *The Last Secret* – versus the contents of *The Tiananmen Papers*. See Alfred L. Chan, "The Tiananmen Papers Revisited," *China Quarterly* 177 (March 2004): 190–205; Alfred L. Chan, "Fabricated Secrets and Phantom Documents: the 'Tiananmen Papers' and 'China's Leadership Files,' A Re-rejoinder," June 19, 2005, [publish.uwo.ca/~achan/Fabricated Secrets 2.pdf](http://publish.uwo.ca/~achan/Fabricated%20Secrets%202.pdf). See also Tsoi Wing-Mui, ed., *The Last Secret: The Final Documents from the June Fourth Crackdown* (Hong Kong: New Century, 2019), alongside Torigian's comments in Graeme Smith, Louisa Lim, Bao Pu, and Joseph Torigian, "Tiananmen's Final Secret," *Little Red Podcast*, June 2, 2019, [omny.fm/shows/the-little-red-podcast/tiananmens-final-secret](https://omny.fm/shows/the-little-red-podcast/tiananmens-final-secret).



the notes becomes unusable in the future, readers can find the archived version at [web.archive.org](http://web.archive.org).

I am indebted to many people for their assistance and encouragement. My biggest thanks go to the Simon Fraser University students with whom I have studied June Fourth. My students' energy and curiosity, which they channeled into more than seventy original Wikipedia contributions, convinced me that writing the history of 1989 is too urgent to wait for ideal research conditions. I am also grateful to Denise Chong, who made a captivating and inspiring visit to the seminar; to Chai Ling, who answered students' questions in a Skype meeting; and to Louisa Lim, who talked with students about her amazing book via Skype.

Wu Renhua is the world's leading expert in June Fourth studies and has been extremely generous in sharing his knowledge with me. Timothy Cheek and Perry Link encouraged me from the very beginning. At the finish line they read the entire manuscript and gave detailed feedback, for which I am forever grateful. Conversations with Rowena Xiaoqing He, Chung Yen-lin, Geremie Barmé, and many people in China whose lives were changed by what happened in 1989 but who cannot be named here greatly enriched this book, as did online exchanges with Michael Sullivan, Joseph Torigian, and Wu Guoguang.

I thank Paul G. Pickowicz, Karl Gerth, and graduate students from San Diego and Irvine for inviting me to tag along on a trip to Stanford University's East Asia Library, where librarian Zhaohui Xue was extremely helpful. At a conference in La Jolla that grew out of the research trip, I received valuable feedback from Richard Madsen, Sara Schneewind, Jeffrey Wasserstrom, and the students in Pickowicz's seminar. I am also grateful to Arunabh Ghosh and to Robert Eisinger for giving me the chance to speak about the post-massacre purge to public audiences at Harvard University and Roger Williams University.

I appreciate Jasmine Chen and the artists and staff at the Arts Club Theatre Company in Vancouver for asking me to take part in a panel following a showing of Lauren Yee's wonderful play *The Great Leap*. Remarks by Mabel Tung and Anna Wang at the panel pushed me to think about June Fourth in new ways.

Librarians helped me to find and use many of the sources I draw from in the book. Aside from the interlibrary loan staff at Simon Fraser University, who did lots of searching, finding, and heavy lifting, I want to thank librarians at the Burnaby Public Library, the Fung Library Fairbank Collection at Harvard University, the National Central Library in Beijing, the National Central Library in Taipei, the National Chengchi University Library, the Universities Service Centre for Chinese



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Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the East Asian Library at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Chris Buckley of the *New York Times* was generous in sharing sources; I thank him and Andrew Jacobs for sharing notes from their dynamite reporting about the military dimension of June Fourth. Timothy Brook shared his VHS collection of propaganda documentaries twisting the truth of what happened in June 1989. As painful and infuriating as they were to watch, I needed to see them. Thanks, Tim, for making viewing possible.

Three research assistants helped me with newspapers, memoirs, diaries, and videos. I do not want to get you in trouble by naming you here, but you know who you are. Thank you.

I have been fortunate to work with three History Department chairs during my time at Simon Fraser University: Mark Leier, Hilmar Pabel, and Jennifer Spear. They fostered a humane work environment that allowed me to complete the book. I cherish the freedom to say, teach, and write what I want at SFU. Writing about June Fourth has been a constant reminder to never take this for granted. I appreciate my colleagues in the History Department, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the faculty association, and the university administration, who work together to protect and promote freedom, tolerance, equity, diversity, and inclusion. One inadequate but significant step in this process is respectfully acknowledging that I wrote this book while living and working on the unceded territory of the Squamish, Tsleil-Watuth, Musqueam, and Kwikwetlem peoples.

I am thankful to Marigold Acland at Cambridge University Press for originally pitching this project to me, and I owe deep thanks to Lucy Rhymer for helping me from start to finish. Six other key people greatly improved the book in concrete ways: Carolyn Brown read every word and polished and fixed the writing; Danny Frazier designed and drew compelling illustrations, allowing readers to visualize what happened in 1989; John Gaunt's careful copy-editing corrected too many errors to count; Cheryl Lenser completed a top-notch index; and Emily Sharp and Natasha Whelan ensured that production went smoothly. I am grateful for funding from Simon Fraser University's University Publications Fund, which supported indexing and illustration costs.

This book was stalled and going nowhere until a group of remarkable people entered my family's life and changed us for the better. Dr. Hamad Abdoul Raman got us on the right track and has kept us there – thank you so much. Equally huge thanks go to Cristina Abasolo, Nancy Barton, Mark Curry, Sarah Gatiss-Brown, Dave Gatiss, Kareem John, Noushaba Nousheen, Michelle Seigel, Catherine Williams, Pam Woronko, and

other teachers and caregivers. The compassion and positivity that they have given (and continue to give) to me, Laura, Henry, and Leo cannot be overstated. During my final months of writing, a hip and back injury made life (and typing) difficult and painful. Nadine Nembhard of Restore Physiotherapy fixed the problem and gave me ways to get stronger. The caring and skilled people named in this paragraph may not have realized that they helped me finish this book, but they deserve credit for making it possible.

# Chronology

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November 5, 1986	More than ten thousand students march in Changsha.
December 1986– January 1987	Hu Yaobang purged as general secretary after student protests in Hefei, Shanghai, Beijing, and other cities.
December 1988	Thousands of Chinese students protest in Nanjing after a fight involving African students and a security guard at Hehai University.
March 1989	Security forces violently suppress Tibetan protesters in Lhasa, killing more than four hundred people. Li Peng declares martial law in Lhasa.
April 7, 1989	Protesting against restrictions on freedom of speech in Taiwan, publisher Cheng Nan-jung (also known as Nylon Cheng) commits suicide by setting himself on fire in his office in Taipei. April 7 is now commemorated as “Freedom of Expression Day” in Taiwan.
April 8, 1989	Hu Yaobang suffers heart attack during a Politburo meeting.
April 15, 1989	Hu Yaobang dies in hospital.
April 17, 1989	Örkesh Dölet (Wuerkaixi) speaks to a large crowd of students at Beijing Normal University.
April 18, 1989	Chai Ling is chased by police near Xinhua Gate, the entrance to the Communist Party’s leadership compound.
April 22, 1989	Hu Yaobang’s memorial service. Protesters in Changsha and Xi’an storm government compounds and are forcibly dispersed by police.
April 23, 1989	Zhao Ziyang departs for North Korea.

April 25–26, 1989	Official characterization of the protest movement as “turmoil” is broadcast on television and radio and published in newspapers nationwide.
April 27, 1989	Approximately one hundred thousand students march to Tiananmen Square.
April 29, 1989	Sham dialogue between students and officials in Beijing.
April 30, 1989	Zhao Ziyang returns to Beijing from North Korea.
May 4, 1989	Zhao Ziyang tells Asian Development Bank delegates that problems should be solved “democratically and legally” and that “major turmoil will not occur in China.”
May 6, 1989	More than ten thousand Muslims march in Lanzhou protesting the book <i>Sexual Customs</i> . Censors in Beijing halt sales of the book and order the destruction of all existing copies.
May 11, 1989	Deng Xiaoping emerges from seclusion to meet with Iranian President Ali Khamenei.
May 12, 1989	Muslims protest against <i>Sexual Customs</i> in Beijing, Hohhot, Lanzhou, and Xining.
May 13, 1989	Students begin hunger strike in Tiananmen Square.
May 14, 1989	Dialogue meeting between student activists and officials ends in disarray in Beijing.
May 15, 1989	Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev arrives in Beijing. Rumors of imminent self-immolations circulate in and around Tiananmen Square. Approximately twenty thousand Muslims demonstrate in an officially approved march in Xi’an.
May 17, 1989	In a meeting at Deng Xiaoping’s home, Deng tells Zhao Ziyang and other members of the Politburo Standing Committee that he has decided to implement martial law. Zhao says that he is unwilling to carry out martial law.
May 17–18, 1989	More than one million Beijing residents march in support of the hunger strikers.

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May 18, 1989	Li Peng meets with hunger strikers in the Great Hall of the People. Thousands of Muslims protest in Yinchuan and Urumqi.
May 19, 1989	Deng Xiaoping tells elders, military officials, and Li Peng that he has selected Shanghai Party secretary Jiang Zemin to replace Zhao Ziyang as general secretary. Approximately 304,000 university students from the provinces arrive in Beijing on fifty-one separate trains. In Taipei, Chan I-hua commits suicide by self-immolation at Cheng Nan-jung's funeral.
May 20, 1989	Martial law goes into effect in urban Beijing at 10 a.m., but citizens block the troops' advance into the city. General Xu Qinxian, leader of the 38th Group Army, refuses to carry out the martial law order.
May 22, 1989	Lu Decheng, Yu Dongyue, and Yu Zhijian throw paint-filled eggs at Mao Zedong's portrait overlooking Tiananmen Square.
May 23, 1989	The Joint Liaison Group of All Circles in the Capital to Protect and Uphold the Constitution, or Capital Joint Liaison Group (CJLG), forms as an umbrella organization of protest groups.
May 24, 1989	People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops withdraw from Beijing and regroup.
May 28, 1989	Zhao Ziyang's political secretary Bao Tong is detained in Qincheng Prison; Bao's secretary Wu Wei is locked up in a security compound outside Beijing.
May 29, 1989	Li Peng chairs a Politburo Standing Committee meeting to discuss how the PLA should clear Tiananmen Square.
May 31, 1989	Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun sign off on plans for the PLA to advance on and clear Tiananmen Square.
June 1, 1989	Eight hundred students from Nanjing head north on foot toward Beijing in a "long march" protest.
June 1–2, 1989	By 3 a.m. on June 2, twenty-five thousand soldiers and officers gather in the Great Hall of

	the People and other areas near Tiananmen Square.
June 3, 1989	PLA troops advancing toward Tiananmen Square open fire on civilian protesters after 10 p.m., killing hundreds, including teenagers Jiang Jielian and Wang Nan and others along Beijing’s main east–west avenue. Xiao Bo, Wang Weiping, Xiong Zhiming, and others are shot and killed while trying to help others. Soldiers shoot and kill Liu Jinhua and Liu Zhenying while the two are out on separate trips trying to buy medicine for their children.
June 4, 1989	The Beijing massacre continues overnight and into the day. At least five students are reportedly shot and killed inside Tiananmen Square: Cheng Renxing, Dai Jinping, Huang Xinhua, Li Haocheng, and Zhou Deping. PLA soldiers kill the following people as they try to commute to or from work: Chen Ziqi, Dai Wei, Li Chun, Liu Junhe, Wang Hongqi, Wang Junjing, and Wang Qingzeng. A rampaging tank kills eleven students at Liubukou, including Dong Xiaojun, Gong Jifang, Lin Renfu, Tian Daomin, and Wang Peiwen.
June 5, 1989	Sporadic murders of civilians by PLA troops continue in Beijing. Around 6:40 a.m., Peng Jun is fatally shot while going out for breakfast. In Chongqing, twenty-eight-year-old factory worker Xu Wanping reacts to the Beijing massacre by forming the China Action Party.
June 6, 1989	More than three thousand protesters attack the 27th Group Army’s headquarters in Shijiazhuang. In Shanghai, a train plows into protesters blocking the tracks, killing eight and injuring more than thirty. PLA troops continue killing civilians in Beijing, including a twelve-year-old boy going home from school, as well as two young men in their twenties named Wang Zhengsheng and Yang Ziping.

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June 26, 1989	Terrorist bombing of train on the outskirts of Shanghai, killing twenty-four people and injuring fifty-one.
June 28, 1989	Another train explosion, this one in Guizhou, kills five and injures twelve.

## Abbreviations

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- HF** Zhongguo renmin wuzhuang jingcha budui Beijing shi zongdui, 回顾与反思: 1989, 制止动乱平息暴乱主要经验汇编 (Looking back and reflecting: 1989, collected experiences of curbing turmoil and quelling rebellion) (n.p., 1989), reprinted by Service Center for Chinese Publications, “六四”专题史料丛刊之十一 (Collection of historical materials about “June Fourth,” no. 11) (Los Angeles: Service Center for Chinese Publications, 2009).
- JY** Zongzheng wenhua bu zhengwen bangongshi, ed., 戒严一日 (A day of martial law) (Beijing: Jiefangjun wenyi chubanshe, 1989).
- LP** Zhang Ganghua, 李鹏六四日记真相 (The truth about Li Peng’s June Fourth diary) (Hong Kong: Aoya chuban youxian gongsi, 2010).
- LSJ** Wu Renhua, 六四事件中的戒严部队 (The martial law troops during the June Fourth incident) (Alhambra, CA: Zhenxiang chubanshe, 2009).
- LSQ** Wu Renhua, 六四事件全程实录 (The full record of the Tiananmen movement) (Alhambra, CA: Zhenxiang chubanshe, 2014).
- QZ** 公安部总值班室情况摘报 (Ministry of Public Security Duty Office Situation Bulletin).
- PS** Bao Pu, Renee Chiang, and Adi Ignatius, trans. and ed., *Prisoner of the State: The Secret Journal of Zhao Ziyang* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009).
- RMRB** *Renmin ribao* 人民日报 (*People’s Daily*).
- SCCP** Zhongwen chubanshe fuwu zhongxin, ed., 中共重要历史文献资料汇编 (Collection of the Chinese Communist Party’s important historical documents) (Los Angeles: Zhongwen chubanshe fuwu zhongxin, 2005–).
- SCPA** Stanford University East Asian Library, Collection of Contemporary Chinese Political Archives.



xxvi	List of Abbreviations
<i>XF</i>	Ding Zilin, 尋訪六四受難者 (In search of the victims of June Fourth) (Hong Kong: Kaifang zazhi she, 2005).
<i>ZY</i>	Liao Yiwu, 子彈鴉片：天安門大屠殺的生死故事 (Bullets and opium: Stories of life and death in the Tiananmen massacre) (Taipei: Yunchen wenhua, 2012).