

DANCING IN SHACKLES: READING *THE WALL DANCERS*

A SIX-WEEK ONLINE SEMINAR FOR SECONDARY EDUCATORS

SEPTEMBER 14 – OCTOBER 25, 2026

How do people create, connect, and speak out inside one of the world's most sophisticated systems of information control? In *The Wall Dancers* (Knopf, 2026), journalist Yi-Ling Liu follows five people who each learned to “dance in shackles” on the Chinese internet. Reading the book together over six weeks, participants will move beyond the familiar shorthand of “the Great Firewall” to a much more complicated exploration of China’s online and technology ecosystems focused on some of the human stories behind it. We will look at how these individuals built and found community, created companies, and made art within tightening constraints, as well as how the narrowing of outside access to China challenges us to think carefully, with our students, about where our picture of the country comes from. The seminar is asynchronous, with weekly readings and discussion forums, plus one required live webinar with course instructor Lauren Collins on October 6 at 7:30 pm ET on AI and censorship using DeepSeek. Open to educators of all grade levels and subjects; secondary social studies, world history, ELA, media literacy, and journalism teachers will find the most direct classroom applications.

Eligibility:

Open to secondary educators (not all levels) nationwide, with priority given to full-time, contract social studies teachers. Course limit: 25 teachers. Rolling admission.



Apply online at:

tinyurl.com/TEAcourseregistration



Expectations and benefits:

- Purchase the book *The Wall Dancers* by Yi-Ling Liu
- \$10 to cover the cost of the book upon seminar completion
- Participate in a live webinar on October 6 at 7:30pm ET
- Submit a short (2-4 pages) final paper and evaluation
- Gain access to resources
- Receive certificate for 25 contact hours
- Earn \$100 completion award

