

# DOING ETHNOGRAPHY IN A RELIGIOUS FIELD: INTERVENTIONS, TENSIONS AND MEDIATIONS

a talk by

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This talk is based on the newly released book *Dream Trippers: Global Daoism and the Predicament of Modern Spirituality* (University of Chicago Press 2017), a multi-sited ethnographic study of transnational encounters between American spiritual tourists and practitioners and the Chinese monks and hermits of the sacred Daoist peak of Huashan. In this talk, the co-authors David Palmer and Elijah Siegler will reflect on how their ethnography unexpectedly and unavoidably became an intervention in the religious field they were studying, leading them to question the insider/outsider distinction in the study of religion. They will discuss their relationships—as friends, translators, and mediators—with the three main protagonists whose lives intersected during their study – a Chinese urban hermit, an American spiritual entrepreneur, and a Sinologist scholar-practitioner.



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13

4:00-5:30PM

ROOM 105

10 SACHEM STREET

Yale Department of Religious Studies

Ethnography & Social Theory Colloquium  
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Council on East Asian Studies  
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