

**GREEN COLLEGE 2006-7 SPEAKER
SERIES: *Autobiography and Film***

Presents:

Thursday, Oct 26, 2006

**4:00 - 6:30, at the Green College Coach House,
6201 Cecil Green Park Road, V6T1Z1**

**Organized by SAGA: Centre for Studies in
Auto/bio/graphy, Gender, and Age**



Jacqueline Levitin

Associate Professor, School for the Contemporary Arts/Women's Studies

**Title of Talk: Probing History and Memory: Navigating Between the
Document of Documentary and the Personal Experimental Film**

Film shown: "Mahjong & Chicken Feet"

Assuming she does not understand them, a group of men in a variety store in Harbin, China, candidly discuss this foreigner with a camera among them, momentarily forgetting her camera is recording them all the while. Later, in Kaifeng, miles to the south, the woman noses her camera into people's homes, searching for traces of the city's millennium-long Jewish settlement. A student translates her questions to the Chinese, rendering them polite in the process. The director's own Russian Jewish family history in China at the beginning of the century, a story of tiger hunters, poignant deaths and daring rescues, binds together this tale of Chinese Jewish cross cultural encounters – a film by turn wryly observationist and painterly lyrical.

Bio:

Jacqueline Levitin is a filmmaker and media artist, film historian and instructor. Her films and videos range from short experimental works to documentary and fiction features and live video collaborations with dancers and theatre performers. Her latest work, the experimental documentary *Majong and Chicken Feet* (2006), uses her family's history in Harbin, China to explore memory and history and the relations between China and her 'others.' *Building Bridge: a Housing Project for Women* (2003) brings her early work in ethnographic documentary and participatory-style filmmaking to the exploration of ethical issues in imaging the poor and drug-addicted of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Jacqueline Levitin is the co-editor of *Women Filmmakers: Refocusing* (2003), a collection of new writing by women filmmakers, critics and theorists. She teaches in the School for the Contemporary Arts and Women's Studies departments at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. Prior to that, she taught and chaired the Film Department at Concordia University in Montreal.