

China's Deficit in American Studies

1. Proper Noun _____
2. Adjective _____
3. Noun _____
4. Noun _____
5. Proper Noun - Plural _____
6. Noun - Plural _____
7. Noun _____
8. Adjective _____
9. Noun - Plural _____
10. Noun _____
11. Noun - Plural _____
12. Noun _____
13. Adjective _____
14. Noun - Plural _____
15. Noun _____
16. Noun - Plural _____
17. Coordinating Conjunction _____
18. Adverb _____
19. Noun - Plural _____
20. Adjective _____
21. Adjective _____
22. Proper Noun _____
23. Preposition Or Subordinating Conjunction _____

24. Noun - Plural

25. Coordinating Conjunction

26. Preposition Or Subordinating Conjunction

27. Noun - Plural

28. Noun

29. Verb - Past Participle

30. Verb - Past Tense

31. Adjective

32. Adjective

33. Preposition Or Subordinating Conjunction

34. Noun

35. Adjective

36. Noun

37. Noun

38. Noun

39. Noun

40. Noun

41. Preposition Or Subordinating Conjunction

China's Deficit in American Studies

Proper Noun faces a Adjective imbalance of intellectual Noun with the United States.

Contrary to conventional Noun, Chinese know less about the United Proper Noun - Plural than Americans know about China. Most Chinese students and Noun - Plural interested in the United States concentrate either on English language and Noun or on Sino-American Adjective history and policy Noun - Plural. There are few opportunities for Noun in the United States, and scholarly work on American domestic Noun - Plural is "woefully inadequate," according to a Peking University Noun in Adjective studies.

By contrast, Americans have done surveys, Noun - Plural histories, and Noun research in the humanities, Noun - Plural sciences, and sciences all across China, including such sensitive areas as Coordinating conjunction. Since China's opening to the West, 30 years ago, Americans have acquired Adverb detailed Noun - Plural about nearly every aspect of traditional and contemporary China. "

Just as American scholars go to Hunan and Guangxi," a Chinese Adjective told me, "Chinese should know more about Arizona and Ohio in order to be familiar with the Adjective Proper Noun."

I conducted Preposition or subordinating conjunction in China for the Ford Foundation's Beijing office last year to review the state of Noun - Plural studies in Coordinating conjunction and to make recommendations for increased Preposition or subordinating conjunction between specialists in China and the United States. Since 1989, Ford has been one of the few private Noun - Plural of financial Noun for American studies in China, but its support has Verb - Past Participle in recent years.

My Verb - Past Tense showed that Chinese scholars and policy analysts are Adjective ready and able to move beyond the narrowly focused approach that has Adjective American studies in Preposition or subordinating conjunction in the past. "We need to study the economy, society, history, and Noun of the United States, not just what Obama said," said one observer. He and many others are eager to investigate the cultural, ethnic, and Adjective factors that help to explain America's Noun and its Noun decisions. As it stands now, "China equates American diversity with Noun, not realizing it is the Noun of the U.S.," says an American professor.

Reflecting their own history and values, Chinese tend to Noun group Preposition or subordinating conjunction over individual rights. , , "

The relative thinness of China's grasp of the American way of life should not be surprising. The serious study of the United States is still young, and China has lacked the resources to look beyond practical and immediate issues

such as language, business, law, and diplomacy. Topics including race and ethnicity have been neglected. American institutions, both public and private, are inadequately prepared to respond to changing Chinese imperatives for in-depth learning about the United States. There are several reasons. First, Americans often take their own culture for granted, assuming that U.S. interests and values are widely known and easily accessible. Second, American studies as practiced in the United States is an eclectic, interdisciplinary field that does not always match up well with Chinese academic disciplines. Third, there is a widespread perception that the U.S. government is responsible for explaining America to the world. But with limited resources, concerns about security, and a focus on the Muslim world, the consensus is that U.S. public diplomacy is not getting the job done.

The list of obstacles goes on: American foundations, think tanks, and universities provide far more support for the study of China and U.S.-China relations than for American studies. Many promising Chinese students with backgrounds in American studies are recruited into China-studies programs in the United States, where they have obvious comparative advantages. Over the years, the Fulbright Program in China has shifted from history and literature to fields such as law, business, foreign policy, and communications. And while there are opportunities for individual exchanges between our two countries, remarkably few institutional partnerships focus exclusively on American studies in China.

Despite all of those problems, there is a real opportunity for Chinese and Americans to work together. At a time when scholars in China are ready to move beyond the status quo, many American-studies scholars in the United States have embraced a global view of American history, politics, economics, and culture. They are becoming more aware of important research outside the United States, informing a transnational perspective. This is therefore an excellent time for Americans to both strengthen the study of the United States in China and promote the internationalization of American studies back home.

Here are some recommendations to improve the situation:

- * Increase opportunities for Chinese to attend meetings of professional associations in the United States and for Americans to attend conferences in China.
- * Expand networks for information about the United States through Web sites, conferences, and training programs. The U.S.-China Education Trust and the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs offer good models.
- * Provide incentives for Chinese scholars to publish articles in international journals, such as the online Journal of Transnational American Studies.
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Support certificate programs for Chinese graduate students and young scholars from less developed regions in China. Universities in China, Hong Kong, and the United States can organize summer institutes.

- * Expand opportunities for student-exchange programs dealing with aspects of American society. These exchanges should be designed as long-term institutional partnerships.
- * Sponsor Sino-American research projects on topics such as immigration, crisis management, poverty, climate change, religion, and Chinese-American studies.
- * Create more pathways for Chinese government officials, diplomats, journalists, students, scholars, and policy analysts to learn about the United States. The National Committee on United States-China Relations and the Asia Foundation could expand existing programs.
- * Organize a consortium of American foundations, with Chinese advisers, to review and help address China's priorities for American studies. Earlier efforts in the fields of international-relations studies and legal studies offer potential models.
- * Establish a China-U.S. advisory group or commission, financially supported by the two governments but managed independently, to identify gaps and foster long-term efforts to promote American studies in China as well as Chinese studies in the United States.

China now expresses its soft power across the United States through 60 Confucius Institutes, which offer resources for teaching Chinese language and culture. Yet America has no equivalent organizations in China, partly because of objections from Chinese authorities. Instead the United States relies mainly on movies, sports, and corporate advertising to convey its core values. It was telling when after seeing the movie Avatar recently, a Chinese official enthusiastically told his American colleague, "This is real American genius."

It is obviously in America's interest for China to have a clear, objective, nuanced understanding of the United States. American colleges, universities, charitable organizations, and foundations should play an active role in rectifying the intellectual imbalance between the two countries. Sustained support for American studies in China will not put an end to suspicion and mistrust, but it does have the potential to smooth out bumps in the road ahead.