

Chinese Government Influence on the U.S. Media Landscape

Written Testimony by Sarah Cook

Senior Research Analyst for East Asia, Freedom House

Testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

Hearing on China's Information Controls, Global Media Influence, and Cyber Warfare Strategy

May 4, 2017

Introduction

Reuters establishes a new round of internal vetting on stories about human rights in China after its English and Chinese websites are blocked.¹ Radio stations in fifteen U.S. cities broadcast content provided by Chinese state-run media.² Tech giant Apple removes the *New York Times*' mobile-phone applications from its download store in China with little explanation.³ And several rounds of crippling cyberattacks hit the New York-based servers of *New Tang Dynasty Television* and *The Epoch Times* newspaper's websites.⁴

These are a small sample of incidents that have occurred over the past three years. Collectively, they illustrate various ways in which Chinese Communist Party (CCP) information controls—in terms of both censorship and propaganda—extend beyond mainland China's borders and influence the media landscape in the United States.

This testimony summarizes and supplements a 2013 study I authored of this phenomenon globally—*The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship*,⁵ while attempting to offer updates on its recent evolution as it pertains to the American news media sector.

The CCP and various Chinese government entities, have long sought to influence public debate and media coverage about China in the United States, particularly among Chinese language communities. However, over the past decade, these efforts have expanded and intensified. Moreover, they are increasingly targeting English-language media companies and news consumers alongside their Chinese-speaking counterparts. As a result, the “China Factor” is palpably present, be it at the internationally renowned *Wall Street Journal*, a cable TV provider in Washington DC, or a Chinese radio talk show in Los Angeles.

I have divided this testimony into five parts and ask that this full written testimony be admitted into the record:

- I. Goals of CCP media influence campaigns in the United States**
- II. Propaganda and censorship tactics: two sides of the same coin**
- III. Recent trends: Expansion and innovation**
- IV. The impact and limits of Beijing's influence**
- V. Recommendations for U.S. government and Congressional responses**

I. Goals of CCP media influence campaigns in the United States

Similar to CCP outreach and propaganda efforts in other parts of the world, influence campaigns in the United States target two primary audiences: overseas Chinese and non-Chinese foreigners. In both cases, the narratives and actions encompassed by these initiatives reveal three primary aims⁶:

- 1) To promote a positive view of China and benign perspective of the CCP's authoritarian regime
- 2) To encourage foreign investment in China and openness to Chinese investment abroad
- 3) To marginalize, demonize, or entirely suppress anti-CCP voices, incisive political commentary, and exposés that present the Chinese government and its leaders in a negative light.

For overseas Chinese, two additional goals of promoting nationalistic sentiment vis-à-vis China and reunification with Taiwan are evident in programming and news coverage as well.⁷ Some Chinese-language state-media content can also be quite anti-American, particularly in how it frames key events in U.S.-China relations.⁸

Research by scholars like Anne-Marie Brady⁹ and James To¹⁰ provide detailed examples and analysis of these narratives and their application to various target audiences outside China. In considering the close intersection between the CCP's overseas propaganda and censorship efforts, Ashley Esarey, a scholar of Chinese media, noted in his own 2011 testimony before this commission:

The objective of CCP leaders is to utilize propaganda to retain high levels of popular support domestically and to improve the regime's international influence. When propaganda messages are disconnected from actions that speak otherwise or challenged by rival perspectives, the effectiveness of propaganda falters and sows doubt among both foreigners and Chinese alike.¹¹

Esarey's observation helps make sense of why the party's recent multi-billion dollar effort to expand the reach of state-run media has been coupled with increased instances of extraterritorial censorship. For the party's narrative to be convincing to audiences inside and outside China, reporting—especially investigative reporting and critical commentary—about the darker sides of CCP rule at home and Chinese activities abroad must be suppressed.

In seeking to accomplish this aim, the party's transnational obstructions appear to prioritize a set of targets that one former Chinese diplomat said were internally called "the five poisonous groups."¹² These are Tibetans, Uighurs, practitioners of the Falun Gong spiritual group, Chinese democracy activists, and proponents of Taiwanese independence.¹³ In many instances, these groups and related causes have been explicitly mentioned as the focus of direct or self-motivated censorship, or of vilifying propaganda, highlighting the special importance the CCP attributes to them. The transnational activism of Tibetans and Falun Gong practitioners—including the latter's efforts to build their own U.S.-based media entities free of CCP controls—render them even more frequent targets of restrictions. These issues touch on some of the most egregious and systematic abuses taking place in China today,¹⁴ pointing to the CCP's nervousness of regime violence being exposed.

But the mechanisms used to marginalize discussion of these subjects are now also being applied to new topics deemed politically sensitive. Since 2012, the Chinese authorities have meted out multi-faceted reprisals and obstructions against American news outlets for investigative reports detailing the assets of party leaders' relatives, critical coverage of the Chinese economy, or unfavorable reporting about Xi Jinping.¹⁵ Foreign correspondents' attempts to report on issues such as human rights lawyers' trials, land disputes, and environmental pollution have also encountered interference and in some cases, physical attacks. These topics collectively affect the lives of tens of millions of people in China and may have global implications.

II. Propaganda and censorship tactics: two sides of the same coin

The CCP uses a variety of strategies in its efforts to achieve its goals of influencing media narratives in the United States in the directions described above. These typically take the form of propaganda tactics that actively promote Chinese government content and pro-Beijing media outlets or censorial ones that suppress information and obstruct media outlets critical of the regime.

Propaganda efforts have taken three primary forms:

- 1) **Aggressive attempts to expand state-run media outlets' reach and influence inside the United States.** These efforts have included high-profile initiatives like Xinhua news

agency's advertisement in Time Square,¹⁶ the appearance of *China Daily* newspaper boxes on streets in major U.S. cities, and the launch of China Central Television (CCTV) America—recently rebranded as China Global Television Network (CGTN) America.¹⁷ In the Chinese-language media sphere, this effort has been going on for over 20 years, resulting in CCTV being accessible to over 90 million households in the United States¹⁸ and a series of free pro-Beijing newspapers displacing the earlier dominance of Taiwan and Hong Kong-affiliated papers.¹⁹

- 2) **Insinuating state-media content into mainstream media or other existing dissemination channels.** Chinese officials and state-media reports have referred to this strategy as “borrowing the boat to reach the sea” (借船出海).²⁰ This phrase refers to disseminating Chinese state-media content via the pages, frequencies, or screen-time of privately owned media outlets that have developed their own local audiences. This strategy has a long history of use in the Chinese-language environment, such as via the provision of Xinhua newswire content for free.²¹ In recent years, its robust expansion to English-language media has garnered much attention and public debate. One of the most prominent examples has been the emergence of China Watch—a paid insert sponsored by the state-run *China Daily*—that has appeared both in print and online in prominent U.S. papers like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Wall Street Journal*. In November 2015, a Reuters investigation revealed that programming from the state-funded China Radio International (CRI) was appearing on stations in 15 U.S. cities, including Washington DC, via intermediaries of a privately owned media group.²²
- 3) **Co-opting or partnering with privately owned media to produce and publish content that serves Beijing's aims:** Not all pro-CCP propaganda appearing in U.S. media necessarily originates from writers and editors at Chinese-state run media outlets. Rather, Chinese diplomats and other officials have gone to great lengths to develop “friendly” relations with private media owners and reporters, encouraging them to produce their own content that promotes key narratives favored by Beijing. Outlets and diaspora media owners whose reporting portrays Beijing positively are frequently rewarded with advertising, lucrative contracts for non-media enterprises, joint ventures, and even political appointments. In several instances, Chinese state-media have also purchased small financial stakes in overseas media to solidify such a relationship. Examples of these dynamics are evident in two media entities whose content is disseminated in many parts of the United States. First, the above-mentioned Reuters investigation revealed that only part of the content aired on radio stations owned or leased by CRI's U.S.-based partner G&E Studio originates from CRI. Other segments are produced by G&E Studio itself in California.²³ Nevertheless, their messaging matches that of Chinese state propaganda. A second example is that of Phoenix TV, the second most

widely available Chinese-language television station on cable in the United States.²⁴ Owned by a former military officer with close ties to Beijing officials, Phoenix TV's coverage is typically favorable to the CCP.²⁵ Moreover, over the past two years, it has been used as an outlet for airing televised confessions by various detained CCP critics, most notably all five Hong Kong booksellers abducted by Chinese security forces in late 2015.²⁶ Such coverage is perhaps not coincidental, considering that CCTV reportedly holds a 10 percent stake in Phoenix.²⁷

Censorship and other attempts to suppress the spread of information deemed undesirable by the regime have taken a variety of other, often more subtle forms. The above-mentioned 2013 study described these dynamics in detail, finding that they manifest in four key ways both in the United States and other parts of the world:

- **Direct action** by Chinese diplomats, local officials, security forces, and regulators both inside and outside China. These measures obstruct newsgathering, prevent the publication of undesirable content, and punish overseas media outlets that fail to heed restrictions.
- **Economic “carrots” and “sticks”** to induce self-censorship among media owners and their outlets headquartered outside mainland China.
- **Indirect pressure** applied via proxies—including advertisers, satellite firms, and foreign governments—who take action to prevent or punish the publication of content critical of Beijing.
- Incidents such as **cyberattacks** and **physical assaults** that are not conclusively traceable to the central Chinese authorities but serve the party's aims and result from an atmosphere of impunity for those attacking independent media.

In practice, different tactics are adopted for varied media and information environments. For **international media**, local officials and unidentified thugs in China obstruct foreign correspondents, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs delays visa renewals, and central authorities arbitrarily block websites. Outside China, diplomats have been known to apply pressure on senior editors and executives to alter coverage, while cyberattacks have infiltrated the global servers of leading outlets such as the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.²⁸

The CCP's efforts to expand control over Chinese-language media based outside the mainland are more systematic, reflecting how the party's domestic political concerns often drive foreign policy priorities.

Co-opting owners of media outlets in **Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Chinese diaspora—**

whose subsidiary publications and broadcasts are disseminated in the United States—has been a successful strategy for advancing CCP efforts to marginalize dissenting reporting and commentary. When positive incentives have failed to reach their objectives, more heavy-handed approaches have been used, such as Chinese officials’ calling editors directly to castigate them for their coverage. For individual journalists, fear of an inability to return to China or of reprisals against family members in the mainland encourage cautious writing and compliance with consular demands here in the United States.²⁹

More forceful measures have been taken to obstruct the operations of independent-minded **offshore Chinese media**. These include several initiatives based in the United States, like the California-based *China Digital Times* website, the citizen journalism site *Boxun*, and the Epoch Media Group headquartered in New York, which includes *New Tang Dynasty Television (NTDTV)*, *The Epoch Times/Dajiyuan* newspaper, and *Sound of Hope* radio. Particular efforts have been made to undermine these entities’ financial viability and block mainland audiences’ access to their content. They have suffered advertising boycotts, debilitating cyberattacks, and harassment of contacts in China. In several cases, foreign companies and event organizers—including Apple and NASDAQ in the United States—have barred their access to newsworthy events outside China or assisted in Chinese government efforts to prevent their content from reaching mainland audiences.³⁰

The spectrum of **Chinese government and party entities** involved in these attempts to promote state media propaganda and thwart reporting by foreign and overseas Chinese media is as broad as the tactics applied. Not surprisingly perhaps, many of the same bodies that supervise censorship and surveillance within China are also involved in applying media controls with transnational implications. These include the Communist Party’s Central Propaganda Department at the pinnacle of the control apparatus, as well the State Council Information Office (whose office of Overseas Foreign Propaganda is central to the day-to-day efforts to influence news coverage abroad), and of course flagship CCP mouthpieces like *The People’s Daily*, *China Daily*, Xinhua News Agency, and state broadcaster CCTV.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chinese diplomats based in the United States also feature regularly in accounts of obstructions ranging from visa denials to demands for content alterations to pressure on businesses not to advertise with a disfavored outlet. Meanwhile, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film, and Television and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology are involved in censorship decisions in China that have ramifications for U.S.-based companies, and when interrogation is called for—the Public and State Security Bureaus.

III. Recent trends: Expansion and innovation

Some of the above dynamics date back to the 1990s. Nonetheless, **over the past decade, certain features have intensified, expanded, and deepened.** The paradoxical combination of the CCP feeling emboldened internationally and insecure domestically has contributed to this trend.

This trend began emerging during the tenure of former CCP leader Hu Jintao. Nonetheless, as current Chinese president Xi Jinping has tightened ideological controls at home and prioritized propaganda efforts abroad, content restrictions and manipulation are also affecting an ever-broadening array of institutions and economic sectors overseas.

In an October 2015 article in the *Journal of Democracy* on China's foreign propaganda efforts, media studies professor Anne-Marie Brady, who testified before this commission in 2009, found that Xi has used his highly concentrated political power to personally induce ramped up efforts to influence foreign audiences.³¹ For example, in an August 2013 speech at the National Meeting on Propaganda and Thought Work, Xi stressed the need for China "to strengthen media coverage... and promote China's views internationally."³² In a February 2016 visit to core state-media outlets, Xi also spoke to CCTV America journalists in the United States via a live video conference.³³

A key focus of Xi's instructions regarding foreign propaganda has been to "tell a good Chinese story" in order to expand China's soft power. In a January 2014 speech, he explained to CCP Politburo members his vision for what this entails:

China should be portrayed as a civilized country featuring a rich history, ethnic unity, and cultural diversity, and as an Eastern power with good government, a developed economy, cultural prosperity, national unity, and beautiful scenery. China should also be known as a responsible country that advocates peace and development, safeguards international fairness and justice, [and] makes a positive contribution to humanity.³⁴

According to Brady, under Xi "China's foreign propaganda efforts have taken on a new level of assertiveness, confidence, and ambition."³⁵ Overseas Chinese observers have described developments in the United States in similar terms. Chen Pokong, a democracy advocate and political analyst in New York, closely follows the Chinese language media market in the United States as he regularly publishes commentary or hosts talk shows on developments in China or U.S.-China relations across a variety of news outlets. According to Chen, in recent years, Chinese government influence in this sphere has increased rather than weakened. He attributes the changes he has noticed to Chinese diplomats in the United States "more actively interfering" in the editorial decisions of certain American Chinese media. "The

diplomats don't hide their efforts or aims and are not hesitant. Rather, they are more arrogant, more aggressive," says Chen.³⁶

Alongside such general observations, over the past few years, the Chinese government's evolving attempts to influence the U.S. media market have manifested in three key ways:

- 1) **Continued—and expanded—application of previous tactics:** The CCP and state entities continue to deploy the above-mentioned toolbox to influence and constrain media outlets in the United States. Incidents of one kind or another are reported on a regular basis. State-run media outlets like *China Daily* and CCTV have continued to expand in the United States and are increasingly hiring foreign media professionals while retaining editorial control.³⁷ Meanwhile, people in China are facing greater restrictions on their ability to read news published by U.S. outlets. Since June 2014, the English and/or Chinese-language websites of the *Wall Street Journal*, Reuters, and *Time* magazine have been blocked in China. The apparent triggers for the blocks include coverage of the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, the jailing of a dissident who had criticized propaganda chief Liu Yunshan, and a magazine cover featuring a comparison between Xi Jinping and Mao Zedong.³⁸

Just two weeks ago, controversy emerged surrounding the unexpected interruption of a *Voice of America* interview with Chinese wanted tycoon Guo Wengui part way through a three-hour live broadcast.³⁹ According to media reports and to Chen Pokong, who hosts a political talk show for VOA, there were intense internal debates among staff about airing the show, reports of Chinese officials applying pressure to prevent it, and suspicion that a senior executive in the Mandarin service intervened to trigger the last-minute disruption. A VOA spokeswoman attributed the cut-off to miscommunication.⁴⁰

The trend of tactics that were previously reserved for dissident Chinese-language media being expanded to mainstream U.S. outlets also appears to be continuing in disconcerting ways. Thus, in December 2016, Apple removed *The New York Times'* applications for English and Chinese content from its store accessible in China.⁴¹ This is the first known instance of Apple doing this to a major U.S. outlet rather than an overseas Chinese dissident initiative. Second, in January 2017, a particularly negative article appeared in the China Watch supplement in the print editions of the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*.⁴² The commentary targeted the New York-based Shen Yun Performing Arts company and Falun Gong, practiced by many of its performers. The article used terms that demonize Shen Yun and Falun Gong, mimicking language in state run propaganda inside China, while encouraging readers to boycott the classical Chinese dance show scheduled to perform in New York and Washington that month. While past

editions of China Watch have mostly portrayed the advantages of investing in China or occasionally taken a strongly nationalistic tone regarding the South China Sea, this is the first known case of potential hate speech against a U.S.-based Chinese dissident group, arts company, or religious minority being highlighted on its pages.⁴³

In a more positive development, the use of certain tactics has been somewhat mitigated—partly due to the U.S. government consistently voicing concerns with Chinese officials. Thus, although American journalist Paul Mooney, whose visa renewal was denied in November 2013, remains outside China⁴⁴, several *New York Times* reporters have been able to return to the country or take up new posts since 2014.⁴⁵

- 2) **Adaptation to changing technology environment:** As the internet and social media have increased in their importance as a source of information and media companies have explored their own tactics for overcoming websites blocked in China, the CCP's propaganda and censorship tactics have correspondingly adapted. For example, in March 2015, a U.S.-based international code-sharing site Github that also hosts websites blocked in China, was hit by a massive denial-of-service attack later traced to Chinese government servers and attributed to a new cyberattack tool researchers called the "Great Cannon."⁴⁶ Among the Github pages apparently targeted in the attack was one featuring a copy of *The New York Times* Chinese-language website.⁴⁷ In another example, the Toronto-based Citizen Lab reported in November 2016 that at least some censorship on Tencent's popular instant messaging application WeChat extends beyond China's borders.⁴⁸ Notably, users who first create accounts inside China are still subject to Chinese censorship standards like keyword filtering even after they leave the country and link their account to a new international phone number. This also affects users in the United States. WeChat is fairly popular among Chinese Americans, as evidenced by its use to organize protests in several U.S. cities in February 2016 over the conviction of a Chinese American New York City police officer for manslaughter.⁴⁹

Lastly, pro-government internet trolls often referred to as the "50 cent party" have become more active in the overseas Chinese internet environment. Chen Pokong remarked that videos on YouTube of a popular political talk show he hosts are now frequently targeted with similarly worded comments accusing him of being a traitor or insulting his personal appearance.⁵⁰

- 3) **Fine-tuning media expansion tactics:** As Chinese state media have encountered challenges gaining a foothold in the non-Chinese language market in the United States, the party-state appears to be trying to refine its approach. Some of these changes are semantic, such as rebranding CCTV America as CGTN in December 2016. Others are more

operational and may include trying to better implement Xi’s instructions to use multimedia content and a variety of platforms to reach target audiences.

In her article, Brady also notes that “foreign-propaganda activities are increasingly conducted as business transactions,” and that there may be an attempt to shift from “borrowing the boat” to “buying the boat” by purchasing stakes in or acquiring U.S.-based media or cultural enterprises.⁵¹ This strategy is partly evident in the failed 2010 bid by The Southern Daily Group to purchase *Newsweek*⁵² and in the CRI example in the Reuters investigation, where a company partly owned by a Chinese-state media outlet purchased some radio stations in addition to leasing airtime.

These adjustments match calls by Xi Jinping in his August 2013 and February 2016 speeches to propaganda cadres and state media to “use innovative outreach methods” and that “Wherever the readers are, wherever the viewers are, that is where propaganda reports must extend their tentacles.”⁵³

IV. The Impact and Limits of Beijing’s Influence

As the Chinese party-state invests billions of dollars a year into its foreign propaganda and media censorship efforts, one of the most important questions that emerges is: how effective are these tactics at achieving their aims in the United States?

The answer is mixed. Some aspects of these initiatives have been remarkably effective in ways that raise serious concerns about their political and economic implications. Other elements have been much less effective, triggering some of the adjustments outlined above.

Three ways in which the CCP’s efforts have evidently been effective in enhancing the prominence of state-run media outlets or narratives, while negatively impacting media freedom and access to information in the United States are:

- 1) **Establishing dominance over Chinese-language media—especially television:** Chinese state media or pro-Beijing private outlets are more influential today than they were twenty years ago when many Chinese Americans got their news from relatively independent papers or radio/television stations based out of Hong Kong or Taiwan.⁵⁴ The CCP’s ability to influence the media consumed by Chinese Americans is especially evident from available data regarding cable television. Based on August 2016 data, CCTV News is available in 90.7 million cable-viewing households in the United States. Although this figure far exceeds the number of Chinese Americans (estimated at 4-5 million in the recent census), it does indicate that Chinese speaking households pretty much anywhere in the United States are able to watch CCTV. The next most widely available station is the

Hong Kong-based pro-Beijing Phoenix TV (79.5 million households) and the pro-China Taiwanese station CTI (71.6 million households). By contrast, the pro-independence Taiwanese station ETTV is available in just 12.3 million households and the New York-based New Tang Dynasty TV, founded by Falun Gong practitioners, is available in only 5.9 million households.⁵⁵ This imbalance does not appear to be accidental. In a January 2017 submission to the Federal Communications Commission, NTDTV notes that some U.S. cable companies have not even been willing to meet with their representatives. And in at least one incident in 2009, Chinese embassy officials threatened an RCN executive who was arranging with NTDTV for the channel to be aired in the Washington DC area.⁵⁶ CCTV's dominance over the cable TV market in the United States is especially significant because of the importance of television as a source of information among Chinese American households. According to a 2015 Nielsen report, 78 percent of Chinese Americans speak a language other than English at home and at least half of Asian American watch television in a language other than English (this is likely more for Chinese speakers but data on that subpopulation was not available).⁵⁷

- 2) Provoking self-censorship and editorial shifts:** Perhaps the most high-profile example of this in recent years was when, in November 2013, Bloomberg executives reportedly killed a story about wealthy entrepreneur Wang Jianlin and his ties to the Chinese leadership. The company's chairman hinted in subsequent remarks that the firm would not be pursuing similar investigations in the future after it suffered reprisals over a 2012 story about Xi Jinping's family wealth.⁵⁸ The ramifications for U.S. readers of such self-censorship surrounding reporting on a businessman like Wang have become more significant as he has personally begun investing in the film and entertainment industry in the United States.⁵⁹ In October 2016, it was discovered that Bloomberg's website had placed its June 2012 story about Xi behind a paywall, even as another award-winning 2012 article about poverty in India remained accessible to all visitors.⁶⁰

A detailed 2016 PEN America report about foreign news organizations operating in China found that Chinese government pressure had led to an increase in internal vetting of stories that could be politically sensitive, with the result that "the story gets softened," spiked, or published with a delay. The study also found that news organizations were often more proactive in self-censoring coverage on Chinese-language websites compared to English ones. Chinese-language editions tended to be more focused on economics, business, and lifestyle stories than politics. In some cases, articles only appeared on the English websites of outlets but not on their Chinese version—such as reporting by outlets like Reuters and *Fortune* with regards to Chinese leaders named in the leaked Panama Papers published in April 2016.⁶¹ Such omissions affect not only readers in China but also Chinese speakers in the United States and elsewhere.

Chen Pokong has relayed less well-known incidents in the Chinese-language sphere. In 2010, access to his blog on a New York based news website was blocked after it opened an office in Beijing. Since 2009, the hostess of a political talk radio show in Los Angeles has suspiciously redirected the discussion when he raised points related to incidents of abuse or corruption in China. More recently, he reports observing a shift in the tone of editorials in a prominent Taiwanese-owned Chinese newspaper in the United States, resulting in commentaries that tend to be more supportive of the Chinese government's position on issues like the South China Sea or North Korea and more critical of the U.S. government than in the past.⁶²

3) Imposing financial difficulties on disfavored media: By the evening of October 25, 2012, after China blocked the *New York Times'* English and new Chinese-language websites in retribution for a story about then-Premier Wen Jiabao's family wealth,⁶³ the entire media company's stock had fallen by 20 percent compared to 24 hours earlier.⁶⁴ Over the following months it returned to its previous levels but the example highlights how censorship in China can negatively impact the financial viability of a major U.S. paper. Since then, the repeated obstructions the *Times* has faced regarding its Chinese-language content—including Apple's recent removal of its app from stores accessible in China—have likely had other economic ramifications. In particular, circulation and readership figures suffer as each new round of obstacles is imposed, making finding and retaining advertisers more difficult.

Such manipulated competition for advertising is evident among Chinese diaspora media in the United States as well. Certainly the imbalanced reach of television stations to cable viewers as described above renders CCTV or Phoenix TV a more attractive avenue for advertisers wishing to reach the Chinese American consumer market than their competitors who are more critical of the CCP. More broadly, many businesses in the Chinese community are reticent to advertise with outlets that take a more critical stance towards the Chinese government, and more inclined to advertise in strongly pro-Beijing papers like *China Press*, either because of direct or indirect pressure from consular officials.

In spite of these and other examples, **there are clear limits to Beijing's influence.** Media outlets in the United States daily put out news that the CCP would likely prefer hidden, and the plight of prominent Chinese activists has received much American media and policymaker attention.

Various factors—from market pressures to journalistic integrity to independent courts—serve as countervailing forces to CCP influence. Media executives and advertisers in North America have boldly refused Chinese pressures despite potential reprisals. Targeted media have developed creative ways to disseminate their content to millions in China and within the United States. For instance, following Bloomberg’s killing of the story about Wang Jianlin, the *New York Times* hired the key reporter and subsequently published its own exposé in April 2015.⁶⁵ Even after the *Times*’ application on Apple was blocked, a different application available to Android users via a less easily censored avenue is still reaching readers in China.

Other CCP initiatives have not entirely achieved their objectives, particularly in parts of the market that remain more evenly competitive. Notably, several media outlets founded by American Falun Gong adherents have professionalized and expanded their programming over the past decade, which appears to have yielded fruit in terms of listeners and viewers. Thus, one of the most popular Chinese-language radio stations in the San Francisco Bay Area is the non-profit *Sound of Hope*, owned by local Falun Gong practitioners and known for broadcasting news about human rights abuses in China, hosting political talk shows critical of the CCP, and providing information that can help new immigrants learn about American values and assimilate to life in the United States.⁶⁶ Similarly, an examination of website ranking on Alexa reveals that *New Tang Dynasty TV*’s Chinese-language website significantly outranks Xinhua News Agency and CCTV within the United States (ranked 947th, 2,103rd, and 2,475th respectively).⁶⁷ *Voice of America*’s online political discussion shows in Chinese have also gained a following of tens of thousands of regular viewers.⁶⁸

In the English-language sphere, it would appear that for the most part, many Americans are not attracted to or convinced by Chinese government propaganda, particularly when its state-run origins are evident. An examination of CGTN America’s presence on social media websites like YouTube and Facebook reveals relatively low numbers of followers and viewers, ones that pale in comparison to major U.S. television networks or initiatives like NTDTV’s English-language programming. Most CGTN America videos on YouTube and posts on Facebook garner just a few dozen views or comments, sometimes reaching several hundred viewers. One of the channel’s most popular YouTube videos—which garnered 896,947 views over the past year—is about the happy experience of being a panda nanny, an example of content that provokes a “feel good” reaction to China but is not necessarily incisive political propaganda.⁶⁹ By comparison, CNN videos about China on YouTube⁷⁰ and *China Uncensored*, an English-language parody news show about China by NTDTV (whose application was also recently blocked by Apple in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan)⁷¹, routinely gain tens of thousands of views, with the most popular items reaching several million hits.⁷²

Similarly, despite the China Watch insert calling for a boycott of Shen Yun, many of its performances throughout the United States were sold out.

More broadly, recent public opinion surveys indicate that more Americans have an unfavorable view of China today compared to ten years ago. This negativity covers topics like China's human rights policies, cyberattacks, and impact on global pollution, alongside economic concerns.⁷³

Despite these limits on the Chinese government's media influence efforts in the United States, the current and potential future impact of the tactics deployed should not be underestimated. As noted above, they impose a significant and potentially debilitating economic burden for targeted U.S. media outlets. Meanwhile, the heavy influence of Chinese state media on Chinese-language speakers, particularly via the television market, could have significant political implications, as millions of Chinese voters might be influenced by biased state media coverage of the United States.

In the medium to long term, as relationships of economic dependence between the Chinese government and U.S. media outlets increase, this opens the door that pressure to self-censor on certain topics will be more effective. Lastly, should some kind of military confrontation erupt between the United States and China in the future, the avenues of dissemination and control over key nodes in the information flow that the Chinese government has developed inside the United States could be deployed in ways that more directly undermine U.S. national security.

Future outlook

As the above analysis suggests, the Chinese party-state has thus far displayed an ability to adapt to changing conditions in order to increase the effectiveness of its influence over the U.S. media landscape in both English and Chinese. From this perspective, if certain efforts do not yield the desired results while others do, it is likely that at least some resources will be re-oriented in the latter direction. This could manifest in a number of ways.

- First, new methods for insinuating state media content via existing outlets may appear. This could encompass a progression to content-sharing agreements between certain English-language outlets and Chinese state media, as has occurred in the United Kingdom.⁷⁴
- Second, Chinese state media and other content providers may try to identify new and subtle ways to incorporate their content into mainstream information flows via more sophisticated online and social media strategies. This could prove effective at a time

when many Americans get their news from social media and may not pay attention to its original source.

- Third, the CCP may try to more aggressively transition—within the constraints of U.S. law—from “borrowing the boat” to “buying the boat,” particularly via individual entrepreneurs either in the United States (as the example of James Su and CRI demonstrates) or in China (as Jack Ma’s purchase of Hong Kong’s *South China Morning Post* typifies). If successful, this could be very effective, as Brady notes:

In the long run, the new strategy of “buying the boat”—taking over Western cultural and media outlets—may turn out to be the most effective way of improving China’s “international face” and constraining international debate about China-related issues.⁷⁵

Such adjustments are likely to occur alongside continued efforts to stifle the dissemination channels and reporting of U.S.-based media deemed critical of the CCP. In addition, the trend of content that appears more aggressively pro-China, anti-American, or inflammatory vis-à-vis CCP critics may continue. Within China, several harshly anti-Western propaganda videos have been produced in recent years, while forced confessions by detained lawyers and Hong Kong bookseller have appeared not only on CCTV but also on Phoenix, likely viewable from within the United States.

V. Recommendations for U.S. government and Congressional responses

Much is at stake as this transnational contestation unfolds. Independent media outlets facing Chinese reprisals experience rising costs and loss of advertising revenue in an already competitive and financially challenging industry. Individual reporters encounter restrictive editorial policies, threats to their livelihood, and even physical injury. News consumers in the United States are deprived of information for assessing the political stability of a major trading partner, responding to health and environmental crises, or taking action to support Chinese people’s quest for a freer and more just society. As China’s international role expands alongside a deep sense of CCP insecurity at home, these transnational confrontations will grow in importance, presenting both challenges and opportunities for those who wish to see the emergence of a freer and fairer market for China-related news in the United States.

As the United States government seeks to identify an effective response to the above developments, it faces several challenges. These include the subtle nature of Chinese government media influences and a lack of awareness among many policymakers to their

prevalence, as well as the deliberate secrecy attempted by entities involved and the presence of some American entities who stand to gain financially from certain tactics.

In practical terms, policy areas such as this tend to fall between the cracks of the U.S. government bureaucracy. Thus, an entity like the State Department, which might best understand the dangers and actors involved, is not able to address events that occur within the United States. Meanwhile, other government agencies that may be relevant to these issues—like the FCC or the Department of Justice—may lack the relevant expertise to identify and address threats.

Lastly, in seeking solutions to the challenges presented by expanding Chinese government propaganda and censorship in the United States, **it is critical that U.S. policymakers uphold democratic principles like freedom of expression**, rather than themselves arbitrarily constraining Americans' access to certain sources of information.

As policymakers chart a way forward in the face of this complex and multi-faceted environment, Freedom House recommends focusing on enforcement of existing legislation, initiatives to increase transparency about media ownership, and efforts to balance the playing field between indigenous U.S. outlets and Chinese state-supported competitors. A number of steps that the Trump Administration and Congress can take in these regards include:

- **Take diplomatic action:** The U.S. government should thoroughly investigate reports of Chinese diplomats pressuring editors, journalists, or advertisers in ways that constrain media freedom in the United States. The U.S. government should respond forcefully to confirmed cases of obstruction with diplomatic demarches and even expulsion of relevant personnel. This would send a strong signal that such behavior contravenes the norms of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and will not be tolerated.
- **Implement counter-propaganda act:** In December 2016, President Obama signed into law the *Countering Disinformation and Propaganda Act* as part of the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Among other provisions, the act calls for expansion of the Global Engagement Center at the State Department to enable greater interagency cooperation on this issue. It also includes a funding mechanism for civil society organizations, think tanks, and other experts to help identify and analyze new trends in foreign government propaganda and disinformation techniques related to China. The State Department should act quickly to implement the legislation, particularly its monitoring mechanisms. It should disburse relevant funds in a timely manner and include closer monitoring of the situation in the United States, including potential

purchases of American media outlets by companies or entrepreneurs with close ties to Chinese government entities.

- **Hold a Congressional hearing:** Congressional committees should hold their own hearing or investigation into the Chinese government's influence on media in the United States, including apparently anti-competitive actions taken by CCTV or Chinese government representatives that have resulted in their dominance over the Chinese-language cable television market or reduced advertising for competing U.S.-based news outlets.
- **Re-examine regulatory framework:** FCC regulations should be reassessed and possibly adjusted so that the United States' regulatory framework is better equipped to constrain some of the loopholes related to ownership stakes or unequal access opportunities that have enabled developments like CRI's broadcasts or CCTV's disproportionate dominance in cable household reach.
- **Enhance transparency:** In reviewing FCC rules, consideration should also be given to implementing requirements for greater transparency regarding foreign government ownership of media outlets or the labeling of paid content sponsored by foreign governments. This could result, for example, in China Watch supplements having to indicate that the original source of information—*China Daily*—is a Chinese state-owned media outlet.
- **Improve FARA enforcement:** At present, it would appear that the *Foreign Agents Registration Act* can encompass foreign state-owned media operating in the United States. A number of Chinese entities—like China Daily's distribution company—are indeed registered. But the number of people and entities registered from China seems to be remarkably few considering what we know about Chinese intelligence gathering and information warfare efforts. In practice, there appear to be loopholes in enforcement or definitions. These should be closed so that more publications transmitting Chinese-government propaganda and individuals working for agencies like Xinhua and *People's Daily* who are likely collecting intelligence on Chinese dissidents in the United States are encompassed.
- **Respond promptly to findings of CFIUS review:** In September 2016, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) sent a letter to members of Congress agreeing to examine whether the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) has sufficient legal powers to keep up with efforts of state-owned firms from China and elsewhere to buy strategic assets in the United States. The GAO said it would begin its review in four

months, meaning that the assessment should currently be underway.⁷⁶ Per the letter from members of Congress that prompted the review, the GAO should be including potential U.S. media acquisitions in its examination. Freedom House supports this review, particularly in light of the above discussion of a potential Chinese government transition to “buying the boat” in the form of acquiring U.S. media assets in order to conduct its foreign propaganda efforts. When the findings of the review are made public, Congress should rapidly take action on any legislative amendments that may be necessary to ensure that CFIUS has the power to review acquisitions of U.S. media companies by Chinese state-owned or affiliated firms.

¹ PEN America, *Darkened Screen: Constraints on Foreign Journalists in China*, September 22, 2016, https://pen.org/sites/default/files/PEN_foreign_journalists_report_FINAL_online%5B1%5D.pdf

² Koh Gui Qing and John Shiffman, “Beijing’s covert radio network airs China-friendly news across Washington, and the world,” Reuters, November 2, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/china-radio/>.

³ Katie Benner and Sui-Lee Wee, “Apple Removes New York Times Apps From Its Stores in China,” January 4, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/04/business/media/new-york-times-apps-apple-china.html>.

⁴ Larry Ong, “Epoch Times Inundated with Cyberattacks Believed to be from China,” *The Epoch Times*, March 1, 2017, <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/2229427-epoch-times-inundated-with-cyberattacks-believed-to-be-from-china>.

⁵ Sarah Cook, *The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship: How the Communist Party’s Media Restrictions Affect News Outlets Around the World*, October 22, 2013, The Center for International Media Assistance, National Endowment for Democracy, http://www.cima.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CIMA-China_Sarah%20Cook.pdf.

⁶ James Jiann Hua To, *Qiaowu: Extra-Territorial Policies for the Overseas Chinese* (Brill Academic Publishers: 2014); Anne-Marie Brady, “China’s Foreign Propaganda Machine,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 26(4), October 2015: 51-59.

⁷ James To, *Qiaowu*.

⁸ Interview with Chen Pokong, April 24, 2017.

⁹ Anne-Marie Brady, *Making the Foreign Serve China: Managing Foreigners in the People’s Republic* (Rowman & Littlefield: 2016).

¹⁰ James To, *Qiaowu*.

¹¹ Ashley Esarey, “Testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission Hearing on ‘China’s Narratives regarding National Security Policy,’” March 10, 2011, <https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/3.10.11Esarey.pdf>.

¹² Statement of Mr. Yonglin Chen, First Secretary and Consul for Political Affairs, Former Chinese Consulate, Sydney, Australia, Appendix 2, “Falun Gong and China’s Continuing War on Human Rights,” Joint Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations and the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on International Relations, 109th Cong. 49–50, July 21, 2005, <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-109hhrhg22579/pdf/CHRG-109hhrhg22579.pdf>.

¹³ These groups and related topics combine perceived threats to both CCP rule and China’s territorial integrity, as well as past and present human rights violations whose widespread discussion in China could

severely damage the party's legitimacy. Sensitivities regarding Tibet and Xinjiang typically involve challenges to official narratives about the regions' history, advocacy of their independence, independent investigations of recent unrest, and sympathetic coverage of leading figures like the Dalai Lama or Rebiya Kadeer. The party's hostility towards Falun Gong, a spiritual and meditation practice that became popular during the 1990s, dates to 1999 when then CCP head Jiang Zemin and other hardliners viewed its informal nationwide network and spiritual worldview as a threat to party rule and launched a campaign to eradicate it. Since then, sympathetic portrayals of the practice, independent investigations of human rights abuses, and Falun Gong practitioners' nonviolent activism have become among the most censored topics in China. The CCP also remains highly sensitive to discussion of the 1989 Beijing Massacre, in which the military opened fire on unarmed prodemocracy demonstrators, killing between several hundred and several thousand. Movement leaders from the period who continued their activism in exile remain sensitive figures, while new generations of activists and commentators periodically run afoul of party censors, particularly when they proactively challenge one-party rule or advocate for a democratic system in China. Lastly, the Chinese government's position is that Taiwan is a province of China despite its de facto features of sovereignty. Recognition of Taiwan as an independent state internationally or calls for independence by Taiwanese politicians typically draws a strong response. The CCP often conditions foreign aid and other cooperation on counterparts' affirmation of a "One China" position.

¹⁴ Sarah Cook, *The Battle for China's Spirit: Religious Revival, Repression, and Resistance under Xi Jinping*, Freedom House, February 2017,

https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/FH_ChinasSprit2016_FULL_FINAL_140pages_compressed.pdf.

¹⁵ PEN America, *Darkened Screen*.

¹⁶ Stuart Elliott, "Sign of Arrival, for Xinhua, is 60 Feet Tall," *New York Times*, July 25, 2011,

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/26/business/media/xinhuas-giant-sign-to-blink-on-in-times-square.html>.

¹⁷ "China's state broadcaster CCTV rebrands international networks as CGTN in global push," Associated Press, December 31, 2016, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2058429/chinas-state-broadcaster-cctv-rebrands-international>.

¹⁸ This sum was calculated from data in a network carriage report provided by SNL Kagan, August 2016. Detailed data on file with the author.

¹⁹ James To, *Qiaowu*.

²⁰ For example, one official report in 2013 noted that "in 2012 the Xi'an Newspaper Media Group and the municipal publicity department collaborated with Los Angeles-based *America Commercial News* to create a special report about Xi'an as part of Xi'an Newspaper Media Group's 'highly effective' boat borrowing strategy." http://news.gmw.cn/newspaper/2013-06/27/content_1664012.htm (accessed August 2013)

²¹ James To, *Qiaowu*.

²² Koh Gui Qing and John Shiffman, "Beijing's covert radio network."

²³ Reuters, "Covert radio network."

²⁴ See page 9 of this testimony and footnote 55 for data that served the basis for this assertion.

²⁵ Philip Pan, "Making Waves, Carefully, on the Air in China," *Washington Post*, September 19, 2005,

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/09/18/AR2005091801597_4.html.

²⁶ All of the broadcasts occurred during February 2016. Guo Minhai:

http://news.ifeng.com/a/20160228/47620482_0.shtml; Liu Bo:

http://news.ifeng.com/a/20160228/47620482_0.shtml; Lam Wing-kee:

http://news.ifeng.com/a/20160228/47620482_0.shtml; Cheung Jiping:

http://news.ifeng.com/a/20160228/47620482_0.shtml; Lee Bo: Karen Cheung and Tom Grundy, "Detained bookseller Lee Bo says he will 'give up' UK residency in Chinese TV 'interview,'" *Hong Kong Free Press*, February 29, 2016, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2016/02/29/breaking-detained-bookseller-lee-bo-says-he-will-give-up-uk-citizenship-in-chinese-tv-interview/>.

²⁷ Philip Pan, "Making Waves."

²⁸ See the International Media chapter in *The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship* for details and references.

-
- ²⁹ See the “Hong Kong and Taiwan” and “Chinese Diaspora Media” chapters in *The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship* for details.
- ³⁰ See the “Offshore Chinese Media” chapter in *The Long Shadow of Chinese Censorship* for details.
- ³¹ Anne-Marie Brady, “China’s Foreign Propaganda Machine.”
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ “Chinese President Xi Jinping visits with CCTV America via video call,” CGTN, February 19, 2016, <https://america.cgtv.com/2016/02/19/chinese-president-xi-jinping-visits-with-cctv-america-via-video-call>.
- ³⁴ Anne-Marie Brady, “China’s Foreign Propaganda Machine.”
- ³⁵ Anne-Marie Brady, “China’s Foreign Propaganda Machine.”
- ³⁶ Interview with Chen Pokong, April 24, 2017.
- ³⁷ Photos from CCTV America’s February 2016 video conference with Xi Jinping, for example, show relatively few Chinese among the staff. The article also notes: “Ninety percent of CCTV America’s staff members are from countries other than China.” CGTN, “Xi visits with CCTV America.”
- ³⁸ PEN America, *Darkened Screen*; Emily Feng, “China Blocks Economist and Time Websites, Apparently over Xi Jinping Articles,” *New York Times*, April 8, 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/09/world/asia/china-blocks-economist-time.html>.
- ³⁹ Robert Delaney, “Plug pulled on US interview with wanted Chinese tycoon Guo Wengui,” *South China Morning Post*, April 20, 2017, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2089000/plug-pulled-us-interview-wanted-chinese-tycoon-guo>.
- ⁴⁰ “Prominent Communist Party Critic Guo Speaks with VOA China Service,” VOA News, April 201, 2017, <https://www.voanews.com/a/prominent-communist-party-critic-guo-speaks-with-voa-china-service/3818031.html>.
- ⁴¹ Katie Benner and Sui-Lee Wee, “Apple removes New York Times Apps.”
- ⁴² Leeshai Lemish, “China Daily Insert Disguised as News in WaPo, WSJ, Others,” *Who’s Afraid of Shen Yun?* (blog), February 15, 2017; Larry Ong, “Paid Insert in Wall Street Journal Carries Chinese Propaganda,” *The Epoch Times*, January 18, 2017. <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/2211937-paid-insert-in-wall-street-journal-carries-chinese-propaganda/>; A copy of the insert is on file with the author.
- ⁴³ Terri Marsh, “Advertising that’s not worth the human cost,” *Washington Post*, March 10, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/advertising-thats-not-worth-the-human-cost/2017/03/09/e0652998-0352-11e7-9d14-9724d48f5666_story.html?utm_term=.e1bc1d80820e.
- ⁴⁴ Harrison Jacobs, “Journalist Paul Mooney on Why He Was Blocked From China And How Things Could Get ‘Much, Much Worse,’” *Business Insider*, November 21, 2013, <http://www.businessinsider.com/paul-mooney-on-being-denied-chinese-visa-2013-11>.
- ⁴⁵ Freedom House, “China,” *Freedom of the Press 2016*, April 2016, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2016/china>.
- ⁴⁶ Citizen Lab, “China’s Great Cannon,” April 10, 2015, <https://citizenlab.org/2015/04/chinas-great-cannon/>.
- ⁴⁷ Eva Dou, “U.S. Coding Website GitHub Hit with Cyberattack,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 2015, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-coding-website-github-hit-with-cyberattack-1427638940>.
- ⁴⁸ Citizen Lab, “One App, Two Systems: How WeChat uses one censorship policy in China and another internationally,” November 30, 2016, <https://citizenlab.org/2016/11/wechat-china-censorship-one-app-two-systems/>.
- ⁴⁹ Julie Makinen, “Chinese social media platform plays a role in U.S. rallies for NYPD officer,” February 24, 2016. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-coding-website-github-hit-with-cyberattack-1427638940>
- ⁵⁰ Interview with Chen Pokong, April 24, 2017.
- ⁵¹ Anne-Marie Brady, “China’s Foreign Propaganda Machine.”
- ⁵² Bill Bishop, “Chinese Investors Tried to Buy Newsweek,” June 17, 2010, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/china/2010/06/17/chinese-investors-tried-to-buy-newsweek/#45e0da492c27>.
- ⁵³ David Bandurski, “How Xi Jinping Views the News,” *Medium* (blog), March 2, 2016, <https://medium.com/china-media-project/how-the-president-views-the-news-2bee482e1d48>.
- ⁵⁴ James To

-
- ⁵⁵ These sums are calculated from data in a network carriage report provided by SNL Kagan, August 2016. Detailed data on file with the author.
- ⁵⁶ New Tang Dynasty Television, "Promoting the Availability of Diverse and Independent Sources of Video Programming," submission to the Federal Communications Commission [MB Docket no. 16-41; FCC 16-129], January 26, 2017, <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filing/1012763254871>.
- ⁵⁷ Nielsen, "Asian Americans: Culturally Connected and Forging the Future: The Asian-American Consumer 2015 Report," June 2015, http://nielsencommunity.com/report_files/Asian_Consumer_Report_2016_Final.pdf.
- ⁵⁸ Howard French, "Bloomberg's Folly," *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 2014, http://archives.cjr.org/feature/bloombergs_folly.php; Barbara Demick, "The Times, Bloomberg News, and the Richest Man in China," *The New Yorker*, May 5, 2015.
- ⁵⁹ Patrick Brzeski, "Wanda Chairman Reveals Ambitious Plan to Invest Billions in 'All Six' Hollywood Studios," *Hollywood Reporter*, November 2, 2016, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/features/wanda-chairman-wang-jianlin-plans-invest-billions-hollywood-942854>.
- ⁶⁰ Mike Forsythe reported the discovery on his Twitter account. As of the time of writing, the June 2012 article remained accessible only to Bloomberg Professional Service Subscribers, while the September 2012 piece about India was freely available. <https://twitter.com/PekingMike/status/789374785901826048>; <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-06-29/xi-jinping-millionaire-relations-reveal-fortunes-of-elite> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-09-06/indias-poor-starve-as-politicians-steal-their-food> (Accessed April 27, 2017).
- ⁶¹ PEN America, *Darkened Screen*.
- ⁶² Interview with Chen Pokong, April 24, 2017.
- ⁶³ Keith Bradsher, "China Blocks Web Access to Times After Article," October 25, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/26/world/asia/china-blocks-web-access-to-new-york-times.html>.
- ⁶⁴ "The New York Times Company", Yahoo Finance, historical data for October 1-31, 2012, <http://finance.yahoo.com/quote/NYT/history?period1=1349064000&period2=1351656000&interval=1d&filter=history&frequency=1d>.
- ⁶⁵ Michael Forsythe, "Wang Jianlin, a Billionaire at the Intersection of Business and Power in China," *The New York Times*, April 28, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/29/world/asia/wang-jianlin-abillionaire-at-the-intersection-of-business-and-power-in-china.html>; Barbara Demick, "The Times, Bloomberg News, and the Richest Man in China."
- ⁶⁶ "Sound of Hope Radio," Member Directory, Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce (accessed April 27, 2017) http://www.svcoc.org/cgi-bin/DJmbr_showmbr.cgi?T=mbr-webcard.html&MBR=00543.
- ⁶⁷ NTDTV.com, Alexa rankings, <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/ntdtv.com> (accessed April 25, 2017); Xinhuanet.com, Alexa rankings, <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/xinhuanet.com> (accessed April 25, 2017); CCTV.com, Alexa rankings, <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/cctv.com> (accessed April 25, 2017).
- ⁶⁸ https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=voachinese+%E7%84%A6%E7%82%B9%E5%AF%B9%E8%AF%9D
- ⁶⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/c/cgtnamerica>
- ⁷⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/user/CNN/search?query=china>
- ⁷¹ Reporters Without Borders, "Apple TV censors 'China Uncensored' show," April 18, 2017, <https://rsf.org/en/news/apple-tv-censors-china-uncensored-show>.
- ⁷² <https://www.youtube.com/user/NTDChinaUncensored>
- ⁷³ Richard Wike, "Americans' Views of China Improve as Economic Concerns Ease," Pew Research Center, April 4, 2017, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/04/04/americans-views-of-china-improve-as-economic-concerns-ease/>; Dorothy Manevich, "Americans have grown more negative toward China over the past decade," Pew Research Center, February 10, 2017, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/02/10/americans-have-grown-more-negative-toward-china-over-past-decade/>.
- ⁷⁴ David Bond, "Mail Online to share content with People's Daily," *Financial Times*, August 12, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/c38c33b4-6089-11e6-ae3f-77baadeb1c93>.

⁷⁵ Anne-Marie Brady, “China’s Foreign Propaganda Machine.”

⁷⁶ David Alexander, “GAO to examine panel on foreign investment in U.S. strategic firms,” Reuters, October 3, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-deals-cfius-congress-idUSKCN1231YA>.