

How Do Americans View the Rising China?

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Theoretical and Empirical Salience

- Public opinion and foreign policy in the US
 - American citizens' coherent views on foreign policies
 - Public opinion on international affairs matters
 - Politicians shape public opinion on international affairs

- Salience of the China issue and Sino-US relations
 - Economic influence of China on the US
 - Presidential candidates' campaigns on the China issue
 - China's PR campaigns in the world
 - China's upgraded media campaign in the world

Key Questions

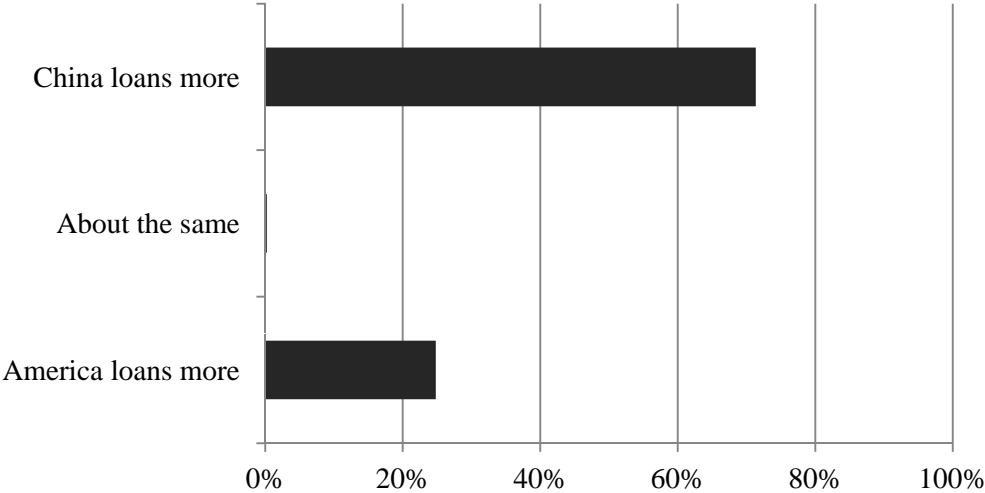
- Recognition of China's rise
 - Is it true that most American voters do not truly understand the significance of China as a rising and rivalrous power of the US?
 - Do they effectively perceive the rise of China?
- Multi-dimensional views of the rising China
 - What are their views of the socioeconomic, political, cultural performance of China, as well as China's influence and behavior in the international community?
 - What is their general feeling toward China and its development? How is it related to their views of China's performance in various aspects?
 - Does their exposure to China-related information in American media affect this general feeling?

Empirical Strategy and Innovations

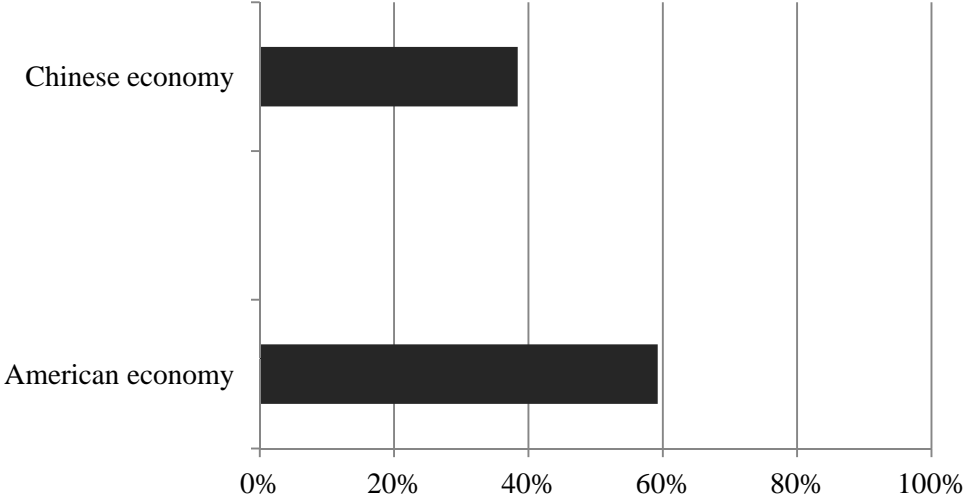
- Empirical strategy
 - Public opinion surveys
 - 2010 American Attitudes toward China Survey
- Innovations
 - Directly measure the perceived importance of the rising China (the cognitive foundation for further analysis)
 - Multiple aspects (beyond general measures) of China's image (relative salience of different aspects in shaping the general feeling)
 - Americans' acquisition of China-related information from different sources, as well as its influence

Perceived Significance of the Rising China (I)

A: Which country loans more to the other?

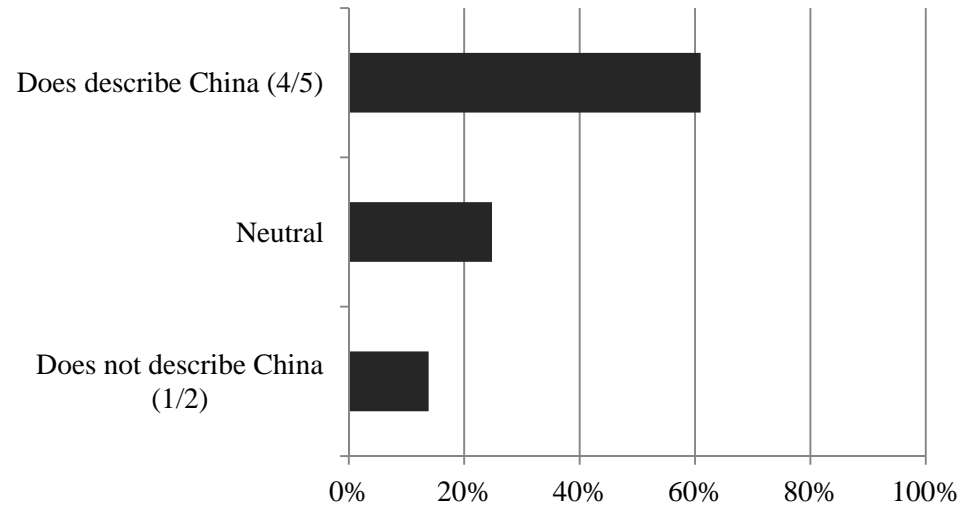


B: Whose economy will be harmed more?

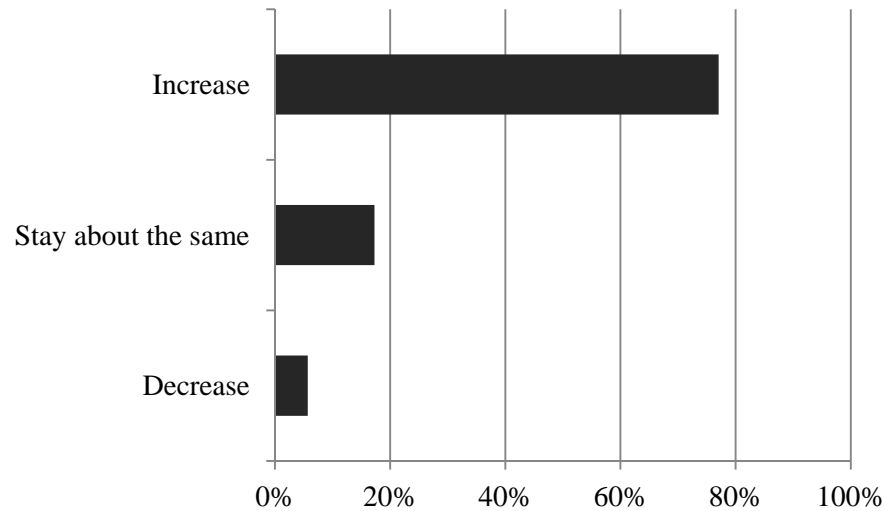


Perceived Significance of the Rising China (II)

C: Influential in world politics

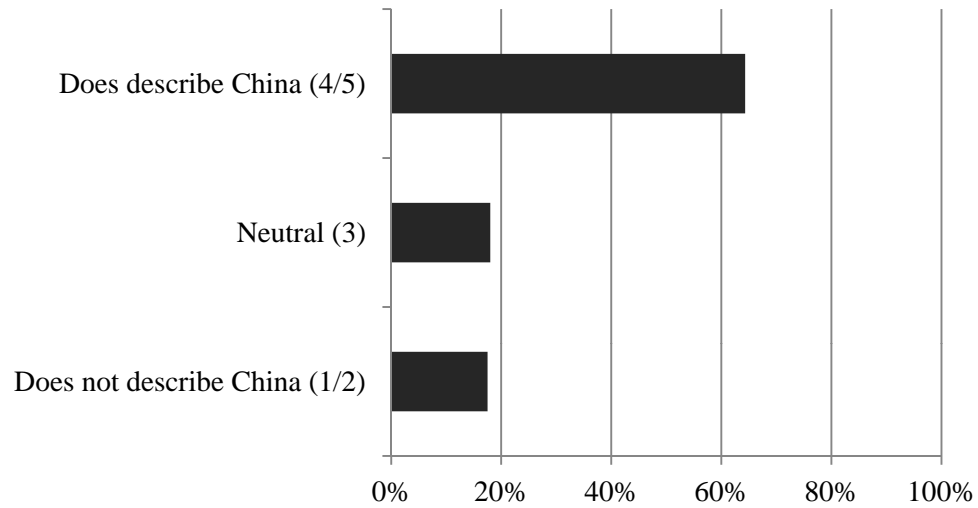


D: Influence in the world in ten years

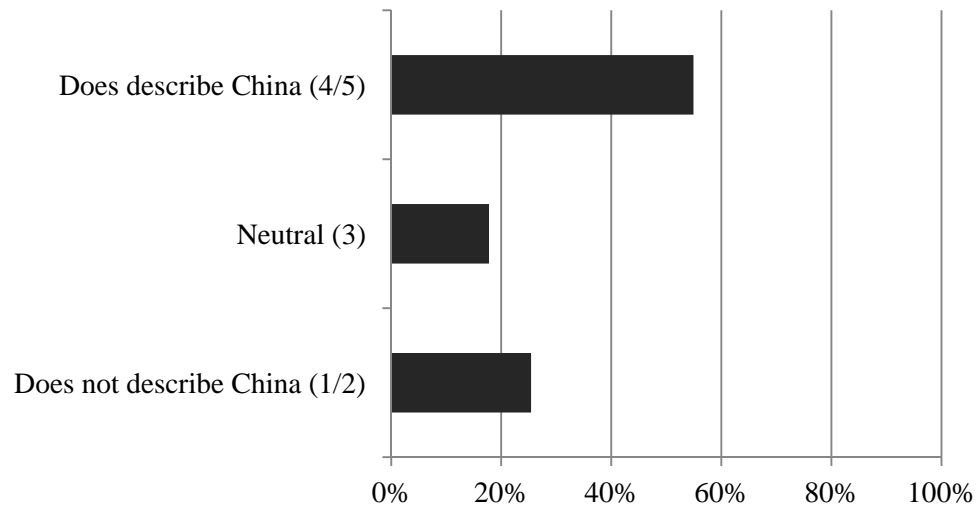


Different Aspects of China (I)

A: Internationally competitive economy

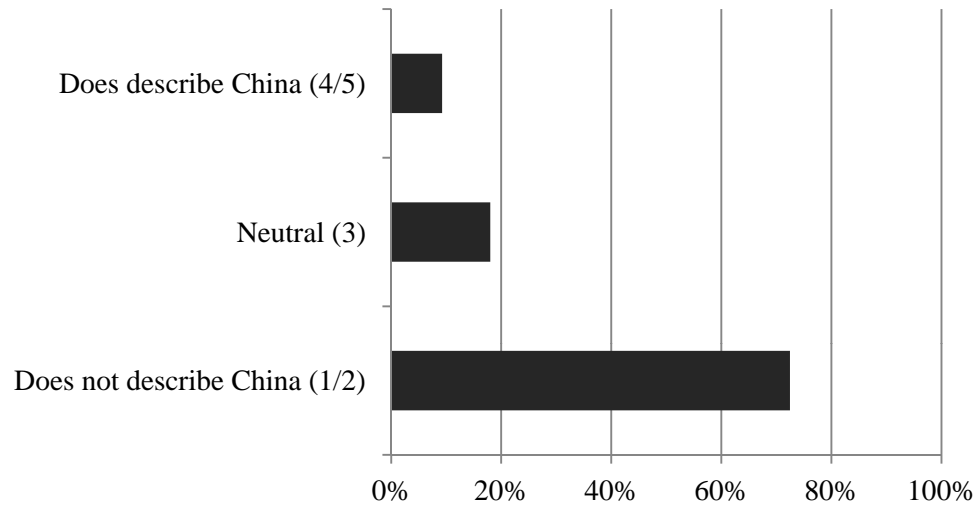


B: A political system serving its people's needs

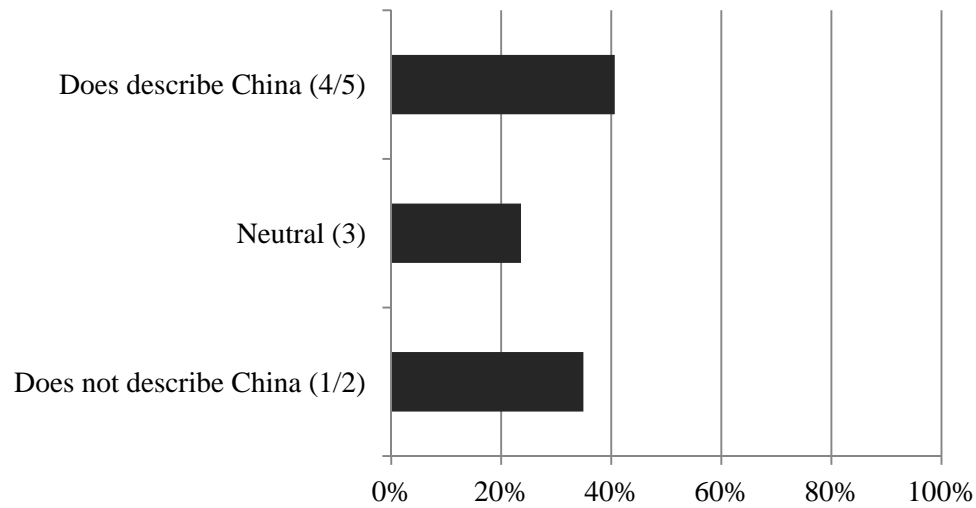


Different Aspects of China (II)

C: Appealing popular culture

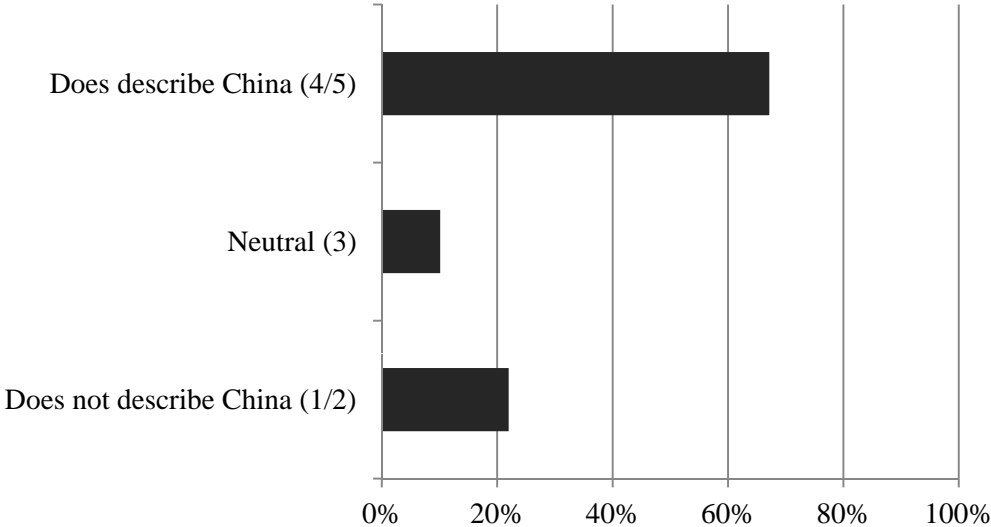


D: Rich cultural heritage

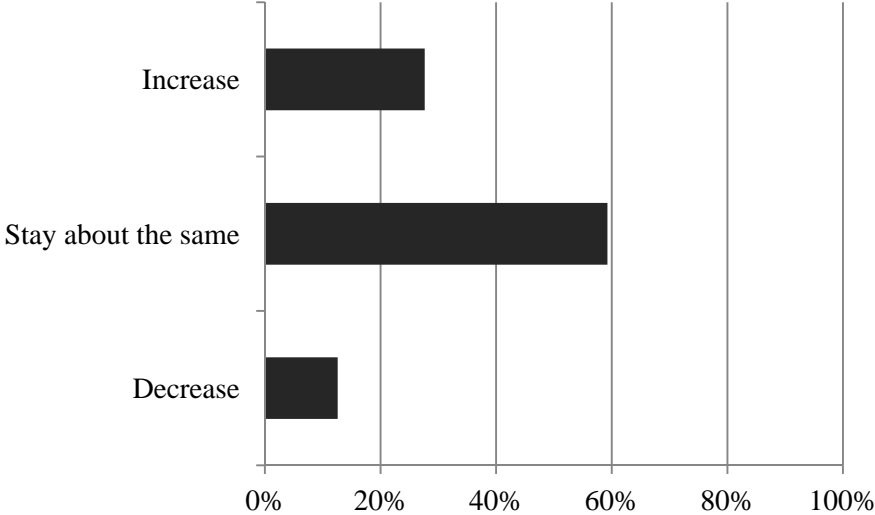


Different Aspects of China (III)

E: Dodging responsibility in the world

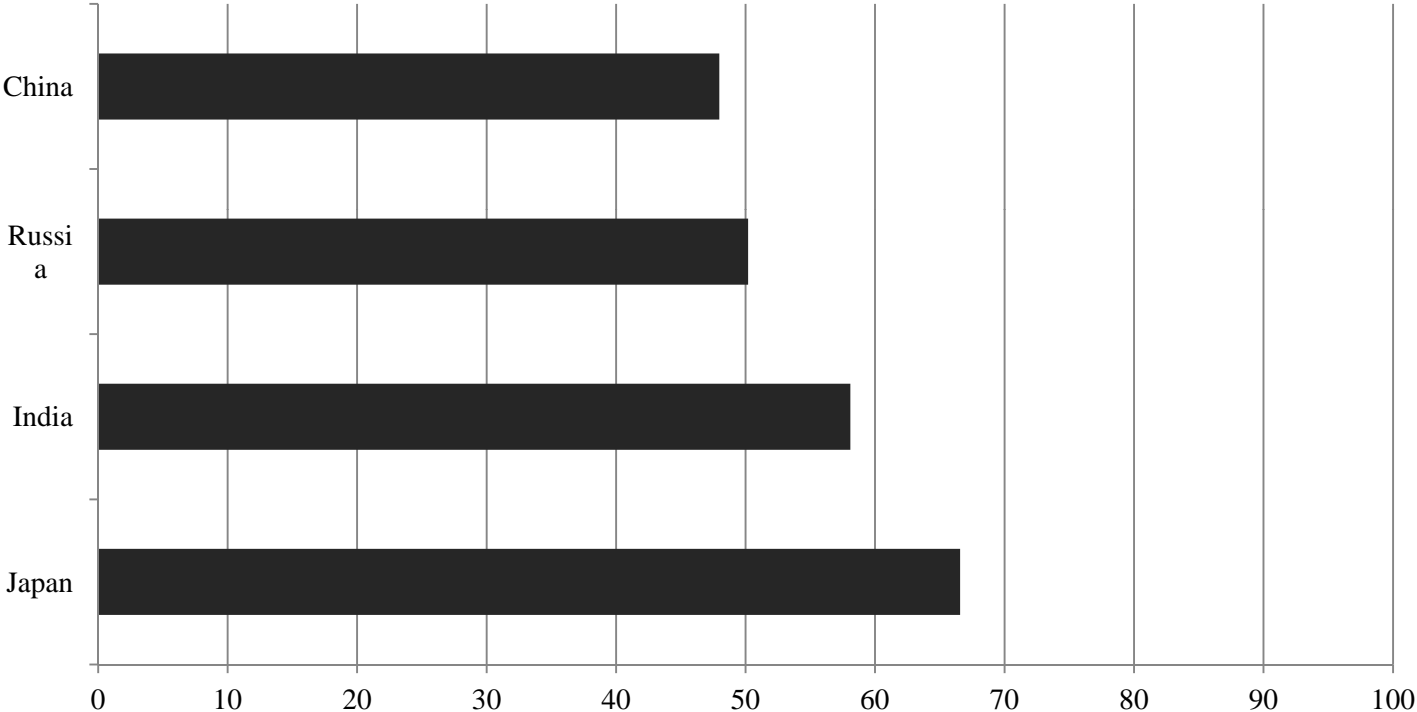


F: Democracy in ten years



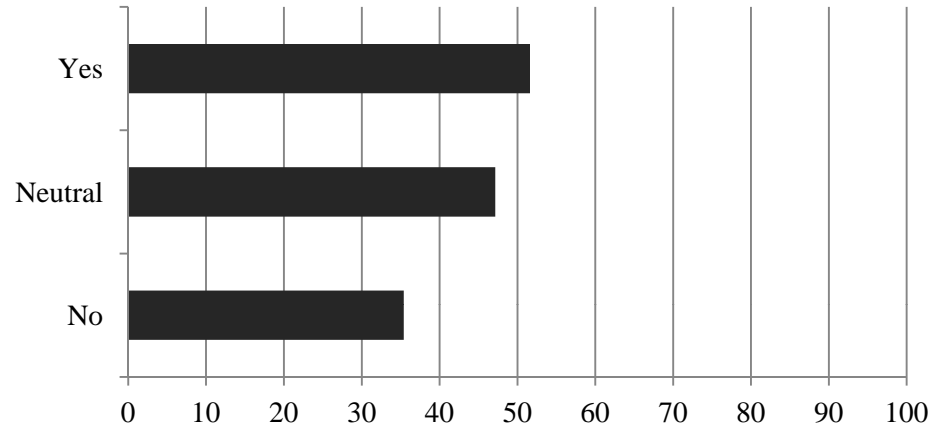
General Feeling toward China

Feeling thermometer toward foreign countries

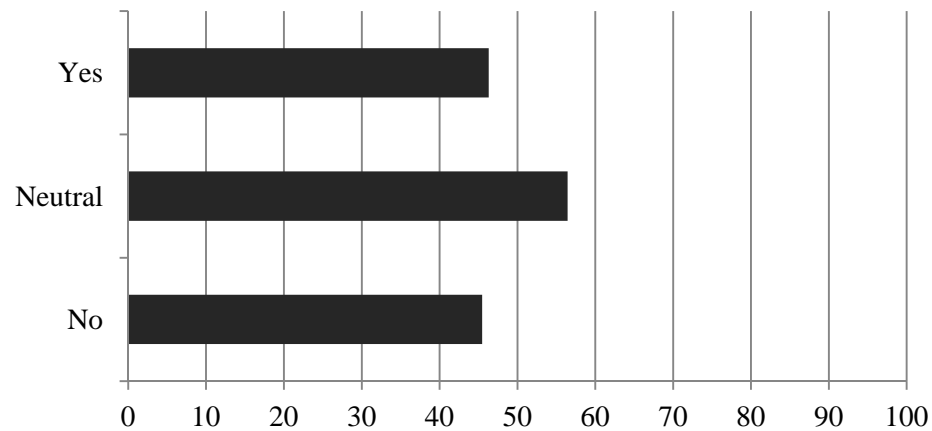


Different Aspects and General Feeling (I)

A: Feeling toward China by recognition of China's internationally competitive economy

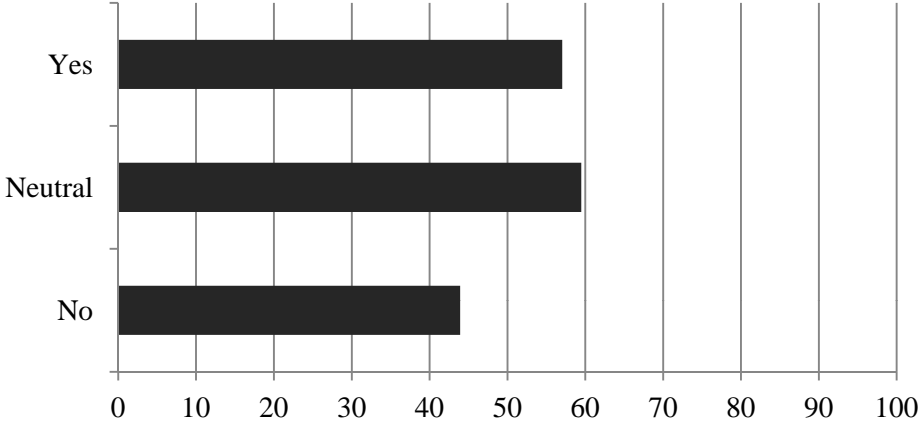


B: Feeling toward China by recognition of China's effective political system serving its people

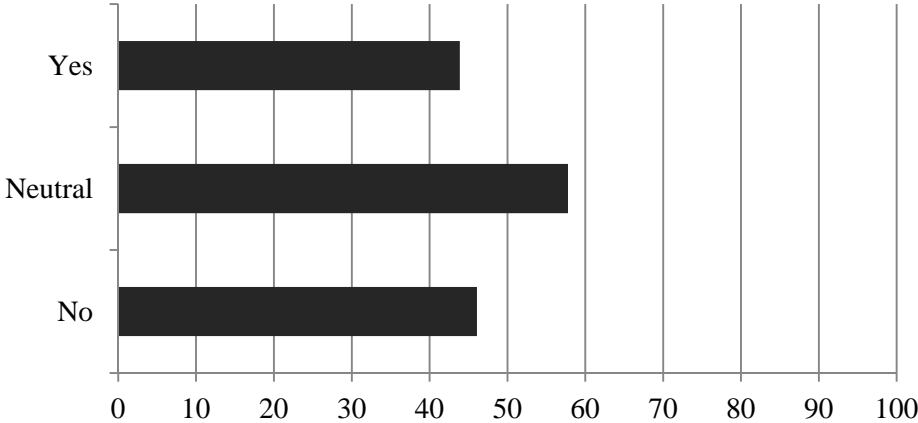


Different Aspects and General Feeling (II)

C: Feeling toward China by recognition of China's appealing popular culture

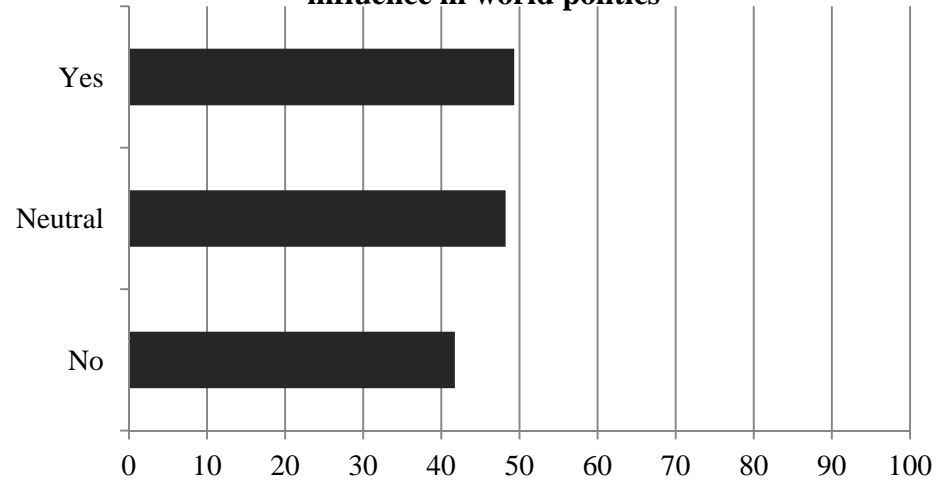


D: Feeling toward China by recognition of China's rich cultural heritage

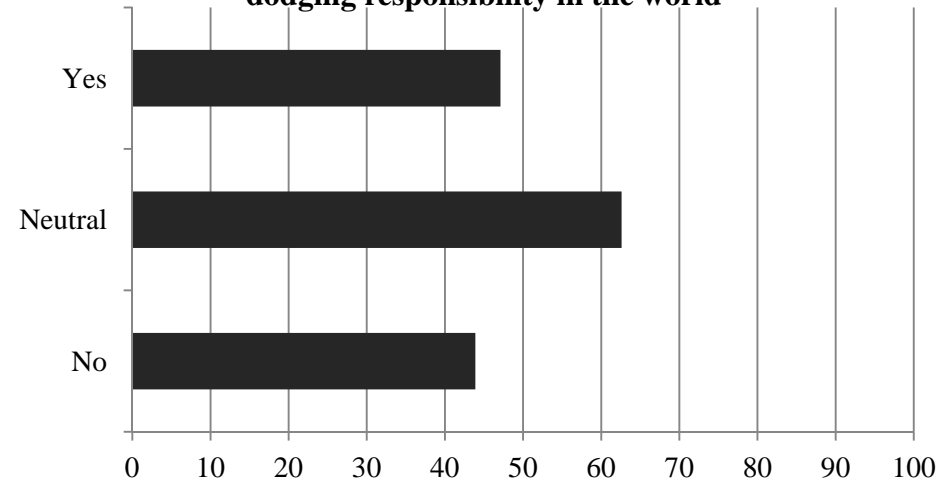


Different Aspects and General Feeling (III)

E: Feeling toward China by recognition of China's influence in world politics

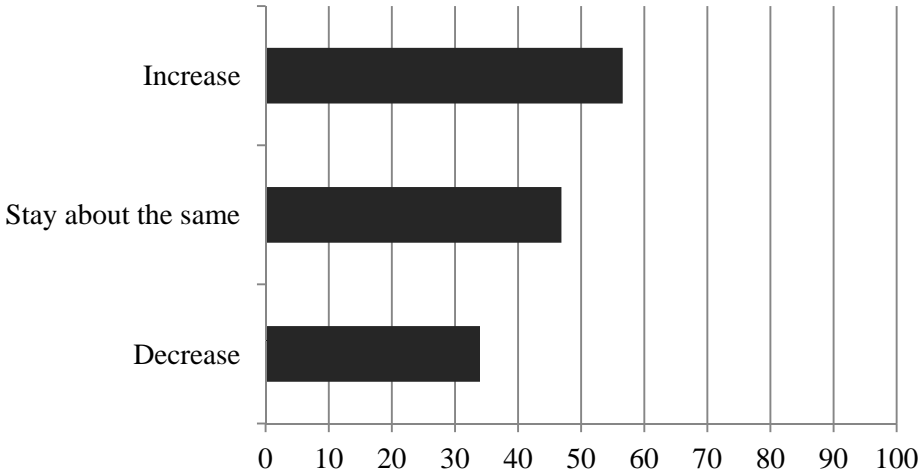


F: Feeling toward China by recognition of China's dodging responsibility in the world

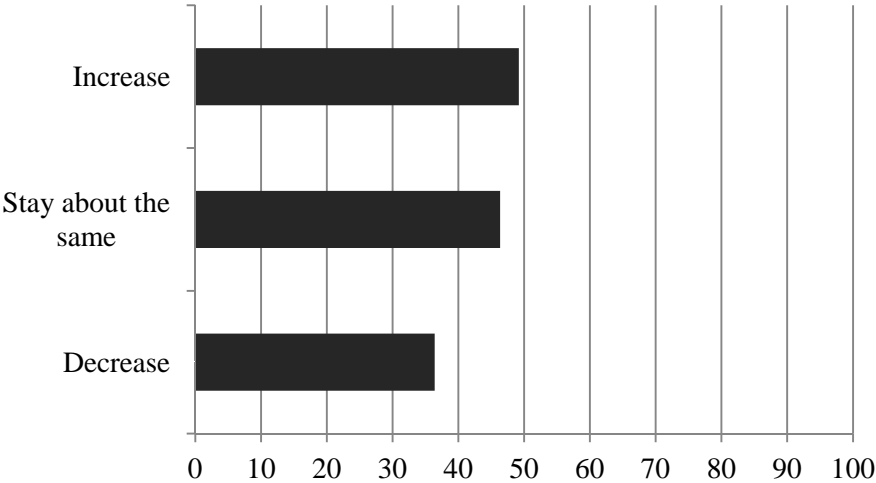


Prospective Evaluation and General Feeling

A: Feeling toward China by democracy evaluation

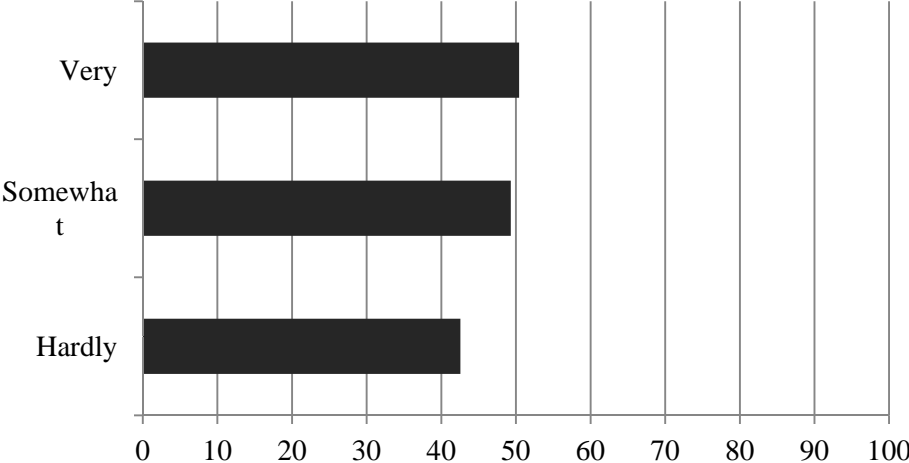


B: Feeling toward China by influence evaluation

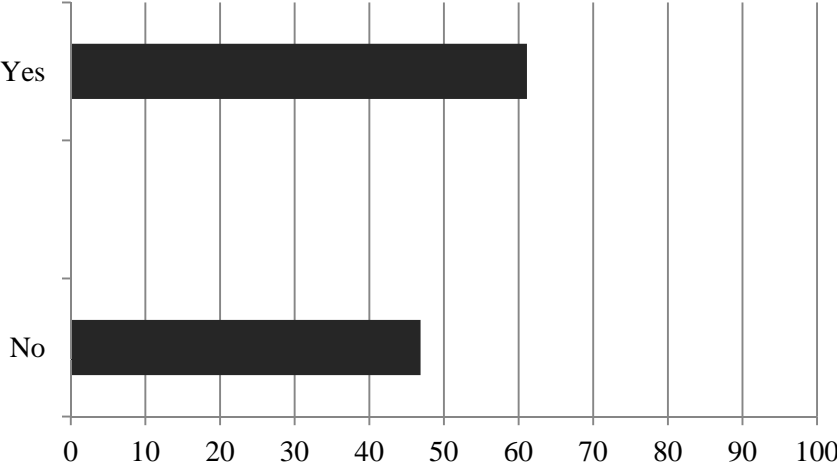


Information and General Feeling (I)

A: Feeling toward China by interest in China news

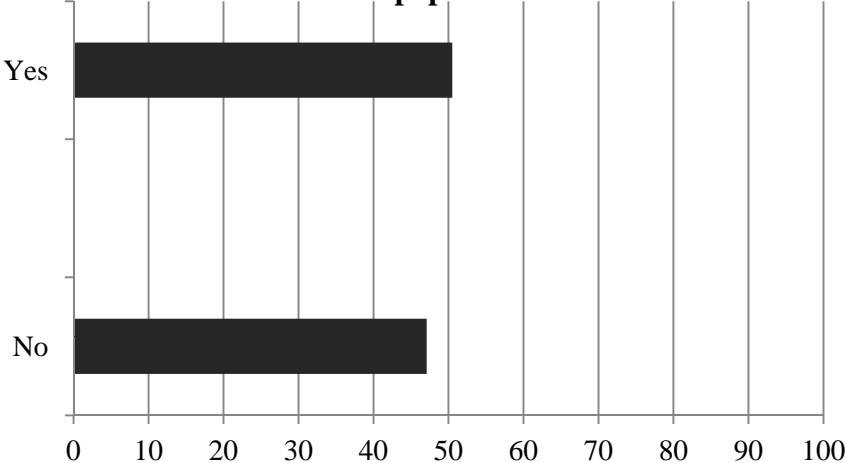


B: Feeling toward China by visiting China

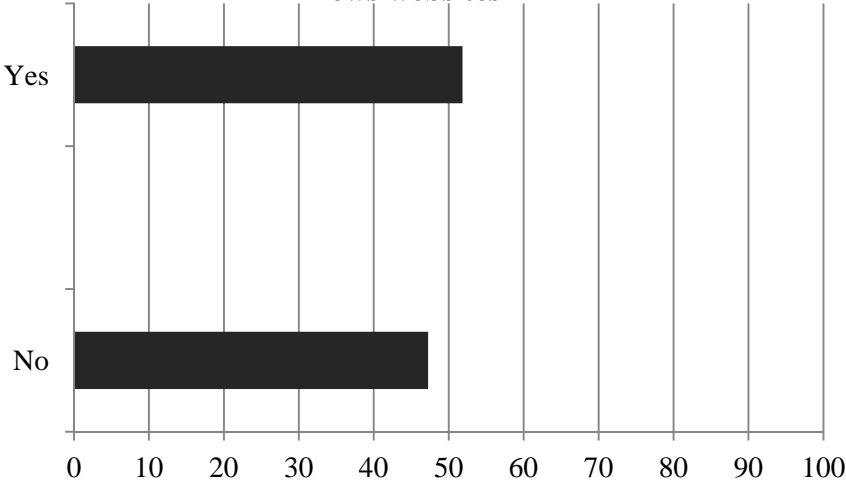


Information and General Feeling (II)

C: Feeling toward China by reading China news in newspapers

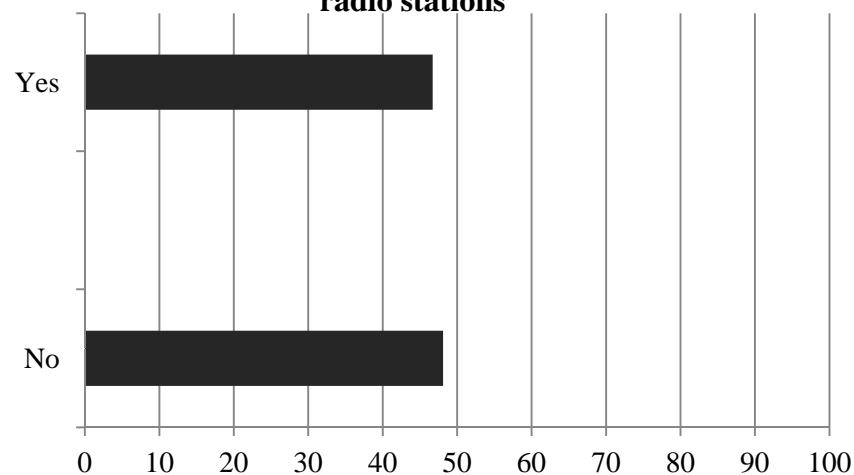


F: Feeling toward China by reading China news on news websites

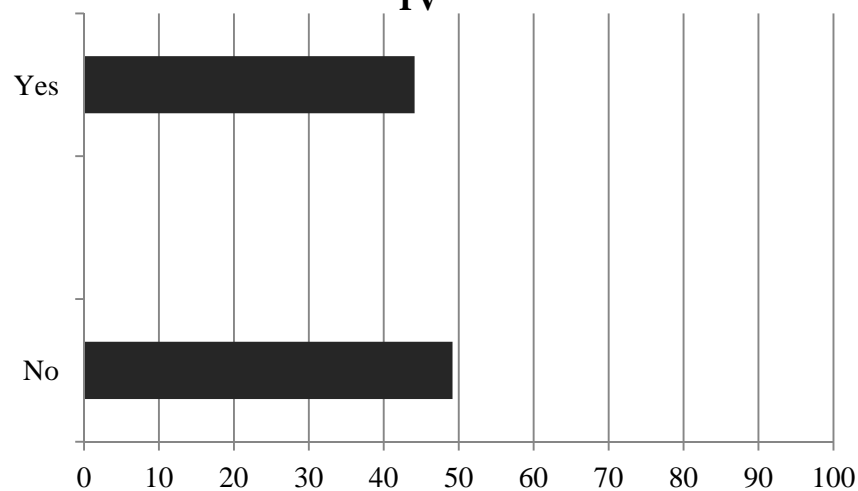


Information and General Feeling (III)

D: Feeling toward China by hearing China news on radio stations



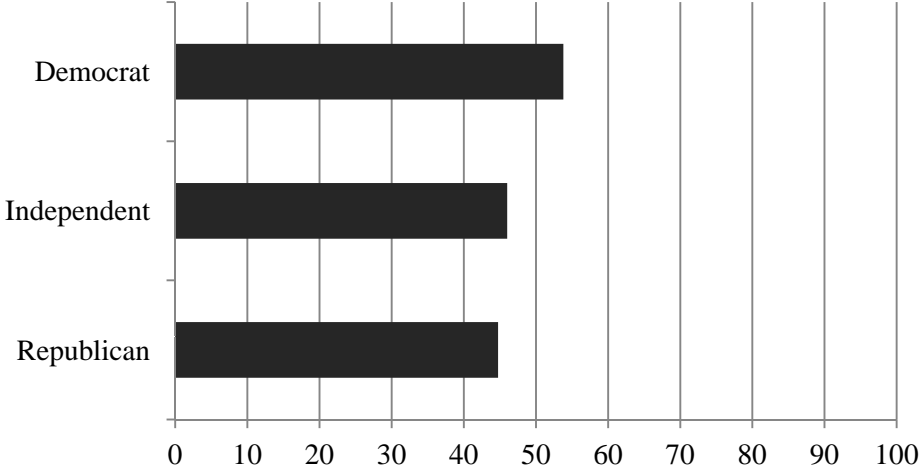
E: Feeling toward China by watching China news on TV



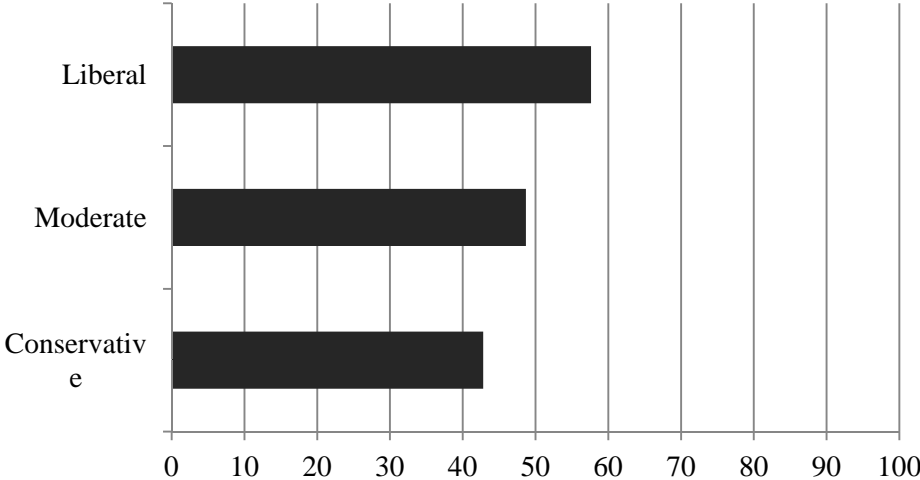
Source: AACS 2010 ($N = 810$).

Party ID, Political Ideology and General Feeling

A: Feeling toward China by party ID



B: Feeling toward China by ideology



	M1	M2	M3	M4
<i>Demographic features</i>				
Age	-0.716 (0.293)**	-0.598 (0.267)**	-0.494 (0.267)*	-0.519 (0.268)*
Age square	0.005 (0.003)**	0.004 (0.002)*	0.003 (0.002)	0.004 (0.002)*
Male	-0.841 (1.691)	-0.624 (1.590)	-0.127 (1.597)	-0.021 (1.603)
Education	5.055 (1.112)***	4.091 (1.107)***	3.085 (1.136)***	3.674 (1.081)***
Income	-0.839 (0.614)	-0.877 (0.567)	-0.712 (0.586)	-0.964 (0.581)*
<i>Assessment of China's varying aspects</i>				
Competitive economy		4.001 (1.165)***	3.669 (1.162)***	3.947 (1.166)***
Effective political system		-1.131 (1.068)	-1.213 (1.065)	-1.496 (1.082)
Appealing popular culture		8.305 (1.68)***	7.449 (1.261)***	7.360 (1.242)***
Rich cultural heritage		-3.119 (1.041)***	-3.134 (1.043)***	-3.675 (1.050)***
Influential in world politics		1.534 (1.206)	0.944 (1.174)	1.042 (1.211)
Dodging responsibility in the world		0.039 (1.178)	0.264 (1.196)	0.006 (1.158)
<i>Prospective evaluation</i>				
Democracy in ten years		8.781 (1.383)***	7.692 (1.439)***	8.307 (1.385)***
Influence in the word in ten years		1.269 (1.484)	0.851 (1.494)	1.125 (1.495)
<i>Information access</i>				
Newspapers			2.681 (2.161)	2.963 (1.129)
Radio stations			-4.3.6 (2.385)*	-4.084 (2.384)*
TV news			-3.559 (2.011)*	-3.718 (2.002)*
Internet news websites			-0.109 (2.533)	0.180 (2.457)
Visiting mainland China			9.693 (2.818)***	10.03 (2.875)***
<i>Ideology</i>				
Conservative			-3.814 (1.767)**	
Liberal			4.765 (2.327)**	
<i>Party ID</i>				
Republican				1.902 (2.013)
Democrat				7.671 (1.921)***
Intercept	58.11 (8.360)***	59.18 (7.570)***	60.25 (7.544)***	56.36 (7.612)***
<i>Model information</i>				
F	(5, 734) = 5.81***	(13, 702) = 14.89***	(20, 672) = 12.57***	(20, 680) = 12.92***
R-squared	0.0390	0.2028	0.2433	0.2515
Number of observations	740	716	693	701

Source: AACS 2010 ($N = 810$).

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses.

* $p < 0.1$ ** $p < 0.05$ *** $p < 0.01$.

Summary of Findings

- The majority of Americans can effectively understand the significance of the rising China.
- The American public's views of China are multi-dimensional with embedded tensions (i.e., a mix of positive and negative evaluations).
- Salient influence of the American public's assessments of China's democracy and cultural performance.
- A significant number of Americans are interested in China-related information and acquire such information from the mass media.
- Salience and positive influence of life experiences in China
- Varying media effects

Implications

- Significant improvement is unlikely
 - Salience of ideologies, values, and cultural factors
 - Significant role of American media
 - Primarily negative coverage of China on the salience issues

- Sufficient leeway for manipulation
 - Salience of ideologies, values, and cultural factors
 - Wide recognition of China's superior economic and political performance
 - Lower hurdles for presenting China as a constant violator of human rights, an authoritarian abuser of violence, etc.