

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

HOW CHINA'S YOUTH ARE TRANSFORMING CHINESE SOCIETY:

NEW RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM THE PRC

Washington, D.C.

Thursday, April 24, 2014

Opening Remarks:

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Keynote Address: Chinese Youth and Upcoming Developments:

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Youth Mobility: Education, Employment, and Inequality:

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Behavioral Change of Chinese Youth in a Commercialized Digital Era:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

DR. LI: Good morning. On behalf of the Brookings China Center, I'm pleased to welcome you all to this very special event addressing youth, a stage of life I wish I had more personal experience with (Laughter). Well, arguably, no demographic group in the history of the world has witnessed a greater economic and social transformation than today's Chinese youths who have grown up parallel to China's emergence as a global economic power.

During their formative years, today's Chinese youths have seen roads fit by bicycles, replaced by highways, filled with Audis and BMWs, even in second tier cities in China. They have seen the blue skies of their younger days stand by a dusty haze, and they have been obsessed with the networking of Weibo and WeChat.

Now, this unique demographic group has witnessed the power of a social, economic transformation both for better and worse. And as the title of today's event suggests, youth are also transforming Chinese society in many tangible ways. They will build on dramatic changes that they have witnessed in their lifetime as they emerge as leaders of all walks of life that will shape China for years and decades to come.

Now today, we are so lucky to have the opportunity to learn more about the Chinese youths from our delegations from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences led by director Chen Guangjin and my good friend Li Chunling. They have come all the way from Beijing to discuss with us their new groundbreaking sociological research on this important, yet under researched demographic group.

What is most impressive about this CASS research team is that many of them are also young scholars, very young, because they are middle 20s and probably even younger than that. How could you have that kind of distinguished younger

scholars? And many of them already have their PhDs. Even at their young age, they have already made a remarkable impact in the field of sociology.

Now, this also reminds me that according to several survey's research about the American public opinion regarding China, the research by peer research and also by committee of one hundred are heavily involved have the similar finding that the younger age group in the United States, namely later teenagers and up to 29 years old, they usually have more favorable views of China. The point, actually are almost 20 points higher than preceding groups.

So, I really want to know -- I don't know whether your research also covered this kind of an attitude in those things about the United States. And if so, whether the Chinese younger generations have the better views about the United States or not. I'm very curious. I don't know whether -- I know that your main topic is not about that, but it would be fascinating if you can share, if you have the data on that topic. Certainly not in all countries do young people have better views than the preceding generation about China, but in the United States, we find it a pattern over the past decade that a younger group has more favorable views of China. This is very encouraging.

And I'm also thankful to have with us several well known Chinese scholars from universities in the United States. I'm particularly pleased that we have the honor of hearing from my good friend, Marty Whyte from Harvard, who will be keynoting this event as the authority on sociology studies in China, and really an intellectual giant in this field. Marty has conducted some landmark survey research on Chinese youths of his own. We feature him many times here at Brookings, and most recently about our book launch on middle CASS, and we were so pleased to have you then, and also, pleased to have you back to Brookings.

I also want to thank my China Center colleague, Jonathan Pollack, a good friend, of course, for moderating the keynote session, especially on such short notice in replacing Ken Lieberthal who cannot be here this morning. He sends his best to the team, to the delegation and to particularly, his long time friend, Marty Whyte.

We are also very happy to be joined by two scholars who are making their Brookings debut as they moderate our two panels today. First, we have Dr. Guo Yong, a visiting scholar at Harvard and an associate professor at the Tsinghua University. He actually also was in charge of student affairs at the Tsinghua University for many years. Tough job, right? And he will moderate our first panel on youth mobility and lead a discussion on education, employment and inequality.

And second, we have Dr. Marcella -- the last name, really cannot pronounce at all (Laughter). I know that -- let me try. Could you --

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Szablewicz.

DR. LI: Szablewicz, thank you -- whose name I really cannot -- never can pronounce, but whose scholarship is truly outstanding. Anyone who has read her articles will agree with me. It's fascinating research. And also, I know that you are working on your new book. I think that it will soon be a bestselling book and your name will become you know, widely known in China. I think that you should probably have a Chinese translation of your name. (Laughter) It's really fascinating.

Well, he is an assistant professor at Pace University in New York, and she will lead a panel on how Chinese youth are adapting to a commercialized digital area. And thank you all for our speakers and the panelists for joining us today. I know that we are all excited to hear your insightful findings and commentary.

But before doing so, let me come to my co-host of the conference, a distinctive scholar by himself, Chen Guangjin, director of the Institute of Sociology at the

CASS to offer his opening remarks, Dr. Chen. (Applause)

DR. GUANGJIN: Good morning, everybody, ladies and gentlemen. And I'm very pleased to be here, first of all, I should really be saying on behalf of Dr. Li Peilin the vice president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, abbreviated as CASS.

I would like to thank Dr. Jonathan Pollack for sparing your valuable time to attend this workshop. And I am also grateful to Dr. Li Cheng for organizing this fabulous workshop for my delegation, and again, congratulations for your recent appointment. Moreover, it will be a great honor and a pleasure to hear your speech and the comments from Professor Martin Whyte, Professor Guo Yong, and Professor Marcella Szablewicz. Plus, my colleagues will survive (Inaudible) 03:15 from your comments and the criticism.

And this delegation, me and the other eight members, came from the Institute of Sociology of CASS. This time, we bring the team of the survey of Chinese college students and the graduates. College students are an important part of Chinese youth. Not only are they the important force to shape the future of Chinese society, but also, they are precious and (Inaudible) are becoming (Inaudible) 03:34:40 issues today.

And this team headed by Professor Li Chunling here, who is conducting an ongoing five years survey based on college students and fresh graduates in 12 universities and colleges in China, among them, not only including the elite universities, but also common universities and junior colleges, as well.

This survey taken through online systems aims to collect the information and variable aspects of those youth, including live calls, consumption, Internet behaviors, cultural preferences, school to employment transition, political attitudes and so on. So, you will hear their presentations on the first wave of their data (Inaudible) analysis of form. Hope You will enjoy it.

And I know you guys are tired of campaigning for my institute, but before handing over my microphone to Professor Martin Whyte, I would like to send all of you a message of invitation to approach us for further cooperation. Besides hosting your visiting fellowship, we can together conduct surveys, coauthor articles, organize conferences, release reports and even build a joint center or program, as we have been engaging with many other strategy collaborators from the globe.

And particularly, I wish this visit will led (Inaudible) blossom the relationship between my institute and the John L. Thornton China Center on the leadership for Dr. Li Cheng, and I hope collaboration between our two think tanks can be productive and constructive. Thank you very much. (Applause)

DR. POLLACK: Good morning, everyone. Thank you to my colleague, Cheng Li and to Professor Chen as well, for your very, very appropriate introductory remarks. I'm delighted to be here. I'm substituting for Ken Lieberthal, who as Cheng has mentioned, sends his best and is here in spirit.

We are really privileged this morning to initiate this event by hearing from Marty Whyte from Harvard University. I should say, parenthetically, I first encountered Marty a long time ago when I was a graduate student at the University of Michigan. Marty, I won't disclose the precise number of years -- well, actually, I know -- well, we both know roughly how long it was. But to me, Marty always looks so unchanging (Laughter). But that's okay. That's okay.

But of course, few people have influenced the field of the study of China at a sociological level than Marty has, that we are all very, very familiar with it. What I think he'll try to do this morning, and he should speak for himself, of course, is to set some of our discussion in both a larger context, and I think in some ways, remind us of some of the difficulties of generalization, when you begin to disaggregate some of the

trends that we see in China.

So you know, on that basis, Marty, welcome back to Brookings. We're delighted to have you here, and all of us look forward to your remarks.

MR. WHYTE: Thank you. (Applause)

DR. POLLACK: This is a podium where you have to be very careful when you step out of your chair (Laughter). You may disappear.

MR. WHYTE: Thank you very much. It's very nice to be back at Brookings, and as a sociologist who studies China, I'm very eager to hear what our Chinese colleagues have to say about their research and their latest research on Chinese youth. I'm also, of course, a little bit intimidated, partly, because when I get these kind of introductions, it sets a very high bar that I don't think I can meet. And also, my own research on slightly different topics today, rather than specifically on Chinese youth, so I'm not necessarily up to date on all of the things we'll learn today.

But I thought I would, as Jonathan mentioned, talk about some concerns I had just about the profile of Chinese youth and how difficult it is to generalize. And my comments might -- you might call my remarks a tale of two youths, with apologies to Charles Dickens.

And what I mean here is, the situation of rural origin youths versus urban origin youths, it seems to me has always been -- has in recent times, been quite divergent, and in some ways, is divergent even more widely. And so there's a difficulty, it seems to me, and a challenge to our Chinese colleagues and to other researchers trying to generalize in sort of two parts of a large group that are in some ways going in different directions.

Let me start by making a few familiar comments about the demography of China and the demography of Chinese youth. We all know that China has been

urbanizing rapidly in recent years. We're told that early in this decade, China crossed the divide to become 50 percent urban, so maybe China is 55 percent urban in terms of population now.

But that 55 percent includes both people with urban hukou, people who I will call urban citizens, but it also includes more than 200 million migrants -- migrants, and sometimes their children. If you consider China's population not in terms of whether they're in rural or urban areas, but by essentially their citizenship status, agricultural, hukou citizens, including both rural people and migrants, still constitute the large majority of the population, maybe close to 65 percent. And for Chinese youth, it's probably even larger, because of course, fertility is higher in the countryside than it is in the cities. The cities have the one child policy very strictly enforced, but it's more commonly in the countryside, two children.

So, we also know that the Chinese government has recently announced last month, new plans to have a new set of policies about urbanization to both increase urbanization further, but also, they are pledging to eliminate eventually, this distinction between your hukou status, whether you're a rural citizen or an urban citizen, because until now, you know, rural citizens have been discriminated against and deprived of lots of urban opportunities and privileges.

And there have been experiments to try to change this and soften this, but still, it's very much in place. So, down the road, I am hopeful that these new policies will make a difference, but I am also skeptical, because there have been many promises before to overcome the discrimination against people of rural origin in China. But they haven't been very successful.

It's important to note, many of you may be familiar, that just in terms of one indicator, the income gap between urban people, urban citizens and rural citizens,

China is perhaps the most unequal country on the entire planet. In 2007, the latest chip survey that's been published indicated that urban hukou people compared to rural people, the family income gap was about four to one. This was really extraordinarily high.

So, all of these means that there have been wide differences in the life situations and opportunities of rural citizens versus urban citizens in China. Again, rural citizens, I mean both people living in the countryside, and also, migrants who came from the countryside. And so, I'm wondering how easy it is to talk about Chinese youth without taking into account this huge divide.

So, let me start by talking about my impressions of the situation in recent times for rural citizen youths, still about, as I said, at least 2/3 of all youth have rural citizenship in these terms. First, as I've already indicated, they're more likely than their urban counterparts to have a sibling. They're not so likely to be an only child.

There also, as I've already indicated from talking about the income gap, they're much more likely to grow up in severe poverty. China has made dramatic progress against poverty, but nonetheless, it's still much more common in the countryside, much deeper.

They're also less exposed to the highly commercialized and Internet savvy daily lives of people in the cities. This is closing somewhat the sort of Internet gap. It's closing. Rural people are becoming more connected, and rural youths particularly, and even more so, migrant youths. But nonetheless, it's still a higher proportion of people with rural origins that are not totally immersed in this sort of highly commercialized and sort of pop culture -- you know, all of the Internet things. So, the digital divide may be narrowing, but it hasn't closed much.

Rural origin youths face very difficult options in trying to figure out how to

get ahead in life. Do they remain in farming? Not too many seem to want to do that these days. Do they try to find a non farming job in the local area working in the current version of the TVEs or other kinds of non agricultural activities?

Do they try to get ahead via education, maybe even aiming to get into college and get a white collar job and so forth. That's difficult to do, and I'll talk about that in a moment. Or, do they become a migrant laborer, going off into towns and cities looking for better opportunities? So, all of these face sort of difficult challenges and obstacles.

Getting ahead via education, in particular, is extraordinarily difficult if you're of rural origins. Okay? First, of course, rural schools themselves, if these kids stay in the countryside are poorer quality. Many of the ones who are staying in the countryside, if they have migrant parents, may be having just grandparents at home to help supervise their school activities. Even their parents will have less sort of educational background, cultural capital than urban parents tend to have.

And if the kids go into the city with the parents, then they face dilemmas about what kind of school they can get into and how much it will cost. Mostly up till now, migrant kids have had to attend private schools of uncertain quality and sometimes subject to being closed down. In the past, they've had to pay very high fees if they wanted to get into urban public schools.

That is supposed to be changing, but even if they get into urban public schools, they're often segregated in -- you know, so they're not treated the same as urban origin kids. And my understanding is, in most localities, even if they get into the urban public schools, they can't go beyond lower middle school graduation, which is the end of compulsory schooling in China. And then, if they want to go to upper middle school or high school, they have to go back to their rural village, and they can't take the

gaokao, the college examination in the city, but they have to do it back in their countryside.

And if they stay in the countryside or go back to the countryside, by lower middle school and upper middle school, they often have to go into boarding schools, because most villages don't have nearby high schools, middle schools that they can attend. So again, it's an expensive proposition and difficult thing.

And partly, as a result of all of this, China has experienced, as you all know, a huge expansion of college enrollments since the late 1990s. China today has something close to 10 times as many college students as it had in the mid 1990s. So, one would think this is a huge thing that opens up a huge amount of opportunity, but in fact, the disproportionate, overwhelming amount of those places are going to urban citizen kids. Okay?

It's still very hard. Relatively few rural kids get all the way through *gaozhongbiye*, take the gaokao, get into college and so forth. So, despite this expansion, it's almost all the advantages going to the people in the cities. So, largely, the most common result for a child born in the countryside is that they will be a lower, middle school graduate, and they will have to look for jobs as laborers and service jobs and so forth. So, there's a limit to how far ahead that they're likely to get.

So, a huge amount of potential talent in China is, from my point of view, being wasted because of the obstacles that make it so difficult for rural kids to get ahead. So much more difficult than for urban kids. But there are at least a couple of slightly positive sides of this, that with the sort of changing of the Chinese economy, the wages of unskilled, semi-skilled laborers and so forth, have been going up, and the chances of being unemployed totally are relatively lower than they are for some more educated groups.

And rural and migrant youths also don't face the kind of very high expectations and obstacles in terms of you know, having to have your own -- you know, a stable job, an apartment, a car, in order to be able to get married and so forth.

So the obstacles in some things are a little easier in the countryside, because the expectations are lower. Just more briefly, on the urban side of things, from what I've said, it's obvious that urban kids are more overwhelmingly likely to be the only child. They're also more likely than rural kids, the opposite of what I said before, to have well educated parents with high aspirations for them, and parents and grandparents and extended kin all sort of placing expectations and hope on them.

My Harvard colleagues, Vanessa Fong, wrote a book called "Only Hope," based upon interviews in urban families in Dalian, and the sort of extraordinary expectations and so forth. Actually, in America, upper middle class families increasingly know what this is like. There's a sociologist named Annette Lareaux that talks about concerted cultivation.

I actually have two families. I was married and raised kids in an earlier era, and then my wife and I actually have a Chinese daughter who is now in college. And my second family, the expectations, you know, and what parents are supposed to -- you know, you have to have violin lessons and soccer camps and you know, computer school and all these kinds of things.

Well, Chinese urban parents that are officially in the middle class, obviously, are increasingly feeling they have to invest all of this in their children, and it's very different from what happens, generally speaking, to rural citizen kids. Obviously, urban youths are more likely to have pocket money, resources, ability to spend on their own, access to digital devices, broad exposure to the you know, highly commercialized society in which they now live, and so forth. So, migrants are in the middle here --

migrant youths in the city are partly exposed to all of these things, but much more so than rural kids who stay in the countryside.

The path to get ahead via education seems much easier in urban society now. It is probably the case that if you're an urban kid in China, it's easier to get into a college than it is for an American child. Well over 50 percent of urban youths can get into college in China now, but because of this huge expansion. Okay?

But there's still extremely hectic competition to prepare for the gaokao, because it makes much more difference now which college you get into and what you're studying, and so forth. So with this huge expansion, the people that get into the best colleges can graduate and hope to get good paying jobs, and you know, domestic companies, foreign companies, government jobs and so forth.

But at the bottom of the higher education ladder, you have very high unemployment. You have the Eadsu phenomenon, the Amtribe -- you know, young people with college degrees from second and third tier colleges who can't find a job. One recent Chinese survey, not by the CASS group, but somebody else, claimed that young people in their early 20s, if they had a college degree, they had 16 percent unemployment. Only lower middle school graduates had only an 8 percent unemployment. So, twice as much unemployment.

So this phenomenon of educated unemployed, which occurs in some other developing societies as well, is increasingly becoming a problem in China. And that, of course, puts the parental and grandparental pressure of not only getting into a good school, but getting a good job, but then, being able to afterwards demonstrate the lifestyle through an apartment and your own car and so forth, so that you can get married. So, a huge amount of pressure.

So, there's also the increasing phenomena of the growing equalization of

college between genders means there are more and more highly educated women. And for them, there's this added problem, the left behind women problem that many Chinese men still don't seem to want to marry women that are as educated or more educated than they are.

So, worries about women -- again, an important part of the talent pool who are getting a high degree of schooling -- but is that harming their chances of having somebody to marry them. So, all of this means to me that there are distinctive kinds of life experiences and problems and opportunity structures for rural youths, rural origin youths, including both rural use and migrant youths, versus urban youths.

And I'm wondering, in the research of our Chinese colleagues, whether they're -- how they're able to bridge this gap. And I'm particularly hopeful that in either their present or their future research, they can make sure that they don't direct all of their attention to the favored urban youth side of the equation, which as I've indicated, is only a little more than a third of total youths. Two thirds of the youths are still on the other side of the rural urban divide, which hasn't yet closed.

And finally, my other hope, my more distant and larger hope is that somehow, finally, Chinese leaders will find a way to eliminate this distinction based upon your hukou status and so forth, which is one of the real ironies of reform era China. This is a legacy of Chinese socialism in the 1950s.

This was a way for Mao Zedong and his colleagues to keep them down on the farm. So many other things about the economy have been reformed, but still, the idea that if you're born in the countryside, you have for the rest of your life, a different and lower set of opportunities and more discrimination. That's still with Chinese youth today. It's with Chinese adults, as well.

And I hope, finally, this very unjust system of discrimination between

rural and urban people can somehow be eliminated. But it's going to be a very difficult job. Thank you. (Applause)

DR. POLLACK: Marty, thank you very, very much for this very enlightening and also, very sobering picture. You know, we here at Brookings often deal with the debate in Washington about China, which is often at the 30,000 foot level. But we are deeply committed to having, if you will, an on the ground understanding of China, and we've certainly gotten that this morning.

I am struck so much by the tenure of Marty's remarks, in that it highlights yet again, that the preoccupations of Chinese leaders will be, if you will, broadly the domestic circumstances that they confront. Or if it isn't their preoccupation, it should be. But you know, I'm just simply struck by the daunting nature of what you're describing, how you get from here to there.

There are very grand objectives, as you've highlighted, but a lot of these trends point to further stratification. Unless there is some kind of a means by which this remarkable gap can be bridged in the coming years. And that's obviously going to be an issue, I think, that we'll come back over the course of this morning's discussion.

So, in any event, I really appreciate Marty setting an overall tone for the discussion that is to come. This is a society that is undergoing some extraordinary stress, and we feel this palpably from what you have presented here today. So, our thanks for shedding light on these phenomena in a major way.

I'm going to open up the floor to questions now. 'I am much more interested, we all are, rather than hearing us talk, but hearing from you about questions you might have in light of Marty's presentation or any other issues that you want to raise. So if you have a question, please raise your hand. We have a microphone that will circulate, and please do identify yourself, and we can proceed from there. Yes, I see a

hand right there. Please.

(Discussion off the record)

SPEAKER: (Off mic) Thank you Professor Martin. My name is Weibo and I am from world bank (Inaudible). So actually, you criticize many sites or Chinese (Inaudible), and right now, with the one child policy, there are more men than women in China. So, one story that -- due to the inequality between the number of men and women, many have to work hard to make the -- who makes the benefit from the economy.

And actually, due to the inequality between men and women, we have high GDP growth. And actually, it's not a joke. It's the lower income professors Chen Jingwei's paper published in (Inaudible) -- obviously the general economic (Inaudible). And actually, (Inaudible portion) we try to handle (Inaudible portion) economic -- for temporary growth. So, (Inaudible portion) what you think about the ways to solve this sort of thing. Thank you.

MR. WHYTE: I think I've never heard before an explanation that China has benefited by having too many men who can't get married, so they work very hard and they contribute more to the economy (Laughter). That's a novel argument.

I would say that the problem is, that's a separate issue. Another challenge China faces. The one child policy, in my view, never should have been implemented in the first place. It was a disaster, in many ways. China was already successfully controlling its fertility before the one child policy was announced, and could have continued a two child policy without such disastrous results.

And again, the leaders are beginning to slightly modify that policy, and I think they need to figure ways to do that, as well as eliminate the hukou discrimination. But it seems to me, it's a separate issue to the ones that I was raising.

DR. POLLACK: Yes, right here.

SPEAKER: Hi. Showay Jow. I'm a part-time intern here at the China Center. Dr. Whyte, I have a question, because I liked your book of the "Midst of a Social Volcano." I read it in my graduate school. And your book was mostly talking about how people were looking at social inequality, income inequality in China.

And to me, I have -- my crude observation is that the thing in China is that people don't even have -- now, people don't even have an opportunity to get ahead, and especially, we're now talking about the second generation, the second rich generation. So, I'm thinking, your book was written in 2004 or 2005. So 10 years later, do you think there's a new problem of upward social immobility is instead of income inequality in the society that we should be focusing on? Thank you.

MR. WHYTE: Well, that again (Laughter) brings in yet other issues rather than the ones I was raising in my talk today. But I would just say we've done a more recent survey, but only in 2009. Another survey is being planned, but hasn't been carried out yet. But I don't think that's the case overall.

In other words, at least at the end of the last decade, you know, in our survey in 2009, we found more people optimistic about their chances of improving their lives, but that's at the overall level. If you look at particular segments of the population, again, particularly for urban youths facing this sort of very high competition still to get into college and worries about unemployment, and feeling that even if you have a college degree, you may be competing for jobs with migrant youths who have only lower middle school education.

So for some segments of society, I think that those feelings are very accurate. But you know, I don't think it's true overall, but obviously, China's growth is slower now than it was in the past. And if goes down further, that pretty much

automatically translates into not quite so many opportunities, but believe me, in America, we would love to have 4 percent economic growth, 5 percent. You know, the idea of can you keep it up at 7 ½ percent, or is going to go down to 5 percent?

You know, any kind of substantial growth means basically more opportunities in the future. But nonetheless, not all groups see those opportunities and benefit from them equally, and there's very unequal opportunities that come from this growth.

DR. POLLACK: Yes, I see a hand right there.

MR. WIDES: Yes, I'm Burt Wides, a pro bono attorney and recovering sociologist (Laughter) and professor --

MR. WHYTE: It will pass.

MR. WIDES: -- Professor Whyte, your talk was really illuminatingly empirical. Professor Parsons would be proud.

MR. WHYTE: (Laughter) He wasn't too empirical himself, by the way.

MR. WIDES: Actually, he was.

MR. WHYTE: No, he wasn't (Laughter).

MR. WIDES: But my question relates to your comment that the rural youth now in the cities have to go to a private school or have a very hard time getting into public schools. And as you know, recently, some of the leaders of the citizens movement protested that discrimination, and they and attorneys who came to their defense were beaten up in jail.

And I'm wondering, is that situation, that discrimination because there's a lack of capacity in the schools, and it's sort of first come for the folks who are urban, several generations? Is it discriminatory? And do you get any sense that the government is seeking to change that symmetry?

MR. WHYTE: Well, I must confess, I'm stunned about the logic or reasons behind it. I mean, the idea that now increasing numbers of cities are allowing migrant kids into the regular public schools without paying high fees, but then the idea that if they go through nine years of schooling, they can't continue into upper middle school, and they can't take the entrance exam there -- I believe there are some localities in China that are experimenting with eliminating those rules, those restrictions. But for the most part, I think they're still in place.

And I'm a sociologist. I don't understand people in authority and why they make the decisions they make. But I will say that in the surveys that we've conducted, even urban people in very large majorities agree that denying entrance to schools because you have Nongye hukou or you know, denying access to health or other benefits because you're from the countryside or so forth, that this is grossly unfair.

But the people, the gatekeepers judging opportunities in the cities are very worried about having to provide housing, having to provide -- you know, having more youths. And also, I think in the schooling case, they're worried about rural kids who have less background and how they're -- you know, if they're put in the same schools with these urban kids who have these, you know, concerted cultivation parents, you know, that it's going to be a very unfair and unequal competition.

So in some sense, there's a legacy of you know, more than 50 years of discrimination here, that's very different to get rid of. And you know, in American society, we have a different you know, racial history that poses some of the same problems, and so forth. So, it's no easy matter to just say, you know, okay, now you can take the gaokao in Shanghai instead of having to go back to your village. It doesn't solve -- you know, it's a huge number of interrelated things that would have to be changed in order to provide more equal opportunities for kids with rural origins.

DR. POLLACK: Thank you. Yes, Cheng has a question.

DR. LI: Thank you, Marty, for your really brilliant way to tell you know, a tale of two youths and remind us of the complexities involved, and also, how difficult it is to make a generalization. And certainly, that your sentiments about inequality, discrimination and many other problems are also widely shared among Chinese scholars in China.

And I just got back last night from Shanghai. People complained, particularly urban dwellers complained about -- they feel their privileges are threatened by you know, new arrivals. Now, this reminded me that probably, we should look at the current China situation, you know, a broader historical perspective.

How would you assess the entire reform era, particularly the recent, you know, a couple of decades? Do you think there's some kind of a positive development in demographic upwards social mobility? Isn't it a choice that in the gender ratio in college, including graduate school, is unprecedentedly high with women students? And also, is that true-- that because the urban dwellers so much feel threatened, there's also a real movement going on in the social mobility?

Is that possible, when you look back in that period of China's development that China not only has this kind of -- what you pointed out four times, inequality between you know, urban and rural dwellers, but it's also true that this is the fastest period in terms of social mobility when we look back. Is that possible?

DR. POLLACK: Thank you.

MR. WHYTE: (Laughter) I didn't realize that my remarks were being interpreted as a condemnation of reform era and the desire to return to socialism and Mao Zedong.

DR. LI: No, no. I did not mean that. (Inaudible portion) most quite

remarkable.

MR. WHYTE: Well, no, I mean, even the things that we're talking about, you know, migrants and migrant youths face extraordinary discrimination so forth. But still, one reason this is not a bigger social problem and political problem is because nonetheless, you know, for a large part of the rural -- population born in rural areas, they're still much better off that they stayed in the countryside. And in the Mao era, they had to stay in the countryside. There was no floating population.

You know, you couldn't migrate. You couldn't go to the city, find a job and send your kids through private school or whatever. So, the extraordinary -- and you know, the people who go off and work in the cities, they're sending remittances back to the -- So, a large number of villages are being brought up, you know, from bitter poverty partly by the earnings of the people who have left, that Mao thought, you know, that leaving would be a brain drain, and that would -- it would drive the villagers downward.

Mao didn't understand economics too well, or he didn't understand Chinese history too well, either, actually, in this regard, because the idea of talented people from grassroots countryside being given opportunities to rise higher is you know, a basic bedrock of Chinese civilization through the dynasties. And Mao tried to totally invalidate that, which is very bizarre.

So you know, I think China is infinitely better in most ways than it was in 1976, and it is not the case, even though China has stark inequalities -- but it is not the case that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. It's that the poor are getting somewhat richer, and the rich are getting much, much richer. So, the gaps are widening.

But even the improvements in lives of people at the bottom have such very -- you know, been quite spectacular. And the people we interviewed, in 2004, more

than 60 percent of the people we interviewed in that national survey said that their families were doing better or much better than five years earlier.

In 2009, 75 percent said that they were doing better or something. So, some people are losing out a little, but the majority -- you know, in America, there's no way that 60 percent of the people are saying they're doing better than they were five years earlier. Again, we would kill to have those kinds of indicators for our society.

And by the way, one other very (Laughter) -- while I'm on the topic, and this is not related to youth or rural urban gap, but the extraordinary, rapid extension of medical insurance coverage in China in the last decade is really -- you know, President Obama would kill for that (Laughter). You know? In 2004, only 25 percent of the respondents in our survey had medical insurance. Five years later, in 2009, 85 percent had medical insurance coverage.

Now admittedly, some of that coverage is very basic minimal. It doesn't cover everything. People are still you know, using bribes to get better care and paying extra fees, and so forth. But nonetheless, what wouldn't we give in America to be able to make that kind of progress in medical insurance coverage? So, it's a very complicated mosaic.

DR. POLLACK: Yeah. Marty has reminded us that one of the first questions we should always ask when we are drawing judgments about developments in the society, developments in an economy or whatever, is compared to what? And I guess my question, following up very much on what Cheng asked and what you've presented, is, it's really -- can we characterize meaningfully kind of the frame of reference that people have?

You know, when they're asked this basic question about, are you -- it's sort of the Ronald Reagan question. Are you better off than you were whatever number

of years ago? I mean, do you think that most people have a concept that is, if you will, more where we have come from and see how much better it is now? Or alternatively, do you see people who may be less certain about what the future could imply?

I mean, I know it's hard to generalize about these things, but these are intimately related to peoples' expectations, what they impart to their children, and so forth. Is there anything that we can realistically say -- or is it just too broad brush a question to pose?

MR. WHYTE: Well again (Laughter) -- this again, takes us to these broader issues rather than focusing on Chinese youth. But I'm glad to do so, because everything about China is interesting. (Laughter) And challenging.

In China and in every other society, how people feel about the fairness or unfairness of inequalities is not driven by the genie coefficient or the economic growth rate or any other objective statistics. It's driven by their relative expectations, their own past experiences, the impressions of people around them, people they know.

They're driven much more by their local social environment than it is by -- so, there can be huge corruption and cases -- often the cities -- but people don't -- you know, that's not what drives people's attitudes. The way I talk about it in the United States, I don't get too upset about how much money Bill Gates is making or Lady Gaga (Laughter), or you know, Kobe Bryant. But if my colleague in my department gets a nicer office than I have (Laughter), boy, I'm going to think that something is very unfair at Harvard.

So, and in these respects -- so these subjective impressions on how people are doing are driven by these kind of local comparisons. One of the dramatic things we found -- unexpected things we found in this 2004 survey was that rural people actually had more positive views of current inequalities than urban people, even though

rural people are at the bottom and urban people are at the top.

But in 2004, it was just at the end of Zhu Rongji's smashing the iron rice bowl. There have been, since the late 1990s, a big wave of Xiangang, of laying off workers, peoples' jobs in jeopardy and so forth, so that the urban people, even though the system had favored them mostly, at that point, they had kind of more sour views, whereas on the other side, in the countryside, if you had been a commune member and you were not able to leave the village at all, it was a system of what I would call socialist serfdom. Commune members were bound to the soil.

They were not able to decide, I want to go off and look for a job elsewhere -- I want to leave farming. I want to go into the cities and look for opportunities. That was all prohibited under Mao. So, the much greater multiple opportunities, even if those are not equal opportunities to what city people have, have produced an overall optimism about opportunities of getting ahead in the countryside in 2004 that was greater than people --

So, the subjective factors of recent experiences and expectations and what other people you knew what was happening to them, that trumps what the overall indicators of the economy are.

DR. POLLACK: Marty, this suggests it's both a bad news and a good news story, and I think that what you've presented to us this morning is an awareness of both the complexity -- that we're dealing here with, if you will, a kind of a moving target in a lot of respects. But I think you've enlightened all of us in very, very useful ways as a first speaker at our conference.

So, to keep us on schedule, since we have a very full morning discussion, we'll conclude now, and I'm sure maybe in the coffee break, however, people might be able to ask you other questions that they might have. So, let us all give our

speaker a good round of applause. (Applause)

MR. WHYTE: Thank you very much.

MR. GUO YONG: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It's my honor to have the opportunity to coordinate this panel.

Thirty-five years have passed since China has adopted the opening and reform policy in 1978. Great change has taken place. Currently, as we all know, China has become the second largest economy around the world. Skyscrapers are rising up in Beijing and Shanghai rapidly and people have become richer and learned more about the world. Of course, there is more corruption, protests, and inequality. But I believe what I changed the most is the people. When the college entrance examination was renewed in 1977 in China, only 270,000 young people got the chance to get into colleges. In 2013, by contrast, nearly 7 million high school seniors have taken higher education. In 1977, few Chinese people had the opportunity to come to America. However, in 2013, about 160,000 Chinese students rushed into American universities.

As part of this, young people from urban and rural areas still share different opportunities. Even at Tsinghua University where I'm from, some freshmen from big cities are quite familiar with computers and the Internet when they were kids, and some others from rural areas have low access to computers at all before college. Young people from rural areas have fewer opportunities to enroll in colleges, especially elite universities.

How about the social mobility in China today? On the one hand, young people are usually sources of innovation. Almost all great enterprises are given birth by young people, such as Microsoft, Facebook, Taobao, and Baidu. They have their dreams and they are also the hopes for a better life for the human beings in the future.

On the other hand, young people are also creators of social movements

and stability, even revolution. They are more likely to be critical to reality and take actions to fight it. For instance, one of the major causes of the Egyptian Revolution in 2011 is the high unemployment rate of young people. The recent Sunflower Movement in Taiwan is another example of the political express of the youth in policymaking.

In the past half year, immigrant workers who worked for others from Nokia, Nike, and IBM went on strike in Southern China. Most of them are young people. The lifestyles of young migrant workers differ from those of their parents significantly. They pay more attention to work conditions, spend more time on the Internet, and are reluctant to go back to rural areas. Correspondingly, their parents are more prone to tolerate any terrible working conditions in order to (inaudible) feed their kids and build big houses in their hometown.

So how about the political opinions and the behavior moods of the youth? How about the opportunity equality standards for young people in China? All of these are very important issues we should pay more attention to in contemporary China.

Fortunately, today we have invited three scholars who have done excellent research on the youth. They have just completed a survey on the young generation in China recently. They are all from the Department of Youth Studies and Social Problems in the Chinese Academy for Social Sciences Institute of Sociology.

First, let's invite Professor Li to share her perspectives and research findings. Please keep your presentation in 12 minutes so that we can have more time for discussion.

(Applause)

MS. LI CHUNLING: Good morning. Sorry, my voice has a problem because of a cough.

It is a great honor for me to give a talk on Chinese youth here, and

thanks Cheng Li invited my colleagues and I, we sit at Brookings and show you our research findings. And also thanks Professor Martin Whyte gives a broad and extensive discussion about Chinese youth, now I will continue to discuss the topic Martin already talked.

I didn't know you would talk on this topic. If I knew, I would change my topic. But anyway, I provided you some survey data to support your views, that is a new type of urban rural separation among the younger generation. Socioeconomic disparity between urban and rural residence is one of the most prominent inequalities in China. That is partly because of the long-term implement of the hukou system which resulted in obvious separation between the urban society and rural society. Some people say there are two Chinas -- urban China and rural China. There has long been apparently a socioeconomic distinction between the urban and rural people.

Since the beginning of economic reform, the hukou system has been loosening. So now, today, there is free labor migration from the rural areas to cities which has brought about a huge rural and urban migration. And at the same time, the opportunities of employment, education, and social welfare in cities opening gradually to the migrants from the rural areas.

So what has happened when urban and rural boundaries gradually fade? Many of today's young people share similar opportunities no matter if they are from urban or rural areas. Martin already gave the answer.

Today's Chinese youth are composed of two age groups -- post-'80s and post-'90s, who were born during the 1980s and the 1990s. So the total number of the younger generation is 403 million. It's nearly one-third of the total population.

One-child policy began to implement it in the early 1980s. However, the policy has been implemented more strictly in cities than rural areas. Rural families

usually had more children than one, so in the figure you will find -- do you have lights? Young people from the rural family, you know, only 19 percent from one-child families, but young people from the urban family have a much higher percentage from one-child families. But most often, post-'80s and post-'90s are not from one-child families. Only 27.5 percent of young people are the only child in their family.

Because of the "one-child" policy, there are more young people from rural families than urban families. About 77 percent are post-'80s and 69 percent of the post-'90s are from rural families. These ratios are even higher than they their parent generation. Although most young people are born in rural areas and hold rural hukou, they are now migrating into cities. In 2013, more than two-thirds of post-'80s and post-'90s live in cities. Only 31 percent of young people live in rural areas but most of them are in industrialized rural areas and work in the factory there. Only 8 percent are working in agriculture. So young people, the young generation is concentrated in cities, especially large cities.

Although young people are migrating into cities from rural areas, but they hold the rural hukou. So that means they do not have legal citizen status in cities. So that result is a new type of urban-rural separation among the young generation. Urban-rural separation moving into cities.

This new type of urban-rural separation is splitting the younger generation into two major groups. One is migrant workers, less educated young people from rural areas, rural families, and another group is younger people with high education -- college students and graduates. So by this way, urban-rural disparity is transferring from the older generation to the younger generation.

Among the total number of young generation, about 25 percent are highly educated young people. About 45 percent are migrant workers. In cities, 42

percent are college students and graduates and 44 percent of migrant workers. So that makes about 70 percent of young people now in cities. Among them, half are highly educated people. Another half is migrant workers in cities. Both groups live in cities but they are in different socioeconomic situations and hold very different social attitudes.

When we're talking about how our Chinese youth, what they think or what we have to clear first, which one it is. So this picture shows socio economical distinction between the highly educated youth and younger migrant workers in cities. Younger migrant workers have much higher percentages than highly educated young people held in rural hukou and living (inaudible) city in formal employment and subject to unemployment. And no pension insurance, no unemployment insurance, no injury insurance, no maternity insurance, hardly reading, never using Weibo, never using email, and so on.

This socioeconomic distinction between two groups have created class differentiation. Younger graduates and students and graduates will be white-collar workers and future members of the middle class and the migrant workers are now a major part of the new working class.

Now, Chinese government leaders are talking a lot about the "Chinese dream" for what is the "Chinese dream" of the younger generation. Now, these "Chinese dream" of high-educated youth is that they are eager to join the ranks of the middle class. The "Chinese dream" of young migrant workers is to gain citizen status and be respected by local people. However, there are many handicaps clogging their dream. These handicaps have made anxiety among the young generation. The Internet has become a place where they whet their emotions.

And with no time to talk in detail, I will just give a summary. The young generation is stratified by hukou status and education. Urban-rural inequality transfer

from the old generation to the young generation. Urban-rural separation is moving into cities with migration of rural youth and creating this class differentiation among young people. New generations of middle class and working class both have strong willingness to participate in public affairs and express their views. How to meet different needs of two groups -- eliminating social separation and reducing economic inequality between two groups are challenges faced by government. Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GUO YONG: Thank you, Professor Li, for your excellent work.

Now we invite Professor Tian Feng to present his research work. Thank you.

MR. TIAN FENG: Good morning, everyone. My topic is differentiation of the higher education and the potential consequences in China.

Since the middle of the 1990s, China conducted a market-oriented reform of higher education. The number of university enrollment continued to increase. Before the market-oriented reform of higher education, some people think that China will benefit from the expansion of higher education, at least an opportunity will be provided and it would be helpful to promote social justice and reduce the social gap.

We can see from this figure, the first thing is a rapid increase in enrollment and the number of participants in the college entrance exam has fallen in recent years. And acceptable rate is also increasing, which had exceeded 17 percent.

Unfortunately, it's not the whole story. After the expansion of higher education in China, more and more people feel it is an inequitable distribution of the chance of higher education. It is this problem why more opportunity leads to more injustice.

After the founding of the PRC has been blocked by the western

countries, China cannot obtain enough human resources from the external. It is necessary to take from the internal. The traditional social elite had to be eliminated during the civil revolution, so the only way to select the social elite from the workers and the peasant families. After few decades, a new social elite had to be formed. Even though there is no higher education expansion, the new social elite will also take advantage of the university as a tool of the elite self-reproduction. It is said that the social function of China's higher education system had changed from the elite recruitment to the elite reproduction. For the purpose of reproduction, the higher education systems becomes even more clear cut, which means that the education system plays a role in the social differentiation, such as a key university focuses on the socio elite and the vocational college focuses on the technical training. That is to say before the students enter the labor market, they have been distributed in the different social classes.

Let me introduce our survey. Our survey is a panel study of the China university students, which is a proposal to following students from universities and colleges to observe the critical period in the life costs from campus to career. The survey is conducted by the Institute of Sociology, China's Academy of Social Sciences. It started from 2013, a mix of typical sampling and random sampling. We selected 12 respected universities and each university typified the random sampling to extract students.

In the first survey in 2013, we got about 7,875 valid samples. The response to that is about 73.9. My research is based on our panel study of the university students' survey debt. Now we look at the background of the students in the university and colleges. We found that the opportunities to enter the key university for the student who comes from disadvantaged families is significantly low. The proportion of those rural students in the key university, general university, and vocational colleges is in an

ascending order. We can see if we look at -- this is before they go to the university where they're living. This is the household hukou. This is the father's occupation. So we use these three measurements and we can see that the students come from rural areas have a low opportunity to go to the key university and most of them are in the vocational colleges.

As we know, the key university's socio function is mainly focused on the elite education in China today. So this kind of situation means that it's very clear cut of social mobility. Given the difference of the family background, it's not surprising that the expansions are quite different. You can see that the key university students spend more than the general university and the vocational college students. However, if only compared with the tuition, the vocational college is the most expensive. It's quite unreasonable. The worst higher education costs the most. As we all know, in order to increase the supply of the higher education, the government always subsidizes the universities and the colleges, and the high level institutions in China is subsidized but also high. So the vocational colleges cannot survive if they do not charge more money from the students. But you know in the vocational colleges, the students always come from the poor families. So it's very unreasonable.

Let's look at another thing, the political participation. Whether in our key university or in your vocational colleges, submitting an application to join the party is quite common. From our debt analysis, the proportion of key university students who have submitted an application to join the party is a low list while the highest proportion of the party membership. The proportion of the vocational college students who submit an application to join the party is more than the key university, but the proportion of the party members is much less than the key universities. The party membership is a political identity, and the political identity is becoming an important prerequisite of the political

elite. In recent year, students -- college students and university students -- become the major source of the new party members, but the motivation of the student to join the party is always controversial. But whatever the motive is, the university becomes more or less a political elitist career mechanism, especially in the key universities which have a low proportion of applications but a high proportion of the party membership.

What does this mean? Obviously, the party prefers to select the new members who are considered political elite from the key university students who are more likely to become economically elite and college elite. It can be predicted that in China the political elite have a mix of college elite or the economic elite.

As I just said, the party prefers to recruit a new member from the key universities but it's (inaudible). Because of the survey that the students of the key universities think the government and the official organization are more distrustful. On the contrary, the students from the vocational colleges think the government and official organization are more trustable. So there is not a mutual trust between the government and the students.

This is about the subculture of the youth. Almost all the students in the colleges and universities are post-'90s, so their subculture is definitely different from other cohort groups. Consider that this period is critical for their whole life because their values are forming in the universities and the colleges. The government put much effort to implant their ideas in the youth through the TV and the movies, but the survey tells you that in the key universities the American drama and the movies are more popular than the China drama and movies. In contrast, the China drama and the movies are more popular in the vocational college students, so it's a little different than what the government is thinking.

The last part is about the job. Because whether youth employment is a

global social problem, our survey focused on the quality of the employment and the satisfaction of the employment. According to the study's average income of first job, key university is the highest and the general university is low and the vocational college is lowest. And also we can see that students who graduate the key university have more opportunity to enter state-owned enterprises. You know, China's state-owned enterprises has much power and much money than the private sector.

The last is the satisfaction of the first job. We can say that key university graduates are much more satisfied with their first job than the general university students and the vocational college students.

So what's the potential consequence? I think the first is a clear cut of national higher education system might lead to social groups against each other. The second is that on the surface the expansion of the higher education brings more chance into the college and universities. But actually, the higher education system exacerbated social inequality in China.

That's all. Thank you for your attention.

(Applause)

MR. GUO YONG: Thank you, Professor Tien, for your very interesting presentation. There are a lot of numbers. I believe there will be a lot of questions around it.

Our last panelist is Professor -- please.

MS. ZHU DI: Good morning. It is very nice to meet everyone here.

So the title of my presentation is "When Chinese Youth Meet Globalization and Commercialization from the Perspective of Structural Effects." Mainly, I'm going to talk about how the structural factors shape consumer culture of the Chinese youth using the empirical data.

a rich, relatively deprived family background or whether they are from urban or rural areas. And another factor is their university type -- which university they go to. So whether they are studying at a key university or vocational college which is at the bottom of the university hierarchy. And the third factor is city, so where the university is, whether it is in the metropolitan cities like Beijing, Shanghai, or Guangzhou or whether they live in a less developed city. I will explain more later.

So the data, I'm using the same data as my colleagues, and I mainly use the data on purchase and use of mobile phones.

The first graph, you can see that there is some differentiation with ownership of smartphones among the students. So if students from higher family income, there is a high percentage of ownership of smartphones. We can see the green part, which is students from the family of income above 10,000 Yuan.

So this graph tells us ownership of the mobile phone brands among the students. We can see for the international big brands, like Samsung, iPhone, and even Nokia, there's a high percentage of students -- there's a high percentage of these international big brands among students from tier one to tier two cities, which is the metropolitan cities and the more developed cities in China. And students from the tier cities that are less developed cities in China, they tend to own Chinese brands and some smaller international brands. However, in terms of what they want, we see homogeneous taste here. Yes.

So all of the students -- no, I shouldn't say that -- so students want Samsung and iPhone most. The questionnaire asks, what do you want most regardless of your affordability? And comparatively, other international brands and Chinese brands are less popular with students.

However, we see a small peak at Xiaomi. I should explain here. So

Xiaomi is a young Chinese company. They produce smartphones at lower costs, so you can buy a decent smartphone, like 120 dollars, something like that. So it's quite popular among students from tier three cities and the college students, which they tend to be less evident.

This graph shows addiction to mobile phones, which is quite stunning. Over 50 percent of students show different extents of addiction to mobile phones. So like I feel comfortable if I don't bring a phone with me or I feel anxious if my phone cannot connect to the Internet. But if the students from a better-off family background, I mean, if they are from urban areas or they come from a family with higher income, they tend to be more addicted to mobile phones. Well, this finding actually is quite interesting because I read a paper from a Korean researcher. They found the opposite finding. They found that students from a more deprived family background, they are more addicted to mobile phones, but I haven't found out how to explain this. So maybe you can give me some hints how to explain this.

And this graph shows the impact of father's education on the influence of mobile phones that is sensed by the students. Although these lines are mostly stacked, we can see the purple line, which is higher father's education, that is post-graduate and above, the students sense a less percentage, a lower percentage of the negative influence from mobile phones, like cause distraction, cause distraction in class or cause distraction when studying or become less intimate with family and friends is a negative influence. So it's a lower percentage of negative influence sensed by students from a family with a higher father's education. However, they feel a higher percentage of the positive influence, like increase in knowledge and information. So a possible explanation might be students with a higher father's education, their parents are more likely to use smart phones and mobile phones frequently themselves, so they will feel at ease using

these new products and they will pass on part relaxing and this kind of emotion onto their children. So these mobile phones won't cause much negative influence to their children.

This graph shows a consumer orientation among the students. It shows a very high percentage of the self-referential orientation, that is the quality of function, practical, the design aesthetic, and the refined. And the performance price ratio fits me. So this kind of consumer orientation emphasized personal passion and comfort rather than social status or social identity, like I have a face when using it. That's a Chinese expression. It means I feel very good and very confident while using this mobile phone and it makes me -- it shows off my social status. And also it shows young people's taste and everybody is using it. So these are all different consumer orientation from the self-referential orientation. But this percentage is relatively lower.

And these findings confirm the findings from some market research in China. The findings show that young people, especially the post-'80s generation -- okay, thank you -- especially the post-1980s generation, they kind of embrace this self-referential orientation which emphasizes their self-rewards, their self-identity, and their self-satisfaction in their consumption. So this finding is quite the same, is quite consistent with the market research findings.

And for the face consumption, for the face consumer orientation, students from better-off family background, they are more enthusiastic about face consumption. Students from the urban areas or they have family with higher income, so they tend to be more enthusiastic about the face consumption. I have face when using it so when asked their motive of buying the mobile phone.

And also, with the higher father's education, students tend to be less enthusiastic about face consumption. So if the father's education grows from primary school to college, students become more enthusiastic about face consumption.

However, if their father's education grows from college to university and even to post-graduate level, they become not that keen on the face consumer orientation. That may be because with a higher education, their father and their parents tend to be more kind of low key or they're better educated so they wouldn't bother to show off their social status. Everyone around here knows about it.

And the findings, when Chinese youth meets globalization and commercialization, addiction to mobile phones are significant among Chinese university students, and the percentage of owning smartphones is high. The international vanguard brands are the most popular with Chinese university students. Chinese young cool brands at a reasonable price are rising. So in purchase of mobile phones, Chinese university students are generally rational, moderate, and are keen on the self-referential orientation.

Structure effects. So students from better-off family backgrounds who live in metropolitan cities are more involved in modern consumer culture, like addiction and this kind of face consumption or consumerism if we talk about their consumer culture. So those from less well-off backgrounds or who live in smaller cities stick to frugality and utility. So family's culture has to have an impact on material culture and consumer orientation of the Chinese youth.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. GUO YONG: Thank you, Professor Zhu.

Now to invite all the panelists to join me to the stage so we can move to the Q&A session.

Congratulations for your excellent presentations. Before the floor is open for questions, I would like to ask two questions. The first question is for Professor Li.

You classified young people in two dimensions -- where is his origin, a rural area or urban area. The other is his occupation -- white-collar worker or migrant worker.

My question is if a student from a rural area get enrollment in certain college, he got a job in Beijing after graduation but he cannot get Beijing hukou and become a so-called *Beipiao*, which category does he belong to?

My second question is for Professor Tian. Your conclusions in your presentation are higher education system exacerbated social inequality in China. Let's take Tsinghua University as an example. Recent years we have launched several programs to give students from rural areas more opportunity for admission, but you know, in China, if a student cannot get a higher score in the college entrance examination, we cannot admit him only because he comes from rural areas. The situation is quite different that in the United States. We know that in the USA, Harvard and Princeton will reject half of the applicants who get a full score in SAT but Chinese universities cannot do so.

So my question is, is such a kind of inequality caused by pre-college education or just higher education? Thank you.

MS. LI CHUNLING: My colleagues and I, we will answer questions in Chinese and ask the translator.

(Speaking in Chinese)

I'm basically responding to Professor Guo's question here, and his question was about how the rural students fared after they have obtained their college diploma and they found a job in Beijing. And he also asked me about the two groups of students or people that I was talking about in my lecture, in my presentation. Basically, there's actually, between the two groups, is what we call a marginal group between the two groups. They are mostly college graduates from the rural areas in China, and for

them to change their status from being able to enjoy the *hukou* perks, so to speak. Having obtained a higher education diploma is actually key to how they might be able to transfer their status from one to another.

My colleague Professor Tian actually had mentioned that in his presentation that there was this group of rural students that came to study in the universities and colleges in the cities and they usually went to lower tier colleges, and therefore, when they graduated, it would be very difficult for them to achieve upward mobility. In other words, they were less competitive, and they also do not have any kind of family networks or *guanxi* that can help them to find better jobs. And usually, they got a job that is lower paid and not exactly stable. So they have become this very big group in big cities and metropolitan areas. In other words, in terms of their income, they are low income people from the rural areas, but they are comparatively more highly educated, and so the Chinese government has seen this group as a potential group that may cause social instability in China.

So this group, they have shown to be people who are quite dissatisfied with their social status, and they are usually the ones who present quite extreme comments through online channels. And so the government now is trying to implement programs that will help to raise their living standard and also to give them better jobs so as to kind of pacify them.

MR. TIAN FENG: (Speaking in Chinese)

So this kind of dissatisfaction of these kind of sentiments or emotions do not only occur in colleges in China but now also in high schools or upper middle school or lower middle schools in China. Basically, the key to this problem, we can look at it from two perspectives. One is that you know that when rural students go to college and get a diploma, the rate of returns for them is actually quite low, and therefore, most of them are

now not incentivized to go to colleges, and in fact, as a result, they are also not quite interested in going to high schools. I think this also has to do with the education policy reform in China. For example, when they combine the schools, this would create hardship for students from the rural areas because it means they have a poor transportation system and it means they have to walk a very, very long way, sometimes dozens of meters or miles in order to attend school every day.

MR. GUO YONG: Okay. Thank you for your feedback. Now the floor is open for questions. Please introduce yourself briefly before you ask questions, and I will appreciate it if you can keep the questions and the answers short.

The lady in the middle.

SPEAKER: My name is Sonya, a (inaudible) candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University. Thanks for the very informative session. My typing skills can barely keep you with the presentation.

Much resources have been given to higher education, which makes sense because empirical studies prove the gap between rural kids and urban kids in terms of life quality. But for me, I feel like the problem and the real solution is realizing secondary education. Without proper schooling, rural or region youth, there's no way for them to compete with the urban kids, and therefore, having no access to higher education. So my question is do you mind sharing with us what has been done to close the gap between urban or region youth and rural youth in terms of secondary education? Thank you.

MR. GUO YONG: Who do you want to answer the question?

SPEAKER: Anyone.

MS. LI CHUNLING: (Speaking in Chinese)

So in the last few decades, the educational reform policy of China has

created many opportunities for higher education for both the rural areas and the urban areas, and as a result of that, rural students have been able to obtain some of these opportunities. However, what I want to stress here today is that this kind of expansion of higher education to rural students has not been able to close the gap for urban rural disparity in terms of education. So part of the reasons, as mentioned earlier, is that the rate of return of obtaining a college diploma is really low, and also it's very difficult to find a job even if you have completed college. So the rural parents do not quite encourage the kids to go to school because they believe that first of all, the rate of return is low, and then disparity therefore as a result has not been narrowed.

MR. GUO YONG: Okay. More questions?

Maybe the gentleman in the front.

SPEAKER: Sorry. I have a question again.

Thank you very much for your presentation. I have a question for Professor Zhu.

In your presentation, you mentioned your study between fathers' education level and their kids' performance with cell phones, et cetera. So my question is what happens to mothers' education, especially when I have my girlfriend here with me from Georgetown, which she believes is better than George Washington with the same degree. But, you know.

So my question would be do you see that correlation between fathers' education level and their kids' performance itself as a problem in China now in terms of opportunities for young Chinese women or girls, especially -- we actually see two of our panelists -- two out of three are women, so what's your opinion on gender inequality for Chinese youth? Thank you.

MS. ZHU DI: It's a broad topic than I talked about.

The impact of fathers' education or mothers' education, what kind of thing you meant, is ownership of smartphones or influence of smartphones?

SPEAKER: Yeah. I was thinking what was the factor you used as far as education for kids using cell phones? And what about mothers' level of education and the usage itself?

MS. ZHU DI: Right. To be honest, I didn't analyze the impact of mothers' education, but from my experience probably, because apparently China is still a male dominated society. I think why I measured the influence or ownership of smartphones from fathers' education is mainly because of the assumption that we think the fathers' education has more impact to the family's economic social status than the mothers' education. That's why I measured from the perspective of fathers' education. But, I agree that the mothers' education, the impact of mothers' education is growing significantly in recent decades, because I read a lot of research and newspapers. They all claim that the impact of mothers' education on everything, like the child, like is not included, is not limited with their use of smartphones but from their intellectual achievement or even their social status achievement. So I believe, yeah, sure, mothers' education has an impact on their ownership and use of smartphones but, I'm sorry, I can't give empirical findings here. But I can email you and we can talk about it later.

MR. GUO YONG: The lady in the middle.

MS. HONG-FINCHER: Okay. My name is Beverly Hong-Fincher. Your answer can be in Chinese also. Make the translator work harder.

Anyway, I'm very pleased about all your presentations, and there's only one thing, and I'm continuing his remarks. In your data, you seem to have missed out on the gender thing. The college graduates or the college entering students, but you did not include gender as one. I just wonder how many college graduates are, like, in the U.S.

we know, you know, it's an overwhelming difference. But in China I would like to know.
Okay. Thank you.

MS. LI CHUNLING: (Speaking in Chinese)

So the gender issue has been one of our priorities when we carried out our studies and our research, and currently the problem is not that women have less opportunities for education. In fact, women are actually more competitive than men in the area of education, so that's why we call it the male gender crisis. In fact, if you look at the data from kindergarten to college, you can see that women actually are more competitive, they always score higher, and they have better opportunities. And, in fact, there are more women now in China who go to college than men.

However, as far as satisfying the demand of the labor market, the labor market now is looking for more white-collar males. And so it actually has put the female college graduates at a disadvantage because there are now obvious and open discriminations against women college graduates.

And one more thing that I need to add on is that even though in general there are more women now who go to college than men in China, but it was very clear that there is still urban and rural disparity in a sense that there are more among all these women graduates, most of them came from the cities and not the rural areas.

MR. GUO YONG: Professor Li, I totally agree with you because we can find there are more women than men here.

Maybe one more question. Maybe we will give more opportunity for people who sit in the back. Maybe the gentleman.

SPEAKER: My name is (inaudible). I came from China. I have been a college teacher at some University for more than 10 years. But the university authorities don't like what I taught to my students so I was fired. After that I became an human

rights lawyer in Beijing for several years but the Chinese government -- I defended constitutional rights of political dissidents and religious dissidents. But the Chinese government also didn't like what I did, so one year ago I came to the U.S.

My question -- I have two questions. One question is the political attitude of China's students or Chinese youth, such as democracy, human rights, two questions are how government policy affects Chinese students' planning of life and career such as jobs, marriage, and how to choose which city to inhabit? Thank you.

MR. TIAN FENG: (Speaking in Chinese)

So there seems like there are two parts of the question. The first part is about the college policy, so I will leave that out, but I will answer to the second part of the question about how college graduates fare in China. I believe that the government has done quite a bit in terms at the national level. However, I think that it's because the industrial structure of China has not been able to follow suit in terms of reform or not been upgraded enough, so now we're seeing less and less labor-intensive industries in China, and that also means that it's harder to find particular kind of jobs if you are not at a certain educational level.

The other things that I think for college student graduates, I think we need to change our mindset altogether, because in the past you had very rare opportunities to go to college, and so when you graduated, you see yourself as someone very special, like the sons of heaven. But now everyone goes to college, everyone wants a job, and you're no longer the sons of heaven, so you should find a job that is suitable for you, like an entry level job, instead of something that's glamorous right away. And so I think that currently, job opportunities may be decreasing for people coming from key universities and maybe high schools, but it is those who are in the middle who came from general universities and colleges that actually are still able to find jobs.

MR. GUO YONG: The lady.

SPEAKER: Hi. Thank you, the panelists today, for your speech. I'm a master's student at the University of Maryland and I'm getting a doctoral program soon in Boston College this fall. So my question is about with the demographic transition in the recent 20 years, there are more and more elderly people in a society and the population aging is becoming a tremendous issue in our society. And I wondering with this social phenomenon, whether it has any impact on the youth mobility in our society because it's very common that in our generation there are more and more sandwiched generations, and it means that we need to take care of our parents, as well as our children. So it's like two persons take care of four elderly people as well as their children, so it's very precious for us. And also, especially for the children in the rural areas, their children are less well-off compared with the urban areas. So does it mean that it's an extra burden to those youth from the rural areas that they are more likely to be constrained in their hometown? So I wonder, do you have related research to deal with this democratic transition? Thank you.

MR. TIAN FENG: (Speaking in Chinese)

She was asking a question on the aging population in China, which is actually one of our top concerns as well because we think that this will be one of the major challenges that China is going to face. And also, its impact is going to be very deep and very wide, and we can see this from the examples among the European countries. So I think that aging population is going to be quite important and quite significant for our country.

I think in China we have always this mentality or this concept that the older ones or the older generation should sacrifice for the younger generations, and so to them it's still quite a thing for the face or it's quite a glorious thing if your younger

generations go out of the rural areas and go to cities and find very good jobs.

If you look at the family cycle in China, basically, nowadays the youth leave their families quite young, around 25 to 26 years old in China. They would get married and they would have their own family. So by that time, the parents will probably be around 52 to 53 years old, so basically, the need to retire and take care of themselves as they age, the idea has not quite hit them yet. And so I think the so-called structural four to two to one is not really an impending problem, yet as far as what we're looking at the situation currently is concerned, I don't think it's yet a problem.

MR. GUO YONG: Okay. One last quick question because we have only one minute left.

SPEAKER: Sorry, I have to use my computer.

Hi, my name is Tenza and I'm a local D.C. Tibetan. So my question is actually for all the panel members.

I'd like to know if in your individual surveys you took ethnicity into consideration, and if yes, have you found that to be a factor in the gaps you've been speaking of? And if you did not take ethnicity into consideration, then what was the reason for not doing so? Thank you.

Interpreter: (Speaking in Chinese)

MR. TIAN FENG: (Speaking in Chinese)

Yes. Yes. Yes, we did consider ethnicity in our studies, and we did include what we call the ethnicity variable in our studies. But you may understand that in China we have many programs that are in the interest or to the advantage of minorities, sort of like the -- I'm trying to explain it -- sort of like the affirmative actions in the United States. So a lot of people see those programs as being unfair to the Han group. For example, when you take the entrance exam, the threshold for minorities is actually lower.

MR. GUO YONG: Okay. Now we have a 10-minute coffee break. Before that, I invite you to join me to give a big hand to all the panelists for their excellent work. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Good morning. If you could all take your seats it would be much appreciated so that we can stick to this tight schedule here.

First of all, I'd just like to say good morning and thank you to the Brookings Institution for hosting this wonderful event. I very much look forward to seeing the presentations of this second group of panelists. But by way of introduction, I'd like to just make three sort of brief remarks about youth and digital medial use in China today.

To begin, I would like to highlight the issue of politics. So I think there is a tendency to see today's youth as relatively materialistic, shallow, and apolitical. Described as the "me generation," scholar Stanley Rosen notes that they are widely criticized for being "China's first generation of couch potatoes, addicts of online games, patrons of fast food chains, and loyal audiences of Hollywood movies." And while he notes that youth have in recent years exhibited an increased interest in joining the Communist Party, presumably for personal gain, he argues that they show a waning interest in politics.

Now, is this true? Last year at MIT's Media and Transition Conference, I was struck by a comment made by Professor Henry Jenkins. Now, Jenkins argued that across the globe, youth are engaged in new forms of what he calls participatory politics, a kind of politics that takes place through online activity, including the making and sharing of viral Internet means. Jenkins notes that these are "politics that often stretch beyond our institutional understanding of what constitutes the political, that involve kinds of

cultural activities that invoke the production and sharing of media."

Now, in the field of Chinese Internet studies, Professor Yung Guobin has similarly argued that the Internet is a place where contentious activity through play flourishes, and my own research into sort of a group of young men who call themselves losers or *diaosi* further illustrates the way in which a kind of playful political participation infuses young people's engagements with digital media. And today I think that this is something that we'll hear a little bit more about from Professor Shi Yunqing.

So secondly, I would like to call attention to the fact that young people's use of digital media often occurs against a backdrop of speculation and fear about the potential negative effects of this media use. Internet addiction is perceived as a common problem, and we heard previously about cell phone addiction, though it is often unclear if this is a mental disorder in and of itself or if this is a problem that is symptomatic of larger social and economic instability.

Now, another common concern about digital media has to do with globalization and the cultural content of digital media that is being shared and consumed. How do socioeconomic differences play into the cultural tastes of young media consumers? Are young people today abandoning domestically produced Chinese media in favor of global media products, such as American pop music or television shows? And if so, what does this mean for China in terms of its cultural or soft power? And this is a subject that we'll hear more today about from Professor Meng Lei.

So finally, I'm very happy that this panel on digital media use follows the previous panel on youth mobility, because as I see it, the two are closely linked. In my own research, I have spent a number of years talking to urban Chinese youth about digital gaming, and I say that one of the most common stories I hear has to do with the manner in which the Internet café served as a haven for young people in the stressful

years leading up to and beyond the college entrance exam. Now in their early twenties and thirties, many of these same young people are finding that digital media serve both as a tool and an outlet for coping with the pressures wrought by the intense competition for jobs, spouses, and material wealth.

So to offer you one final example, in an interview with Phoenix television, a well-known micro film director suggested that young people's love for digital gaming was closely wedded to their lack of physical and economic mobility. He told the news station, "in this day and age of growing pressures, we choose to play games because of our feelings of helplessness with regard to our real economic power. Try to imagine, if I had money to travel and surf, why would I shut myself at home in front of a computer to play games? Because the vast majority of youth living in today's world of high rents and low wages don't have that ability."

So I hope this quotation can lead us to ponder the way in which digital media use links back up with the previously discussed issues of education, employment, and inequality. How do slogans such as "the China dream" fit into the everyday digital realities of young Chinese citizens? And this is something finally that we will hear more about today from Professor Lu Peng.

So having highlighted these issues, let me now turn over the podium to our three esteemed panelists. Thank you very much. And I would like to invite Professor Shi Yunqing to the podium.

MS. SHI YUNQING: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I'm very honored to be here to share some of my ideas about the digital natives in China. My presentation, the title is "The Digital Natives in China: From Entertainment to Politics."

In the past 25 years, China has experienced very fast Internet growth. In this picture, you can see the numbers, the population of the youth generation. The use

population on line has increased by about six times in the last 10 years from 33 million to about 60 million. So the main component of this generation, the people we call the post-'80s and the post-'90s, they are the children born after the 1980s and 1990s. So it may close to the Y generation or millennium generation in the U.S.

Maybe another name is more familiar with you, "the little empire."

Basically, the little empire in digital globalization, they have the following four features. First, they are the one-child generation, so they are rich in digital resources. Here are the data from our survey. They have digital devices on average of 1.8 per person and almost everyone owns a cell phone and 80 percent own a smartphone. I won't read it. They have very -- the most advantage in Internet access. So the red numbers compare numbers about national natizens.

So the second feature is the market, the rise of the consumerism give them free choices in their own preference. So this has cost the rise of individualism, and according to our survey, these college students can adapt to the market very well and the online shopping rate is very high. It's about 90 percent.

So, the third feature is the urbanization, when we consider what has happened in China in the last few decades, urbanization is one of the most important phenomenons driven by the market economy. And also for the lifestyles it provides new ways for associating. According to our survey, the young generation in college, they can adapt to social media very well, almost 20 percent higher than the national numbers.

The last one is globalization, which is very closely related to the rise of the Internet. So this generation, the lifestyle and the subculture affected by this information globalization, according to our data, about 38 percent of college students like American TV series most and the others, about 30, like American and European pop music most, but my colleague, Meng Lei will show more details.

About this generation, they are living digital lives in China. When we consider this, one of the issues we can't ignore is the politics because the Internet, born with freedom, equality of democracies seems to be so controversial with the political regime that featured the centralized authority in China. But when we look at what is really happening in the daily lives of China's Internet, it is entertainment, not politics which takes up most of the time of the natizens when they are online. So living digital in China, it's politics or entertainment. Is it really an either or situation or another way? Does entertainment mean anything in China?

Let's look at what the most common activities with computers in high educated youth. These are the numbers from our survey. The first is they keep friendship. The second is get information. The third is relax and entertainment. And also, this is what they do with their cell phones. The first is talk with friends. The second is take pictures and enjoy music. The third is about getting useful information and access to Weibo. We can see the most important things in digital life for college students. The first is to be social. They talk with friends or people who share the same hobbies. The rest, they go for information and relax.

So in the previous research, scholars usually divided this online behavior into two categories. The first is for information. They call this the capital enhanced behavior, which is positively related to the politics or public participation. The second, they call it entertainment, which will be active related to the public participation. And about the social function, which sometimes will be ascribed into the amusement part, entertainment part. But as we all know, the social ties not only provide for -- as for the public participation, it's hard to be -- as for politics, it will be hard to be measured directly, so we measure at least public participation. In the seven dimensions, we can divide it into the words and action part.

So what we find interesting actually, the information of online behavior has a positive relationship to the words, and the relaxed online behavior has positive -- it's just enactive to the action participation but it has also positive relations to the words. About the social behavior, it's most important. It's positive to not only the words participation but also the participation via actions.

If we go further, we can find more interesting things. When we consider who we are talking to on the Internet, there are basically two types. First, it's friends, family. Those are who we know in the real and the Internet just provides another way for us to interact with them. The second is someone we don't know in real. They are strangers online. We talk to them because we want to share the same interests and identities with them. So what will be different when we're considering the public participation.

So this is what we found in the survey. People who are talking to their friends, they will get more positive in the words participation but this may not affect the action participation. And the people talking to the strangers online, there seems not much difference in the words participation but they have a positive relationship with the action participation.

So how to explain it? The first one may be here are some details. So how to explain? The first one may be easy to understand. People want to share their opinions with their friends, but what's their relationship with the people talking to strangers and their participation in actions? So I think in my opinion, it's the sign of emergence of the new social association in China.

Here are two models of the social association suggested by Chinese professor Fei Shaotong. So the first one he used to describe what is the association in east countries. The self is in the center, and this is the dependent self. Like the ripples

disturbed by the stone in the water, the layers indicate the relationships as guanxi and the farther the layer goes, the weaker the guanxi was. So the closest layer is for family, and as they go out, the weak -- the ties will be weak. So in this model, strangers are nowhere in this circle. So we don't have rules to instruct how to interact with strangers. So actions with strangers is very hard.

The other graph is for the group model of associations which Fei usually to describe the association in the west countries, but now it seems it is imaging in China now. So in this group, the self chooses their membership by joining online interest groups. So this circle indicates identities getting self and strangers together. So this means the rise of individualism in the new social association. This will facilitate the public action.

And the last but not least, when we talk about the relationship between entertainment and political, one thing that can't be ignored is the digital content with political implications. So these are two concepts I borrowed from other scholars to describe the first information paternalism is to the digital environment in China, and the second digital hidden transcript is about the Internet culture on China.

Because the time is limited, I will just give a very simple example of this digital hidden transcript, Han Han, he is a famous writer and car racer, and a spokesman for the post-'80s generation. So this is an advertisement he made for brand. Just one minute. Yeah. Made for a brand, selling clothes for young generation online. So this is the slogan, "Love the Internet, love freedom, love the night, whatever. I just speak for myself. I'm just like you. I'm just an ordinary traveler."

So let's see what natizens do. This is a city inspector. Actually, he is the very concrete end of the administrative power. So his main duty is to clear the street of the vendors, but it's caused much conflict in the urban areas. So this is what -- they

translated these words and at least they say, "We are the city inspector. We will rule the world." So this is politics. And in a very fun and ironic way.

So this is a very simple conclusion. In China, digital entertainment is related to public participation and also related to politics. Social media for friends will affect the public participation in their words. That means Chinese youth are waiting to get information from friends, as well as share personal opinions with them. And social media for strangers has affected the public participation figure action, especially the non-contentious action and youth in digital age is learning to interact with strangers through online groups with the same interest or identity. This also indicates the emergence of new social associations. So at least, the digital hidden transcript is a very complex combination of entertainment and politics on the Chinese context. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Thank you very much, Professor Shi, and I would like to welcome Meng Lei to the podium.

MS. MENG LEI: Good morning.

My research focused on youth culture in China, and this article is based on an empirical study of college students' cultural conception.

Since the reform and opening up with rapid economic development, the cultural (inaudible) and the spiritual life of the people are getting richer and more varied. Good changes have taken place due to globalization, urbanization, and digitalization conjointly. The huge market incentive national policy and high technology push forward the cultural progress.

China's special situation comes from the national condition. Several wars and the Cultural Revolution calls the traditional cultures breaks and cultural deprivation. (Inaudible) seems almost no distinction with an increasing gap between rich

and poor. Class differentiation manifests in the cultural feud grandly.

Pop culture can be traced back to the start of the 1980s. Mandarin TV series from Asian areas, just like Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore became popular across the country. The audience ratings were very high and the same songs were singing by everyone. China's cultural productivity advanced sharply during the '90s. The in-party, the cultural groups became plentiful. It is significant to note that we do media -- websites spring up during recent years. TV plays and pop music downloads online went up at a fantastic rate.

Rapid update technology supplies abundant information resources, especially to young people. Convenience and liberty enable them to quickly access the newest work. The young generation became securing Asia. This big group is consuming the cultural products from all over the world. So the multicultural context nurtures college students to have global taste.

Music will allow various -- oh, it's some mistake, but the (inaudible) China's pop music and the second part is Europe and American pop music. And the other is Japan-Korean pop music. Even when the classic -- western classic music folks and jazz and so on.

What's they most enjoy is American TV series. American culture industry proposes the global leadership. That's it.

Generally speaking, conception of popular culture showed foreign competition of cultural influences compared with Japan and South Korea culture, European and American cultures have more advantages. This conclusion is on the macro level.

Next, I will share some specific differentiation among student groups.

There are two main types of cultural taste. The students from rural areas

related to localized preference and the students from urban areas related to international preference. This is the rural-urban gap of cultural taste. Just like Professor Li Chunling mentioned hukou-type, urban-rural is the Chinese special separation. We can see the red one. The red part is the urban students. They are American TV fans and the blue is rural hukou students. They are the local Chinese TV series fans.

This, in fact, is very similar to music preferences. If we go a step further, the family residence, the red line goes up as American works fans and the blue is Chinese works fans. And the other art practice goes in a similar way. There is a high degree of uniformity between advantageous cultural capability and advantaged status. Global tastes may be turning into global interact (inaudible) elite status.

As Professor Tian Feng mentioned, higher in college rank and more western preference. We can see the macro level is urban-rural and family residence. The micro level is rank of college, and the macro level is family and the individual, including parents' education degree, family finance.

This figure shows mother's education is a contributing factor. It's a parent trend. And the elite (inaudible) elite status, including party members and no party members. The right party is party members they prefer to American TV series. And the cadre -- students' cadre, in a similar way.

Family finance. The purple curve is the American fans.

Cultural differences are shaped by regional differences, globalization and urbanization. The distinction between localized taste and westernized taste have been given by social differentiation, just like urban-rural separation and original differences.

Maybe there are some potential influences of cultural assumption. Our data through materials conception became (inaudible). The British and American TV fans preferred to foreign culture and lifestyle, and they expressed the more purchasing

will of the luxury goods. And Professor -- Dr. Zhu Di just mentioned the mobile brand.

Globalization brings the distinction of lifestyle and cultural taste, which will participate in the accumulation of cultural capital, point to class stratification, and reproduction of social stages. When you involve into the process of globalization, cultural imperialism, (inaudible) cultural homogenization, criticize globalization and modernization, undermine development of other countries.

But I think in China's case, international competition is challenges but also communication.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Okay. Thank you very much.

I would like to invite our last speaker to the podium. I wish we had more time for everybody, but hopefully we can get some more information in the question and answer session.

MR. LU PENG: Okay. This part actually is divided into two issues. One is action and the other is attitudes. Action is more about social and political behaviors, and attitudes are about two issues -- one is dream and the other is trust.

First of all, we need to see the social and political behaviors of Chinese young people and the data all come from the panel survey data as my colleague has just talked about. And we have found that for the general respondents, more than 60 percent of them have read and searched for societal-political news from newspapers, magazines, and about 50 percent discuss public affairs with their friends and relatives voluntarily. But just a few of them participate in social and political actions in public. We can see the data on the right most, too, only 16 percent participate in boycott of certain products and only less than 2 percent have participated in any activities like protests, demonstrations, and

so on. But we can find that about one-third of the respondents have enthusiasm of participating in social charities and donations.

And we can find that for three types of college students. Students from elite universities are more likely to read and discuss politics, while students from the junior colleges are more likely to participate in boycotts and protests. And for party members, the difference actually is not very significant, but still we have found that Communist Party members in college are more likely to read politics than nonparty members, while they are much less likely to participate in public actions or politics.

But more interesting, we have found that another indicator, the student association membership is probably a more effective indicator to mirror the public participation for Chinese students. That means if you are an active member of the student association, you are more likely to participate in politics. And the membership of the Communist Party is not that much apparent as many people think. This probably is because of the more realistic attitudes of joining the party.

We have found that the action of climbing the Great Firewall or jump the Great Firewall, that students who climb the Great Firewall more frequently are more likely to participate in politics. That's the action part.

And this is the attitudes part. You'll note the word "Chinese dream" is now the buzzword in China. Some people say it's just a political propaganda of the state, but our survey shows that Chinese college students have very positive attitudes to this concept. It's actually quite widely accepted. The data shows that 85 percent of Chinese students don't think that the "Chinese dream" is a concept of the state, and 80 percent don't think it is merely about the elite either. So they think it's a concept about themselves.

But, on the other hand, we have found that the majority of students agree

that the priority of the "Chinese dream" is to realize their personal dreams. It's a little bit different than the concept defined by the state. And we asked the students to evaluate their family economic situation compared to their cohorts -- good, okay, or bad -- and we found that students with better economic self-evaluated better family background are more likely to -- are less likely to accept this concept from the state, and they are less likely to think that the concept is merely about the elites. But students from the worst family backgrounds are more preferenced on the priority of the "Chinese dream" as a personal dream.

Let's talk about the confidence of social mobility. Well, surprisingly, we found that Chinese students are very much confident about social mobility, even though we already talked about a lot of social inequalities. We have found that for the first questions if people still have plenty of opportunities to succeed in works if they work hard enough. We have found that 52.9 percent of students agree and 21.8 students strongly agree with this. So it's very positive.

And the second question is kids from poor families still have plenty of opportunities to enjoy an elite university through self-promotion, and their positive rate is still very high.

On the third question, if people cannot succeed in tasks for officials without strong connections, the opinion is split. We can find it half to half. And students from poor family backgrounds are more optimistic about general upward mobility. We can find the rate from 68 percent to 75 percent. Students from richer family backgrounds are more optimistic for public post-tests. That's a very interesting difference. And students from rural are slightly optimistic on elite college entrance tests than students from urban. That might not be a significant difference, but it's very interesting and maybe it is because the respondents themselves have succeeded in their entrance

examinations. That's why they think about this.

We have found a very apparent split on gender inequality, that male students don't think that females have to work harder than females to succeed, while the female students don't think so totally. It's very apparent.

Trust in societal political news sources, we have listed several items to let them evaluate, and we found that the most trusted news source is a statement from the Central Government and then the State Mainstream Press and a statement from the local government and the Foreign Mainstream Press, marketized the domestic price. And it's surprising for me that the news source from the Internet, like the Weibo, that's the Chinese Twitter, and the Internet forum is much lower than the organized media. We cannot call the (inaudible) because the Mainstream State may also uses a lot of new technology to propaganda. And the party members trust more those media sources, except the Internet forum, and the data here is the mean of the result. The students who climb the Great Firewall trust more in foreign media and Internet.

The agenda. Female students are more likely to trust those media than male students, except on their Internet forum and VIP account on Weibo. And students from the urban are more likely to trust in foreign and marketized media.

This is trust in charity channels. We have found that the most trusted charity channels is friends and classmates. That's reasonable. And estate organs, private organs, foreign organs, party payment, corporate activities and celebrity activities.

The last one is the Red Cross. We just tested this because the Red Cross was in a huge scandal, and it turns out that if you get a scandal it takes a long time to be trusted again. But it's also a surprise for us to find that actually students are more likely to trust the charity channels with organization background instead of those with commercial backgrounds.

And in conclusion, I'll go through very quickly, Chinese college students' interpretation of the "Chinese dream" is connected with the dreams or desires and personal realizations. It's slightly different with the state definition. Most are optimistic on upward social mobility, so self-promotion, while more than half are pessimistic on competition into the public post and agenda issues.

So the policy implication is that if you want to promote confidence in social mobility, the government needs to create more equalities, particularly inside the state system. Chinese college students are not political, though they barely, or they don't have enough chances, to participate in radical political activities like protests and demonstrations. More than 60 percent read societal political news, almost half discuss politics, 15 percent write comments online about politics, and 16 percent boycott products for political reasons. It's still surprising. And one-third participate in philanthropic activities or donate voluntarily. Elite students prefer to talk and read, while students from junior colleagues are more likely to act. So party members might not be an effective indicator in predicting political behaviors, while vice versa other sociopolitical involvements. And most students trust more in the statement of government and organized public medias than less organized self-media. A countermovement on the Internet might be emerging probably because of the government's campaign under the scandals or rumors on the Internet. And charity channels with commercial backgrounds are less trusted than state and civic ones but those with scandals need a long time to recover. Internet behaviors have a significant impact on trust, but socioeconomic differentiation also matters.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Okay. I'd like to invite all of the panelists to join me

up here on the stage for a question and answer session.

Thank you very much, first of all, to all the panelists. I think it's fantastic and very interesting information that they have provided us with today. I only wish we had more time to hear some of their fascinating findings. But I think since we're running a little bit behind, I would like to sort of, rather than posing my own question, jump straight into the questions from the audience and then perhaps if there's time remaining at the end I'll pose a few questions myself. But can I invite the audience to open it up for questions?

SPEAKER: Just a simple curious question about what Chinese young people are watching on American TV. A lot of the things you said was watching this group of national channel, but what specifically, what are the shows that attract young people? What are the imagery of those shows? What are the themes of those shows? If you could just give us more of an impression of what that is, I mean, that would help me as an American to understand the Chinese eyes seeing American culture. What is the attractor and what types of entertainment and shows?

MS. MENG LEI: (Speaking in Chinese)

Most Chinese college students or the youth in China are still watching the local productions, and I think as far as TV programs in China are concerned, there's still space for them to grow because China is still in a transition period of restructuring the country's system. So it is somehow kind of unique or set itself apart from the other societies. So all these situations in China have been reflected in the entertainment business in China.

As far as the U.S. TV series are concerned, she mentioned a show that I didn't quite get, but most college students tend to lean towards intellectual shows, like probably documentaries and that sort of thing, but also entertainment, more entertaining

types of shows, for example, sitcoms as one of them.

So currently, if you look at the entertainment, this is a cultural business. The U.S. and Korea are more advanced, and they have more mature industries and also higher technology. But as far as the cultural products in China are concerned, we have the money. And so we are still learning and growing in terms of acquiring technology and also formulating business models.

Because the U.S. and Korea have very successful commercialization and entertainment models, and so we have begun to see that the same things are now emerging in the Chinese productions.

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Okay. Question from the lady here. And can I also ask that you please identify yourself and your affiliation when you stand up to ask your question.

MS. HONG-FINCHER: My name is Beverly Hong-Fincher.

I just wonder if you have talk shows like Bill Moyers. I mean, are there any followers of Bill Moyers or Charlie Rose, et cetera? Because you mentioned that, you know, some of the variants are voluntary, and these are, you know, how many would voluntarily watch Bill Moyers and Charlie Rose, et cetera?

MS. MENG LEI: So, yeah, our research or studies did not include the part about how many people are watching shows like Bill Moyers and Charlie Rose. Mostly, our studies focused on just television shows and other popular shows.

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Yes, Dr. Cheng Li?

DR. CHENG LI: Well, congratulations for a very impressive panel, and also congratulations to my colleague, CASS, your great effort to train young scholars. It's really quite impressive.

And my question is for Lu Peng about the concept of the "Chinese

dream". It certainly caught my attention. Now, as we know, the definition of "Chinese dream" has two major components. One is related to national affairs. It's a rejuvenation of a Chinese nation. The other is the middle class lifestyle and also the opportunity for poor people, low class, to enter the middle class lifestyle. How did you distinguish these two in your survey? And is it possible that the people, when they answer the question, not so much in your line of thinking about the middle class but rather China's rise.

Now, also related to this question is have you noticed any other studies in China, survey studies about "Chinese dream" which may not yield the same positive results? I haven't noticed that but I was really quite impressed by the high positive response.

And if I may, I want to ask a final question. For your survey, you mentioned -- several of you mentioned this is the first phase, phase one. So when will be phase two? And what do you want to emphasize in phase two?

MR. LU PENG: Okay. That is three questions.

The first one is that for our survey we actually did not give a definition of "Chinese dream". We just asked the respondents several questions on the "Chinese dream" but they can define the "Chinese dream" by themselves. What kind of -- in your mind, actually. So that indicates that Chinese students, they have very positive attitudes to the concept, but not the exact concept as the state wants them to have. Social mobility is a vital part of the "Chinese dream", I think, but the state maybe wants to emphasize the other side, so that's why I say they have different opinions on it.

And on the second question about the priorities of the survey this year, the second wave, we would like actually to dig more about those patterns of behaviors because, you know, for the first wave you already discussed some very interesting trends. We want to design the question as more theory driven and more deeper.

And for the political attitudes part, which I designed for this year, we would like actually to design a questionnaire that is less political, because we actually find that if you ask students questions about politics, they actually cannot understand it clearly sometimes if you do not use a way they can understand, especially for students from junior colleges if you talk about some big words, especially political philosophy words. They actually cannot understand it as you think they understand. So we try to narrow their political attitudes through their everyday life participation. That's why in the first wave of our survey we didn't ask them about how do you think about democracy or how do you think about political systems; we just asked about how do you think about charities, because this might be a more useful way to reflect their real attitudes towards social and political activities. Thank you.

MS. SZABLEWICZ: On the corner here at the back. This woman.

SPEAKER: Hi. I'm (inaudible) from Georgetown University. As a Chinese student, I really appreciate your efforts and studies on Chinese youth.

My question to all of you is as you mentioned, the elite group in Chinese youth, they're more focused on the western culture. They are more likely to be influenced by the American culture, the soap opera, the smartphones, technology. I'm wondering what do you think about this phenomenon in terms of the influence on Chinese future development. Thank you.

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Are you saying what kind of impact their attraction to western cultures has an impact on Chinese youth?

MS. MENG LEI: (Speaking in Chinese)

MR. LU PENG: I want to add two more points.

Interpreter: (Speaking in Chinese)

So, yeah, our studies actually also focused on the influence of foreign

cultures or foreign influence as the Chinese youth continue to grow, whether they are going to incorporate this kind of imported cultures into their own. And how that's going to affect them in the future when they want to choose their career path, for example, whether they want to come to the United States to study.

And in our study or in sociology, we call it a hidden variant. Am I saying it right? Or hidden variable. But I think by listening to all these kind of descriptions about how they're attracted to Western cultures and so forth, I think in the future a phenomenon may be that we're going to see also cultural stratification in China.

MR. LU PENG: Okay. I want to add two points. The first is that putting the question of how to define the western culture aside, it's inaccurate to claim that Chinese students are more preferable to the western cultures because our data just reviews that just a certain part of Chinese students are more preferable to a certain kind of American culture products. So there is actually apparent differentiation among Chinese students.

It actually surprised me that we found that a large proportion of Chinese students, especially those from the rural and poor family backgrounds, prefer to domestic products, especially those in anti-Japanese movies. It's very surprising to find that those movies have a very large market. So it reminds us that on one hand we have a trend of Chinese young people pro the so-called western cultures but on the other hand, the populism might be another way for the Chinese young people.

And the second is that for your question about the impact on the future development. In the second wave of our data, we want to design some questions on the relationship between culture preference and actions. We want to test whether a people who prefer American values are more likely to agree with American values. And so far we found that -- we don't have the large scale survey but we have a small group to test --

we found that the connection is not very significant as we thought. So they like American dramas but they don't act the way Americans do.

MS. SZABLEWICZ: Okay. Thank you. I think we are getting towards the end of our time here, so unfortunately, I'm going to cut off the questions from the audience, but hopefully you'll have an opportunity to perhaps speak with some of these scholars afterwards.

Also, I would like to say that there are going to be the PowerPoints from the presentations available today. They will be online, as will be an audio transcript of the proceedings of today's conference.

And I would just like to thank all of the scholars who have come here from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Brookings Institution once again for hosting this. I think that this has been an interesting entry into a dialogue about Chinese youth and the future of Chinese youth.

Thank you very much.

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