

《外国人对中国的偏见到底是怎么形成的？》

导读:不少外国人都对中国带有偏见，同样的中国人对外国人的刻板印象也不少，这些不合实际的观念是怎么得来的呢？



I recently bumped into a fellow Canadian as we waited for an elevator. We had a pleasant exchange about respective birthplaces and length of time in China.

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We happened to be going to the same place, enhancing the delightful coincidence. I pushed the button for the fourth floor, but he told me the office was on the seventh. Unfortunately, our next simple exchange showed that our shared nationality didn't mean we were likeminded.

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It was just a simple comment, the kind I hear all the time, but one that forces me to bite my tongue.

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I don't understand how some people think that sharing an exotic experience, such as living in China, entitles them to say something derogatory and expect concurrence just because we're in the same boat.

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As the elevator doors closed, I tried to correct my mistake and double pressed the button for the fourth floor, hoping it would erase the selections and prevent an unnecessary stop. Unfortunately, it was an older model and it didn't work.

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The next words he said told me everything I needed to know about his attitude toward China. "Not going to happen in this country," he said nonchalantly. Sure, it was just a simple observation, but to me it immediately showed his sense of superiority.

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Understanding the better part of valor, I usually let offhanded comments like this slide, but not this time.

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"Interesting you'd say that, I've only ever seen the 'cancel-floor' option on elevators in China. I think it was invented by a Chinese elevator company," I said.

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Okay, that is enough of the elevator story.

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Studies show that we all carry around built-in, implicit bias on just about every topic. They are almost impossible to overcome, but we should strive to recognize when we are feeding our prejudice.

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Too often, a long-term "China experience" seems to entitle foreigners to walk around with a giant chip on their shoulder.

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I've seen how this attitude evolves. The newly arrived are keenly interested in this very different place. Soon the novelty wears off, and the formerly interesting differences become objects of ridicule. Then the yearning for the way things are back home begins, and the "expert" expat critic emerges.

