

# NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

#8, January — March, 1983



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## *REPORT: SEMINAR ON EAST ASIAN STUDIES & CAREERS*

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The seminar, held October 21 at Portland State University, brought together representatives from the business, governmental, and academic communities to discuss the utility of training in East Asian studies and languages for international careers in business, law, journalism, and government.

Robert Landauer, editorial page editor of *The Oregonian*, discussed the relevance of training in East Asian studies, particularly languages, for international careers. He also said that the image of the "tonguetied" American is no longer funny but a very real detriment to successful trade, and, that, unfortunately, foreign language incompetence in the U.S. seems to be increasing.

Marwyn Samuels, a geography professor from the University of British Columbia and private consultant to international firms, emphasized the importance of language and area expertise to business dealings in the Asian context. He spoke of the importance of "guanxi" (in Chinese, "connection" or "relationship") in business dealings with the Chinese -- a friendship relationship built on mutual interests and years of contact, and requiring the input of much time and effort.

Dian Murray, a China historian at Linfield College, then gave a short summary of the state of East Asian studies in Oregon, with the conclusion that only the University of Oregon (UO) offers an comprehensive Asian studies program and more than two years of training in an Asian language.

Robert Willner, former executive director of the Governor's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies, then presented the Commission's findings, which included a survey of Oregon businesses involved in international trade, and led to some of the following conclusions: international-related firms need individuals who "know their way around in international trade"; the interest in language training was not overwhelming but could affect hiring or promotion decisions; of the languages preferred for potential employees, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese ranked the highest.

A short panel presentation followed with Stephen Kohl, chairman of UO's East Asian Languages and Literatures Department and Doug Rake, television producer of Shinzen Productions. Kohl described UO's language program and how it had been revised recently to adapt to the needs of business and law students (who have been en-

rolling in increasing numbers in language courses) in the form of more slowly paced classes to fit their time constraints. Rake described his company's experience working in Japan and the positive difference that knowledge of the language and culture made.

The seminar ended with an open discussion of the Northwest China Council proposal for a Portland area summer East Asian Language Institute to provide high-quality, competency-oriented, intensive language training in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, with advanced courses for such specialized needs as business negotiations.

Discussion included: possible short- and long-term benefits to companies; need for cooperation between business and academic communities in determining specific training and how to accomplish it; and support of existing academic programs in East Asian languages.

As a result of the seminar, which involved about 65 people, the Northwest China Council has initiated an ad hoc committee which is meeting regularly to establish guidelines for a summer language institute. Some of the institutions now being examined as possible models are: the German Summer School held each year at Lewis & Clark College, Middlebury College's Language Schools, and the Thunderbird Institute in Arizona.

Deborah Sipe

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## CHINA COUNCIL NEWS

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### TAIWAN PROJECT

A joint national/regional project on contemporary Taiwan is being planned for Oregon. Taiwan is undergoing major transitions in its economy, society, politics, and international status. Production of consumer goods is giving way to an emphasis on high technology. Younger mainlanders are identifying more and more with Taiwan, and native Taiwanese are growing in social and political influence. Taiwan is nearing the end of the Chiang era and it is not at all certain who will lead in the future. There is renewed uncertainty in Taiwan about U.S. military support and increasing pressure from China for reunification. The joint project, to be funded by regional businesses, will include a major one-day conference in Portland geared to business executives on political, economic, and diplomatic developments in Taiwan; a series of luncheon lectures in other parts of the state; a slide-tape; and a nationally produced booklet for general readers on contemporary Taiwan. Richard Bush of the national China Council is working with a regional committee to develop the project and raise funds.

### SEATTLE BRANCH

Mary Bernson, formerly a Beaverton High School social studies teacher and an active member of the Northwest China Council board, is now coordinator of the East Asia Resource Center at the University of Washington School of International Studies. She not only assists teachers and others in learning more about China, Japan, and Korea, but also coordinates the Seattle branch of our regional China Council. She replaces William Crowell, who now works for the International Communication Agency.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Joining the Northwest China Council board in 1983 are: Wen Chen, China Liaison Manager, NIKE, Inc.; Karen Gernant, Assistant Professor of History, Southern Oregon State College, Ashland; Anthony Polsky, Managing Editor, Pacific Business; Christine Richardson-Barlow, Admissions Office Manager, Lewis & Clark College; and Linda Walton, Assistant Professor of History, Portland State University. All had been associates to the advisory board prior to joining it as full members. Joseph Ha, International Affairs Chairman at Lewis & Clark College, also joins the board as the new president of the World Affairs Council.

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## **OREGON — TAIWAN TRADE**

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In 1981, Taiwan was Oregon's\* fifth largest trading partner, with \$297,902,433 worth of goods traded, and a balance of trade favorable to Oregon (\$193,273,127 exports to Taiwan, compared to \$104,629,306 imported).

Grain was the Northwest's major export to Taiwan, along with much smaller sales of other farm crops, steel scrap, aluminum, machine parts, trucks, and wood products like particle board.

What Taiwan trades for these goods reflects changes taking place in the Taiwanese economy. Clothing and footwear still account for a large part of their exports, but a little more than half of what Oregon bought last year fell into other categories. Televisions, radios, plywood and veneer, sports equipment, telephones, loudspeakers, and microphones were among the top ten Oregon imports from Taiwan.

Some goods move full circle. Corn passes through Oregon to be canned in Taiwan and re-sold to Oregon supermarkets; hides from the Northwest

come back veneered and crafted into dining room sets.

The world recession weighs heavily on an economy for which exports represent 50% of the Gross National Product. Furthermore, rising wages are driving certain industries to Hong Kong, China, and the Philippines where labor costs are lower. Also, Taiwan has increased tariffs on such import items as beef and grain sorghums. Uncontrolled counterfeiting of imported products (such as Apple Computers) has also proven a major problem for exporters of high technology.

As a result, the Taiwanese economy has been slipping recently, with the GNP growth rate only 5% in 1981 (compared to an average of 10% annual growth rate over the past three decades). 1982's growth rate is projected to be 4% at best.

Imports are down 13% from 1981, exports up only a fraction of a percent. Unemployment almost doubled between April and September, although it still remains very low by world standards, probably 3% by the end of 1982. Industrial production is operating at 75% capacity.

However, such difficulties have not yet affected the volume of trade with Oregon. The volume has more than doubled since 1977, and the number of Oregon firms involved in trade has increased. When the U.S. broke off diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1979 and the Taiwanese consulate closed in Portland, there were roughly 100 Oregon firms doing business with Taiwan; today, there are over 160--of which at least 12 also do business with China.

Taiwan's economic strategy for the future is to develop its "Information Industry"--semi-conductors, computers, and specialized high technology. The Sinchu Science-Based Industrial Park, opened two years ago outside Taipei, offers business the lure of tax and profit incentives, below-market loans from

government, and a pool of trained technicians. Control Data and Wang Laboratories are two of the 37 companies opening operations there, and Taiwan would like to see more joint U.S. - Taiwanese ventures, building towards a goal of 150 firms by 1990. One hope is for joint firms in engineering and construction to do consulting work for the rest of Asia. Developers of the Sinchu project liken it to the early stages of Silicon Valley, where many of them got their training.

A decade ago, Oregon trade with Taiwan meant almost exclusively exports of Northwest grain. Then came textile imports. If changes in the Taiwanese economy take place as planned, Oregon - Taiwan trade should again see major changes in the 1980's.

\*"Oregon" does not refer to the state of Oregon, but to the Oregon Customs District, the only unit for which export - import figures are available. Included in the Oregon exports is everything that leaves the country through an Oregon port --for example, mid-western corn. Included as imports are goods that enter the country through Oregon, including goods headed for parts East. To further complicate matters, some Oregon products are shipped out through Seattle and Oakland, and no air freighted exports (such as electronic equipment) manufactured in Oregon go through our ports.

Diane Fox and Jane Larson

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## CHINA RESEARCH SEARCH

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This issue inaugurates a new column in which we invite interested readers to make contributions to ongoing research projects which depend on local resources for their success. If you would like your project mentioned in future issues please write a short description of it, along

with the type of assistance needed, and send to Jeffrey Barlow, History Department, Lewis & Clark College, Portland, OR 97219.

Ron Towner, P.O. Box 53, Palouse, WA 99161, requests information or photographs for an ethnoarchaeological analysis of the Warrendale Cannery site on the Columbia River. Any information pertaining to Chinese workers on the Columbia from 1876 to 1930 would be appreciated.

Jeffrey Barlow, at the above address, requests assistance in locating individuals, memoirs, or photographs relating to Oregonians who did mission or medical work in China during the nineteenth century or later.

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## CHINESE IN OREGON

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### PRC STUDENTS IN OREGON

There are now between 75 and 100 students and scholars from the People's Republic of China resident in Oregon while studying at local colleges and universities. These Chinese sometimes feel quite isolated from people outside the confines of the academic community and usually welcome opportunities to meet a wider group of Americans. If you would like to meet one or more of those Chinese resident in your town, you could contact the following people and extend an invitation for dinner at your home, or perhaps a visit to your workplace, or even an overnight field trip which might enable these visitors to see more of Oregon. Please contact:

In the Eugene region, where there are about 15 Chinese resident: Dr. Tom Mills, Foreign Student Advisor, University of Oregon, 686-3206.

In the Corvallis region, where there are more than 15 resident Chinese: Dr. M. Durham, Foreign Student Advisor, Oregon State University, 754-3006.

**Northwest Regional China Council**

1912 S.W. Sixth, #252  
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503-229-3049



December, 1982

Dear Newsletter Readers:

With this issue, #8, we complete our second year of publication of the Northwest China Council Newsletter. Our articles this issue include a cover story on our October Seminar on East Asian Studies and Careers; a book review of Becoming Americans by Portland author Tricia Knoll; and a summary of Oregon's booming trade with Taiwan.

We hope that you enjoy receiving the newsletter, which is now distributed without charge to more than 1,300 people and organizations on our mailing list.

Our 1982 operating budget totalled \$17,833, of which we have received only \$9,500--from corporate and individual donations, sales of books, program profits, and our annual Asia Society grant of \$4,000.

One of our largest annual expenses is this newsletter, which costs \$1,500 to print and mail. We don't want to institute a subscription system at this time because it is so time-consuming to keep in order, but we do need some financial support from our readers to continue publication.

Thus, we now find it necessary to ask you to help support publication of this newsletter and the general operations of the Northwest China Council.

Contributions of any amount will be welcome and are tax-deductible. Those of \$25 or more will be rewarded by a free copy of the China handbook published by the national China Council.

We hope that you will find it possible to support us this year. Thank you very much.

Most Sincerely,

Jane Leung Larson  
Coordinator

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NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of contribution \_\_\_\_\_ (please write checks to World Affairs Council for NWRCC).

Comments:



In the Portland region, there are three possible contacts: Dr. Kwan Hsu, Physics Department, Portland State University, 229-4239 or 228-6875; Jean Vanderwoude, Foreign Student Advisor, Lewis & Clark College, 244-6161 x324; Maxine Sweetman, U.S. - China People's Friendship Association, 644-7757.

#### CHINESE AMONG SOUTHEAST ASIAN REFUGEES

Of the 17,500 refugees in Oregon, rough estimates are that 1,600 to 1,700 are ethnic Chinese, coming mostly, but not exclusively, from Viet Nam. They speak a variety of dialects, including Cantonese, Hakka, Fukien, and Mandarin. To help deal with their new lives here they have established the Chinese of Indochina Friendship Association.

Especially in view of government cutbacks, agencies helping the refugees welcome your help. One of these is the Indochinese Cultural and Services Center (241-9393) which is looking for people able to make a three month commitment to tutoring English once a week.

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## BOOKS IN THE NEWS

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### Becoming Americans

Tricia Knoll

Coast to Coast Books, 1982  
\$14.50

"San Francisco, California, 1848: 'The American brig Eagle arrived here from Canton, China on the 2nd of February, 1848, with two Chinamen and a Chinawoman, who were looked upon as curiosities by some of the growing town of San Francisco, who had never seen people of that nationality before'."

Thus opens the recently published book Becoming Americans by Portland author Tricia Knoll. Knoll's new book is a fascinating account of nine Asian groups and their intro-

duction to and experience in the United States, particularly on the West Coast. Described in the first chapter are the Chinese, the first Asian group to settle in large numbers in the United States. We learn that at one time Portland had the second largest Chinese population on the West Coast. The 1980 census showed 850,000 Chinese in America.

Two techniques are used in this work which set it apart from other histories of Asian-Americans. A short description of Asian and American history provides a context in which each migration is viewed. The author also defines the various groups according to whether they were sojourners (those who intended only to work in the U.S. for a certain period, then return home), immigrants, or refugees.

The Chinese who came to the United States in the 1850's and 1860's were primarily sojourners, lured in large numbers by the promise of rich rewards in the gold mining fields. By 1870, 61% of the miners in Oregon and 59% of the miners in Idaho were Chinese.

Later came work on the railroads, then truck farming and work as merchants and in the service occupations. Many Chinese were employed as horticultural workers. One such worker, Ah Bing, was immortalized when his employer, Seth Llewelling, named the Bing cherry after him.

Knoll's book includes documentation of the continuing history of discrimination against the Chinese, from ownership of mining claims through marriage rights. Most Chinese were male, often leaving wives and children at home. From 1872 to 1935, Asians were prohibited from marrying Caucasians. The 1924 Immigration Act also made it impossible for Chinese men to bring over their wives. Thus, for many years, an enforced bachelorhood typified the Chinese-American experience.

Discussions with the author yield interesting background information to the book. Knoll's interest in the Asian experience started in about 1975 when she began, as a high school English teacher, to teach in an English skills lab. An increasing number of students in the lab were Southeast Asian and Knoll came to know many of them and their individual stories.

Knoll turned to free lance writing in 1980. The author consequently decided to look at the history of all Asian ethnic groups in the U.S. and to trace the common threads and diversities among groups.

Material for Becoming Americans came from numerous sources. Personal narratives, often the result of many hours of interviews, were particularly important in writing about Asians who had more recently arrived in the U.S., such as the Cambodians. Information was also culled from numerous libraries, historical societies, photo archives and even some private collections to present both general history and personal experience.

The current chapter of Asians coming to the United States appears to be drawing to a close. Gradually decreasing limits are being placed on refugees allowed into the U.S. and funds for assisting them are beginning to dry up. Knoll's book arrives at a valuable time then, in giving us a perspective on the experience of all Asians in "becoming Americans" from 1848 to the present.

Deborah Sipe

Portland's Cinema 21, January 9 and 10.

This delightful little black and white film was made in San Francisco's Chinatown for nothing; the shoestring budget of all time--\$20,000. If that sounds like a lot, consider for a moment the average Hollywood movie with a price tag of ten million dollars. At least now, however, the filmmaker Wayne Wang won't have to collect welfare checks anymore; this film is a financial as well as a critical success.

Although this is a "mystery" with a "Chan" in the title, don't expect a murder, drawing-room scene, number-one son, or case that's neatly tied up in the end. This is a real Chinese mystery.

On the surface, the story is about a Chinese cabdriver (Wood Moy) and his nephew (Marc Hayashi) who go in search of the money (\$40,000) they have entrusted to their Taiwanese business partner--Chan. He has disappeared and no one seems to know what has happened. Along the way we get a grand tour of Chinese-American culture and the real people who live and work in Chinatown. Each of them adds clues (Won ton spelled backwards is not now) to the mystery while simultaneously debunking most of the cliches about Chinese.

In the end, however, the cookie that's cracked open reveals an enigmatic fortune: "The more you know, the less you understand."

F.A. Hutchison

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## FILM REVIEW

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### CHAN IS MISSING

If you missed "Chan is Missing" when it played at the Fifth Avenue Cinema in October you have another chance to see it. It will be at



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## **NORTHWEST REGIONAL SEMINAR IN PORTLAND**

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The Northwest Regional Seminar on East Asia, a regional association of East Asianists from area colleges and universities, had its bi-annual meeting at Smith Center, Portland State University on November 6, 1982. Linda Walton of the History Department at Portland State was the coordinator. The meeting consisted of five scholarly panels of paper presentations on the themes "Imperialism in Korea," "Politics and Art in Contemporary

China," "Topics in Modern Japanese Culture," "Ch'un-ch'iu Scholarship and Political Philosophy," and "Survival Strategies for 'Outcasts' in China," and a panel discussion on the problems of teaching English in China and teaching Chinese in America. At the plenary session, Professor Henry Schwartz of Western Washington State University spoke on "the Mongols and China," emphasizing the long-term cultural and political domination of Mongols within China by Han Chinese.

The date for the spring meeting of the Regional Seminar to be held in Seattle has not yet been set but it is planned for early March.

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## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

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### **January**

- 14 POTLUCK DINNER/TALK with Chinese scholars at Lewis & Clark College; sponsored by the U.S. - China People's Friendship Association. 7:00 PM, Dubach Dining Room, Templeton Center, Lewis & Clark College. Bring a main dish, side dish, or dessert. For information, call Sarah Morgan, 282-1778.
- 26 NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL BOARD MEETING, open to China Council board members and associates; Salem Civic Center, City Council Chambers, 555 Liberty St. SE, 6:00 PM. Meeting followed by no-host Chinese dinner. Call 229-3049 for information.

### **February**

- 10 SLIDE SHOW ON CHINA, by Paul Morris, who was a member of the journalists' delegation in China for six weeks last fall; sponsored by the U.S. - China People's Friendship Association. Multnomah County Library, downtown, 7:00 PM, no charge. Call Janet Dietz, 245-4061, for more information.
- 2/18 - SIXTH PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, sponsored by the Northwest Film Study Center, Swann Auditorium, Portland Art Museum, 1219 SW Park. New films from throughout the world, including China and Taiwan. Call 221-1156 for schedule. Individual tickets, \$4.00.
- 3/13
- 19 CHINESE NEW YEARS BANQUET/DANCE, sponsored by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, New Lung Fung Restaurant Ballroom, SE 82nd and Division St., 6:30 PM. \$20 per person (tax-deductible); call Mary Leong for reservations, 284-2592/231-4711.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This issue was prepared by Jeffrey Barlow, Diane Fox, Fred Hutchison, Jane Larson, and Deborah Sipe.

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NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL MAILING LIST We welcome you to receive this quarterly newsletter and other special mailings, at no charge.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your special interest in China (trade, scholarly, lived in or traveled to China, Chinese descent, etc.). Let us know what programs we should organize for the future.

WANT OFF THE MAILING LIST? Just call the World Affairs Council office, 229-3049, give us your name and zip code, and we will gladly remove your name from the list.

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*The Northwest Regional China Council is formed to deepen public understanding of China's history, culture, and contemporary affairs (in the People's Republic, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and among Chinese-Americans). Our events are held all over Oregon and in Vancouver and Seattle, Washington and include exhibitions, lectures, conferences, teacher workshops, and business seminars. The Northwest China Council is a program of the World Affairs Council of Oregon and one of twelve regional China councils in the U.S. affiliated with The Asia Society.*

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