

This first is Ed's email just to me, followed by a long description of life in China as he is living it.

To Dad

Reply to letter written June 25th, 1989, received June 26, 1989

June 3, 1989

Before I begin, my reply to Harry Stevens is my journal entry for this week. So that letter can be edited to be put online.

Actually there is quite a bit to look at. I would say I'm less than a mile, as the crow flies, to the ocean, or is that Yellow Sea? There is a lot to see but people are more interested in daily life - which you understand can be hard work - than in exploring the world. And when I talk to people they're not much interested in telling me about their town, more interested in me.

I understand their interest in me, but little is said about China, especially Dalian. But I pick up pieces here and there.

Tell Regina and Frank that I use Big Sky Telegraph as

one of
my best examples in describing the power of telecom.
Most of what "I see" is via VOA and BBC. I get angry
when I
hear of the executions, I understand why the government
is doing
it, and of course I don't agree, but understanding why is
what
makes me even more angry.

I like the reporting on VOA the best, however the
editorials
on BBC are very good and seem to get to the point and
remove all
the sensationalism that most people are attracted to.

I read the notices about the Washington Post, Link-up,
etc.

So, what do you think of your dyslexic son now?

Functional
illiteracy at youth can pay off!

I will keep writing as I can. I want to put most of what I
do down. Therefore my journal will start to have current
political situation mixed with everything else. I will try and
keep them distinct enough so you can separate things
out
easily enough. But it will be written in a chronological-
thought
order for now (editing occurs later).

If ever I cannot be at home when I expect your call for an upload/download I will set my system on automatic.

Therefore if

you receive and send then it hangs up it means I probably not

around. That is why I want to see how to modify the program to

send you a file to your screen to let you know if I'm here or

not, or something else important. Monday night is a good night

for calls. Sunday and Wednesday nights are usually not too good.

Concerning Dagoon Computer Company. I should be getting

names and addresses in China, as well as a company description.

Because of the situation in China things are happening a little

slowly. There is interest in giving me about 1000 Yuan FEC and

then have you send me two modems (not one) as a gift.

Then I let

them use it. I have thought of this idea before but if there was

any trouble it just makes things really complicated. But if you're

interested this could save the hassle of getting an export

license. I don't care what you chose to do, it makes no difference to me.

I think they would enjoy some literature about some modems.

That's no big deal, but it might help them understand some things better.

Finally, they asked about using acoustic modem instead of

direct-connect. The reason is a good-one. If they use a direct

connect they have to get permission from the Post Office (Telecommunications office of the governemnt) for permission

which could make trouble. I personally think that acoustic won't

work with long distance. I told them of my concern. But didn't

want to push it. I think this may fall through because of this

simple problem. Getting permission is difficult and can create

alot of hassles. In fact if they found out how I was using the

phone lines here I would probably get hassled.

I still plan to pursue things with this company, but between

the trouble in China and just the hasslr of getting things

done it
could be difficult.

Concerning my Okidata Microline 80. There is a little spring that sits between the two ribbon spools. When a spool gets to the end of a ribbon a small eyelet on the ribbon pushes a slide and causes the ribbon to change direction. The little spring is on the slide and prevents a gear from contacting the other ribbon spool. Well, this spring seems to have worn out and isn't working at all. As a result the spool sits in one spot and just dries out. I can still use the printer having to manually change directions, but it isn't much fun. Anyway, if you haven't figured out what I want... I want the spring. If you can locate one (or more) please send them to me. This is a fragile spring so if you can send more than one please do so. I can also write to Okidata in Japan but thought you might have a better chance.

I think that even a none standard spring might work...
which

makes me think of Bob Weekly. Anyway, anything you
can do is

appreciated. Just let me know what is happening.

I also made some inquires about a used printer. I might
be

able to pick up something for under \$200. But that's a
last

resort, I can't afford that and don't think you want to
either.

His email for publication wherever I want to put it.

Ed was asked many questions through my connections
to him un China by modem. Here are some of his
answers, reports, and

Harry Stevens, who ran the Discussion software on the
Source asked several

To Harry Stevens

Reply to HARRY STEVENS mail sent June 20, 1989 and
received in

China on June 26, 1989

June 30, 1989

Dear Mr Stevens,

This is quite lengthy, but I have chosen to make my reply to you my journal entry. So bare with me. I have answered all your questions in here.

I'm glad that you are putting some of my text in China Today and USSR Today.

It is very important that none of the names of the people I mention are printed. This is a very small school and the very few people speak English. If any of what I write happens to get back to China, which I doubt anyway, it would be difficult for authorities to figure out whom I was talking about. Only about 20 teachers and staff here speak English, although most of the students do. I also ask that maybe you give me some kind of pen name. The most that the Government would do is expell me, I'm sure. But I don't want to give them any help.

Again, the most important thing is to protect the people here. Please change names of people, even this school, and myself. I can always leave, the people have to stay here and in China you can't quit your job and go someplace else.

Anyway, on to your questions.

That is an interesting stat. that more people here are learning English in China than the US. I can believe it. As far

as I can tell, in the cities at least, every student is taught English. I also think that the illiteracy rate in the country side is pretty high, and the government here is trying to change that.

I am also opposed to English-Only in the US. A form of Fascism, don't you think. Because of America's prosperity other people and countries want to learn English so as to work with

America in one way or another. I consider myself very proud and

very fortunate to be an American, now more than ever being in

China for only a few months. I think its time that the US actively show some respect and learn other countries language.

I keep hearing that some "people" are angry with some other "people" because they don't understand the first "people" and vice-versa. One of the simplest ways I think of learning about another culture is to learn there language. I found that it is much easier to deal with someone who speaks english than those who don't. Not just because of the language barrier but people who speak English tend to understand me better because the understand my language and this changes there way of thinking. I can sometimes tell (seldom though) if a Chinese was taught American English or British English by there actions. Even if it was a Chinese teacher that had a British or American accent.

This is becoming an information rich world but as I said above people really don't understand each other across borders and cultures. Telecom helps strip a lot of visual and verbal prejudices but more has to be done. Only well paid

diplomats or individuals with an interest in learning actually go out to understand another culture.

In many places there are programs to help foster this understanding, such as student and teacher exchanges. This needs to continue. And other things considered. However, it must be an on going and an on growing project.

Getting to understand things in China can be difficult. You asked what is required in the schools. I'm not quite sure at this time. I can tell you that teaching in China isn't much fun and it isn't very difficult.

It isn't much fun because teaching doesn't have much respect. Teachers are very low on the pay scale in China, and like I said it isn't easy to change you job in China, especially if you current boss doesn't like you. Then it's next to impossible.

Well you might say that even though the monetary reward isn't great the reward for touching so many minds and hearts...

Nope, sorry, not in China. From the very beginning people are taught to respect there elders and never talk back. You know, "seen and not heard". Getting students to talk in class is very difficult. Not just for me being a big, tall foreigner but even for the Chinese teachers. Pulling the tooth of a wounded female elephant comes to mind as being easier. I can ask my students if they understood something and ever so gently, as not to attract attention, the shake there heads "yes". However, when ask them a question about what they understood, an answer I often get is "sorry". Sometimes because they didn't understand or because they where afraid to answer.

One time I went to the Liaoning Noraml University. Normal always refers to a school for educating people to become teachers and people who are already teachers. I went to a class on Linguistics taught by a Chinese teacher to Chinese

teachers in

the English language. Repeatidly, the teacher would ask a

question, wait a polite two seconds and then answer the question

herself. Why? Because she knew that even these adults wouldn't

answer. Oh I would hear mumbling around me, but no student

wanted to become the center of attention and be put on the spot.

Being incorrect in China is also a social no-no.

To complicate things further I teach in a Professional High

School for Foreign Trade. Most of the students here come from

well to do families. The young in China are becoming more and

more spoiled because there are fewer childer in each family;

often only one in each family, following with the governments

attempt at slowing the population growth rate. And finally these

students know that all they have to do is graduate, even barely.

Once they graduate they will be working in the "Vogue" job in

China: Foreign Trade. That's where the money is in China. Even the worst student at this school who graduates, and it isn't difficult, will be paid much better than the teachers and staff members at this school.

This is grossly simplified and a little exaggerated. But that's what happens in China; teachers who don't care and students who are learning not to care.

I have been told repeatedly by the Chinese teachers who teach English not to work so hard and not care. They say it won't get me anything but upset and maybe make trouble for myself. And they are right.

Imagine a place that you worked was operated politically.

You had to know the right people, and be friends with some but not others. Much of the time of the leaders was spent protecting their job from others who wanted their job. Even if you

didn't

worry about getting promoted but just enjoyed doing your work

well; no, this wasn't very smart either. Because you might make

your boss look bad because you can do better than he, so he makes

sure that you don't do that. Arbitrary rules can come from no

where.

And in America an employee can depend, usually, having only one

boss. In China you have at least ten people that can tell you

what to do at anytime and you have to listen to all of them.

After awhile people find a hole that they can crawl into and

do just enough to make all the people above them satisfied and

try to be seen as little as possible.

In the US there are many infra-structures to solve problems.

In China there really isn't any. If it doesn't get solved by the

single normal path then it isn't going to be solved. I here and

see other ways that the government tries to install. But they don't work very well for various reasons. First people don't think they work; going to them can make trouble for yourself; and the people who run these problem-solving things often don't care to hear someone else's problems. They have problems of their own and they themselves don't want to make waves.

This has become a place of where you know not what you know if you want to get something.

The young are very enthusiastic, but they soon learn that the little waves that they make come back hard. An extreme example is the massacre in Tian An Men Square on June 4th.

My personal feeling is that the government over centuries has exploited the parts of the culture to control the people. An analogy to this would be raising a child. When you're getting old enough to have children you might say that you wouldn't do or say

some to your children that your parents did to you. At times I'm sure you felt that your parents where unfair or maybe inconsistant. Then you have kids of your own and you do some of those exact things that you said you wouldn't. Maybe you realize that it isn't that easy to be consistant and sometimes you just have to control your child. Well that's what I feel that the governments of China has been doing for a while.

I have recently heard that the government has just passed new laws in China to modify the rights of protest and demonstrations. In other words further eliminating it. When China became the Peoples Republic of China it promised those rights to the people because the government before wouldn't allow it. But the current government is doing just like there predestors did, control the people the easist way they can toprotect themselves.

Rasing a child is work. Raising it correctly is hard work. And the leaders of this government is spening most of its time just trying stay leaders and protect there fine way of life.

And

if you're a leader anywhere, when you fall you go down to the people that you had to step on to get up. When people fall here, they fall hard.

So, if you happen to agree with the basic idea of this model then place that over all of China... Not much gets done, and not very well. Not because the people are stupid or lazy. NO WAY!

In China it's called survival. When I have talked or worked with people privately some amazing things get done or discussed.

Where do you think I have developed most of my opinions from.

Please don't misunderstand me or the people here. This is an excellent culture and a beautiful people. I just feel that its culture has been bastardized by a few people who, at the moment, control the military. But what I am learning about is the human spirit that exists in everyone. Even with all the

B.S.

that goes on here (or anywhere) people push through it and in their own special ways do some amazing things.

Even Deng Xiao Peng and all the others would like to have a properous China. I see evidence everywhere of what the government is trying to do to make life better here. It's just that any leader maybe got there with good intentions but when he is there he has a better way of life and people want to take that from him. So much of his time is fortifying his empire. Once this is done, and only then, does he move on to the purpose of his job.

Concerning Deng and all the other circle of leaders the 10 or 20 of them. They are all very old and remember the way China was before the War of Liberation. As far as I know China wasn't to pleasant. So things have gotten better, much better; but, these are old men, with a memory of what was like, who

are now

no longer in touch with their people, and are working with old

ideas and tired minds.

If you notice I said "he", "him", and "his". Woman do not play much of a leadership role in China. Both men and woman work

in China. There are no housewives in China. At least none that

I have met or heard of. But just like many other places men say,

even complain, that they have to work so hard. But actually the

woman usually do much more work than the men. They have a full

time job at less pay, the clean and cook, the raise the child.

And seldom complain. Of course you occasionally you hear of the

hen-pecked husband, but not very often.

In my classes there are a few good male students, but very

few. Most of the girls work hard, some very hard. If I was

asked to pick the best of my students it would be 90% of the girls and 10% of the boys! The sad truth is that the worst boy student will have a better job then the best girl student. Maybe the pay will be about the same, but the boys get the better jobs.

When went I on a Senic outing a month ago we stayed at a carpet factory that made traditional oriental silk rugs. I was told that the rugs made by men where much more expensive than those made by women. I asked why. The man laughed and said that the men are more skillful. His laugh expressed that he knew this was silly but he knows that he and every man practice this segretion in China.

Another note on the Culture.

As a fallout of the this "Culture Control" I feel has happened for such a long time is that the culture hasn't changed much for a long time. That's why you can find some of the things

you do in China. Because of this control the culture hasn't been allowed to evolve as it normally would. The evolution is what has made the US so strong. The US has many different cultures and was allowed to grow that culture in any direction that it wanted. Because of this freedom people where (and are) able to explore many different things; thus always making new discoveries about so many different things. If you look at Chinese History some of the greatest inventions were made during times of cultural and civil freedom; conversely the controlled times yielded little growth. Don't confuse controlled times with times of war. Some interesting inventions have been made during war or because of the threat of war. But people are often given a wide breadth to freedom to do their research.

July 2, 1989

You implied that the world is "becoming" a global economy.

It already is. An excellent example of this is what is

happening
in China right now.

After the Chinese Governments action on June 4 with a massacre the world reacted. One of the many reactions was tourists cancelling and not people not coming to China. China is a poor country and can't afford much sustained economic loss like this. It has been estimated that in the last few months alone they have lost over 2 billion (b) dollars! And that's much needed foreign currency, not just local currency.

This brings me to another point. Congress just passed a bill that further enhances President Bush's position.

Actually it sounds like it is just imposing more restrictions and sanctions.

Watching Chinese Television and listening to VOA (Voice of America) and BBC I am starting to hear what happens when a country is beginning feel pressure. Not public pressure, but more important to any third world government, economic pressure due to individuals feelings and concerns. Li Peng is now appearing in a Western suit. Why? I think he is trying to improve his

appearance to the west. The government is adjusting its casualty counts. The government via the media is spending a lot of money trying very hard to show the outside world as well as its own people that the government acted properly and everything is OK. This includes excuses and justifications for its actions. I can even watch regular Chinese TV before there was any trouble and they show things for the people's health and safety. Even as late as 1970's and anytime before that the Chinese Government has never cared one bit what other governments thought. It never had to. China was always independent to the world. Thousands of years ago China surpassed all others in just about everything. It would benefit none by going outside its borders. Doing this would just bring influence it didn't want. So it could, and did, close its doors. As the millennium passed the world passed China in many ways except population

and now the government has made a commitment to get itself back up with the rest of the world.

I don't know if China could ever close its doors again. I supposed it could but it would be catastrophic if it did. For

one reason or another a lot of people would die.

China also doesn't trust the West. If I were in the government I wouldn't trust the West. Repeatidly, one Western

nation after another has come to China and taken advantage of

this country. Study up on the Boxer Rebellion or the Shanghai

Wars and maybe it will make since. China didn't invite these

invasions of "good faith" (they always are) but the people came anyway.

Now you have the US and other Western countries pushing its

threat of economic pressure. I think the US government should

take a stance. But it actively doesn't have to attack China like

it is. The people around the world are doing that more passively

and much more powerfully. Tourists aren't coming.

Businesses

aren't investing. China can argue with another government

easily, but it can't with a million individual tourists.

The Government of China is slowly learning that the individual's total appearance is important to the individual. This country

has never placed much emphasis on the individual.

I agree, for the most part, the sanctions that President Bush has done. But what China needs now is not further sanctions

but passive explanations of how to deal with its problems.

If all you do is punish a child and give it no way out, no solutions, that child gets bitter, lies and fights back. What do

you think China will do if all these governments just offer is

criticism and not the help that it needs.

You also asked about what is required in the schools. I briefly touched on that with some of my feelings above.

But my

experience is limited to this school for now and that question

deserves more time than I have now. I will try and address it later. If I do not reply in reasonable time please ask again.

Living in China can take a lot of time, so I don't always get to things that I would like.

As for your last question. Would I like to part of a forum on the source. Yes, very much so. I also think I could get people like students and teachers to respond to some the questions that might arise.

My first problem is that I make a very good salary in China, about 700 Yuan RMB per month. That's about 200 Dollars, US. If you would like me to partake I will need to be subsidised almost entirely. The communication you are getting now is through my father and I cannot expect him to pay for my participation. There are the obvious concerns for protecting people and their names and I would have to screen questions sometimes. But any question would be welcomed and I would try and get answer or

at least an explanation.

Also, my usage of the phone system, telecommunications and a direct connect modem, is probably illegal. Or could become illegal very quickly. China is known for its "let's make a rule" policy. I also don't want to get too high of a profile using telecom in this environment for various reasons.

So I am interested. I suggest that you recommend a format that you would like use and a method covering costs and I will give you my ideas. (It costs me about \$6.00 per minute to call the US, where as for the US to call China it costs \$3.30 the first minute and \$.89 every minute after)

Even if everything is worked out my replies may not be as timely as they could be, essentially due to my lack of time. Sometimes I can turn around and answer things immediately, but usually it takes a few days. If I have to get other people involved then getting questions answered can take a while.

Always remember: this is China, people do things at their own pace. It took me three weeks for the school to get me a

Category: Ed in China

Published: Wednesday, 16 May 2012 18:45

Written by dave

Hits: 3800

pillow

from a building 15 meters from where I am sitting now;
and four

weeks get my phone fixed, and only when they thought I
might be

leaving China with all the other foreigners during the
unrest.

All for now...