

PETER CALLAMARI and DEREK REVERON

China's Use of Perception Management

China is generally assumed to be a rising power in both Asia and the international arena. The strengthening of the Chinese state poses potential economic and national security challenges to the United States. An important question remains as to what China is doing to shape a positive image for itself as it joins the international community. A partial answer lies with China's effective implementation of perception management. A single episode, the April 2001 incident of a collision between a Chinese F-8 fighter and a U.S. Navy EP-3E Aries reconnaissance aircraft, is instructive in demonstrating the Chinese government's use of the perception management tool. China successfully utilized perception management in manipulating press coverage of the EP-3 incident to avoid blame and a label of enemy of the United States.

PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT

Typically, deception is used as a catchall phrase for influencing an enemy's cognitive decisionmaking process. Deception is defined by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff as "those measures designed to mislead the enemy by manipulation, distortion, or falsification of evidence to induce him to react in a manner prejudicial to his interests."¹ Perception management deals

Peter Callamari, a federal agent with the United States Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI), specializes in counterintelligence. He is a recent graduate of the Joint Military Intelligence College, Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C. Dr. Derek Reveron has taught at the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland; the University of Illinois at Chicago; and the University of Indiana Northwest, at Gary. He is also an Adjunct Instructor at the Joint Military Intelligence College. The views expressed here are those of the authors alone and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the United States government.

primarily with the international political environment. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), “Perception, the process of forming images of the world, can be thought of as involving two sub-processes. Sensory data is first acquired, then [it is] organized and analyzed to form a coherent, comprehensive picture. Thus misperception of the world can arise either from incorrect data, or from malprocessing of correct data.”² In the end, the target is responsible for interpretation of the false data, and is thus an unknowing participant in perception management.

Generally used during peacetime, perception management does not have to employ deceitful information. Its purpose is to influence the opinions of a country’s senior officials through a long-term and complex manipulative process, with the goal often being to improve an image or deter a conflict. Considered a more complex undertaking than deception, perception management is focused on influencing the highest levels of an adversary’s government or the general public. This goes well beyond trying to deceive the enemy with camouflage or false signals intelligence during a military deception operation. Even greater preparation must be undertaken during a perception management offensive. “Knowledge of the adversary’s capabilities is important, but his decision-making process, psychological mindset, culture, history, and leadership must be understood in order to be effective.”³

USE OF PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT

As clearly evident in advertising and marketing campaigns, perceptions can be managed. In fact, some societies are more susceptible than others to manipulation via the perception management tool.⁴ As opposed to strategic military deception, perception management is more methodical, leading an adversary to more slowly implement changes favorable to the originator. This effort can include the manipulation of an opponent’s perception through an attempt at influencing its decisionmaking, by either showing a false situation or creating a goal that would support the originator’s objective.⁵

When designing a perception management offensive, the first step is to establish a strategic goal. After establishing an objective(s), the user must research and know the opponent. The originator must have a clear and accurate understanding of an adversary’s decisionmaking process, as well as its culture, beliefs, and history. Perception management planners must be prudent enough not to treat all targets the same. Various cultures react differently in different situations. In addition, in order to have a successful perception management effort, the originator must be cognizant of the target’s frame of reference. Senior officials are often slow to change their opinion, and often place more stock in their own personal observations because they have well-developed sets of beliefs.⁶

The next step is to design the perception management effort and decide how best to influence the adversary. During this stage the risk of discovery needs to be measured.⁷ This step should be taken while always remembering that such actions need to be grounded in fact. After designing and then implementing the campaign, feedback mechanisms need to be established in order to make a judgment on the effectiveness of the effort. Such feedback will allow the originator to make adjustments accordingly, pull back if necessary, and protect from counterperception management efforts by the opponent. At a minimum, perception management includes four steps: (1) getting the target's attention; (2) presenting relevant information to hold the target's attention; (3) portraying the information in a way consistent with the target's memory or experiences; and (4) repeatedly communicating the information in order to remain congruent, and avoiding the ploy from being discovered by the target.⁸ Additionally, the information should be timely.

DECEPTION MAXIMS

When designing a perception management effort, certain deception principles, or maxims, apply. A 1980 CIA deception research program produced ten maxims that apply to the practice of deception. Of these, six have regular applicability to the more complex process of perception management. According to the first, known as McGruder's Principle, manipulating an opponent's preexisting belief is easier than presenting false evidence in attempting to change it. Applying this to perception management, "what a person notices, and how he interprets it, may be highly dependent on what the person expects to find."⁹ Concerning international relationships, the beliefs of senior officials are often difficult to sway anyway, so that designing the effort around maxim #1 would be more advantageous. In the case examined here, China nurtured a preexisting belief in many quarters that the United States is an uncontrollable hegemon.

The second maxim pertains to the concept of conditioning. Manipulating an opponent's perception by presenting information bit by bit is far more effective than doing so all at once. An adversary is highly likely to dismiss blunt offerings, especially when they are inconsistent with its beliefs and frame of reference. On the contrary, small and gradual changes, even if ambiguous in nature, are more likely to be accepted by an opponent in ultimately altering its perception over time. For example, China has consistently promoted the idea that the South China Sea is in its sphere of influence.

The third maxim of a perception management offensive is the utilization of as much truthful information as possible. By reducing the ambiguity with

factual information, the originator is more likely to influence the opponent. In the end, bits and pieces of truthful information do not necessarily equate a factual representation of the big picture. As a result, the originator has not directly affected a foreign official's cognitive process but has led him to a desired and possibly erroneous conclusion. Here, China controlled the flow of information by holding the aircrew for eleven days. Crew members were not allowed to communicate with a U.S. representative for three days, thus giving China full control of factual information in shaping media coverage.

The need for feedback mechanisms is required with any perception management effort. These return channels of information are essential in determining the effectiveness of the effort, and any required changes. This maxim is more necessary for perception management efforts than for basic deception operations because perception management campaigns last longer and are more likely to require course corrections.¹⁰ In this case, the feedback mechanism was an American media outlet. By reading the *New York Times* coverage of the incident, China could determine the extent to which its message was being rebroadcast in the United States.

As with basic deception or more sophisticated reflex control operations, perception management planners need to closely monitor the results of their efforts. Another maxim ("The Monkey's Paw") addresses the need to be cognizant of any subtle and unwanted side effects. While all possible ramifications of a perception management effort cannot possibly be anticipated, handling unwanted developments as soon as they present themselves proves most advantageous. The planners must extinguish detrimental side effects before they develop into more significant problems. Here, China wanted to avoid direct military confrontation with the United States. Beijing ultimately backed down from its demand that the U.S. cease all surveillance flights, and settled for an apology and the destruction of one EP-3.¹¹

The final maxim involves the effort's overall design. Prior to beginning a perception management project, the placement and presentation of material needs to be mapped out. With perception management, the timing and flow of information to the opponent is critical. A sudden "good fortune" concerning available information will always be viewed skeptically by an opponent, and thus should not be presented in such a fashion. China took about two days to formulate its message, but once it did, Beijing controlled the information and prevented contrary information by tightly controlling media access to the U.S. aircrew.

CHINA'S STRATEGIC GOALS

Although a diverse and complex country, China's overall grand strategy appears to have three interrelated goals. These objectives, which tend to be

the same for all countries, include: (a) controlling the periphery; (b) preserving domestic order; and (c) attaining and maintaining geopolitical status.¹² China's concern with its international status goes beyond its economy.

Beijing is simultaneously and equally driven by national security concerns. Its leaders have observed the strengthening of the United States's security alliances with Japan, and closely monitored Washington's attempt to control an arms race in East Asia. A feeling of further isolation may be overcoming China. According to one scholar, "They feared that the worst nightmare could come true and that China might become the target of containment through a U.S.-led security alignment in Pacific Asia."¹³ In other words, China did not want to replace the Soviet Union in U.S. foreign policy and be the subject of American military targeting. To avoid becoming the new "evil empire," China achieves its goals through a combination of diplomacy and passive military posturing to deter conflict, with perception management as an important tool.

Perception management is effective against perceived adversaries. Manipulation and deception have been a part of China's culture for more than 5,000 years. Sun Tzu's writing specifically called for such measures ("All warfare is based upon deception"); and deception has been a pillar for modern military strategists.¹⁴ China uses such practices in order to protect strategic interests while deterring conflict. China's military elite widely accepts the concept that it is better to subdue the enemy without engaging it in battle. As a result, heavy reliance is placed upon manipulating an adversary's cognitive process. In conducting such efforts, the Chinese place great merit on perceptions and/or misperceptions, embracing their full potential. This concept goes beyond mere attempts to outwit the opponent by conveying false intentions; it involves the more sophisticated tasks of directly manipulating a perception of reality, and in particular, of producing perceptions that directly benefit China.¹⁵

The Papers and TV

The media are a key element in the implementation of a perception management effort. Beijing has long placed significant emphasis on propaganda, or the manipulation of information made available to the public. This result is much easier to achieve when the government controls the media, as is the case with the Xinhua News Agency. In fact, China places so much emphasis on propaganda that a separate Chinese Communist Party organ exists in the national security leadership structure, the Propaganda and Information Leading Group. This unit is one of the leadership's larger groups, with a director (Wei Jianxing), two deputy directors, and eight members. To carry out these activities, China primarily

uses the government-owned or government-controlled press to ensure that its views on policy issues are heard internationally.

ANALYZING THE PROCESS

In an attempt to identify and measure the success of an apparent Chinese perception management effort concerning the EP-3 incident, we conducted a comparative analysis of headlines from two major newspapers: the *New York Times* and the *Xinhua General News Service*.¹⁶ We found 99 articles with associated headlines from the *Times* and 88 headlines from *Xinhua*. We coded all headlines from 1 April 2001 to 20 November 2001 concerning the incident. If a headline was pro-U.S., we coded it a 1; if it was neutral, we coded it a 0; and if it was pro-China, we coded it as -1. Then, we analyzed the headlines to test our hypothesis that China had actively engaged in altering the perceptions of the air collision through perception management.

We attempted to determine the effects of the suspected Chinese propaganda effort on the U.S. media.¹⁷ By selecting and studying headline data sets for a specific incident, the items being compared were sufficiently alike, yet, as variables they remained independent. In other words, the *New York Times* and the *Xinhua General News Service* are not related. But, we wished to test whether the *Xinhua* articles had an effect on the *New York Times*'s coverage of the events. We developed two basic hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: If the *New York Times* shifted its coverage from pro-U.S. to pro-China, then perception management was working.
- Hypothesis 2: If *Xinhua* printed a pro-China story (i.e., -1), and the *New York Times* carried that story within two days, then perception management was working.

ANALYZING THE DATA

An initial review of the headlines revealed that the *New York Times* published six articles within the first two days of the EP-3 incident, while *Xinhua* published none. We suggest that *Xinhua* did not report the incident for two days because the Chinese leadership was formulating its strategy (the final maxim). Further analysis showed that during the two weeks following the collision, *Xinhua* published 61 related articles, while the *New York Times* published 71 stories concerning the collision. Interestingly enough, prior to the publication of the *Xinhua* articles, the *New York Times* had referred to the EP-3 as a "plane" in its headlines; after *Xinhua* had started printing articles that focused on American espionage and hegemony, the *New York Times* began referring to the EP-3 as a "spy plane." We cite this

fact as preliminary evidence to support our hypothesis that China used perception management to alter coverage of the collision.

Detailed analysis of coverage from 1 April through 20 November 2001 reveals that the *New York Times* published 16 articles coded as pro-U.S. (+1), 52 articles coded as neutral (0), and 31 articles coded as pro-China (-1). During that same period, *Xinhua* published only one article coded as pro-U.S., 38 articles coded as neutral, and 49 articles coded as pro-China.

See Table 1 for a breakdown of the articles for each week following the EP-3 incident. Alongside each article is a numerical average calculated upon the sum of the coding divided by the number of articles for the given period.¹⁸ As Table 1 illustrates, although the *New York Times* began with a slightly pro-U.S. view (.097), its headlines quickly shifted toward a pro-China view during weeks two through six. Though coverage dissipated as the crisis diffused, the last headline published on 18 October shows a solid pro-China view (-1).

The final, total average for the *New York Times* came to -0.152 for 99 articles, while the final average for the *Xinhua General News Service* came to -0.545 for 88 articles. The week before China refused the U.S. request to fly the aircraft home, the *Times's* coverage was solidly pro-China (-0.667). Notably, of the 88 related articles published by the *Xinhua General News Service*, only one (11 June 2001) could be considered pro-U.S. (+1). Additionally, after China denied a U.S. request to fly the aircraft on 8 May, *Xinhua* published only eleven articles. This suggests that the perception management campaign was over and successful. The United States not only apologized for the incident and regretted the loss of the Chinese pilot, but also agreed to dismantle the aircraft.

DID THE *TIMES* FOLLOW *XINHUA*?

China clearly engaged in a perception management campaign that ended once its demand that the plane be dismantled was accepted by the United States. What is not clear is whether *Xinhua* influenced the *New York Times's* coverage. To test this possibility, we analyzed the headlines featured in the *New York Times* up to two days after *Xinhua* published a story.¹⁹ We did not conduct a comparative analysis of similar headlines, but rather tried to assess if the general movement of the *Times's* coverage was influenced by *Xinhua's* pro-China message.

Xinhua published no articles until forty-eight hours after the collision, but once it did, the U.S. was continuously portrayed as responsible for the crisis. The government- and Party-controlled press formed an anti-U.S. theme, "supported" by a cast of international states. The term "hegemony" in reference to the United States's policy was printed in strongly worded headlines during the second week following the collision. Of particular interest was how *Xinhua*, on multiple occasions, included in its headlines

Table 1. Weekly Averages of Incident Coverage²⁰

| Week <i>Significant Event</i> | <i>NYT</i> Articles | <i>NYT</i> Average | <i>Xinhua</i> Articles | <i>Xinhua</i> Average |
|---|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1–7 Apr 1st: Collision occurred | 31 | .097 | 34 | –.588 |
| 8–14 Apr 11th: U.S. regret expressed, aircrew released | 37 | –.243 | 27 | –.593 |
| 15–21 Apr | 9 | –.222 | 7 | –.857 |
| 22–28 Apr | 3 | .333 | 3 | –1 |
| 29–5 May | 3 | –.667 | 3 | –.333 |
| 6–12 May 8th: China denies request to fly EP-3 | 3 | –.333 | 1 | –1 |
| 13–19 May | 1 | 0 | 0 | NA |
| 20–26 May | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 27–2 Jun 28th: U.S. consents to dismantling | 1 | –1 | 2 | 0 |
| 3–9 Jun 7th: China/U.S. agree on details | 0 | NA | 2 | 0 |
| 10–16 Jun 16th: EP-3 dismantling begins | 1 | 0 | 2 | +5 |
| 17–23 Jun | 0 | NA | 0 | NA |
| 24–30 Jun | 0 | NA | 0 | NA |
| 1–7 Jul 3rd: Dismantling completed | 0 | NA | 1 | 0 |
| 8–14 Jul | 0 | NA | 1 | 0 |
| 15–21 Jul | 0 | NA | 2 | –.5 |
| 22–28 Jul | 1 | 0 | 0 | NA |
| 29–4 Aug | 3 | 0 | 0 | NA |
| 12–18 Aug 18th: Dismantled plane left China | 1 | 0 | 0 | NA |
| 29 Aug | 0 | | 1 | –1 |
| 18 Oct | 1 | –1 | 0 | NA |
| Totals | 99 | –.152 | 88 | –.545 |

the support and backing of numerous media outlets from around the world, including those of the United Arab Emirates, Russia, Tanzania, Canada, Cuba, Iran, Tunisia, Pakistan, Cambodia, Spain, Greece, Iraq, Syria, Nigeria, Egypt, Bangladesh, Lebanon, and Sudan. By doing so, China created the impression that the international community supported its position. Additionally, *Xinhua* prepared headlines stating that Chinese-born citizens living in America, Cambodia, and New Zealand firmly supported China and blamed U.S. hegemony for the crisis. This theme was followed by claims that the U.S. had violated international law. Finally, *Xinhua* always referred to the EP-3 as a “spy” plane, even though the aircraft flew in international airspace with a filed flight plan, engaged in overt reconnaissance, and landed in China in accordance with international law that allows planes in distress to land without prior clearance.

In graphing the distribution of the 187 published articles, the general pattern that developed indicated that during the first week following the incident, the *New York Times* had a slightly pro-U.S. coverage, with an average value of 0.097. But, during weeks two through five, the *Times*'s coverage shifted to a pro-China position.²¹ During week two, coverage was -0.243 ; during week three, coverage was -0.222 ; during week four, coverage was -0.333 ; and during week five, coverage was -0.667 . A mere look at the language change documented the shift. When the *New York Times* began printing articles concerning the incident, it referred to the EP-3 as “plane” in its headlines. Several days later, and after *Xinhua* had starting printing articles where China maintained a firm anti-U.S. position, the *Times* began referring to the EP-3 as a “spy plane.” In spite of the Pentagon's objections, the *New York Times* continued to refer to the EP-3 as a spy plane, even though the term is typically reserved for clandestine, not overt, operations.²²

During the same time period, *Xinhua* published 75 articles that steadily maintained a very strong anti-U.S. position, with an average value of -0.627 . When the average of *Xinhua* headline(s) for a particular day was negative (-1 to $-.001$), the following day's *New York Times* headline(s) had a negative average eleven times; a neutral average once; and a positive average ($.001$ to 1) six times. In other words, after *Xinhua* published a negative article, the *New York Times* was twice as likely to print a negative story. The general trend for the *New York Times* during the first two months of the crisis clearly indicates positive coverage for China. Since the aircrew was isolated, and official U.S. contact with the crew was limited, the U.S. government had no information to rebut the Chinese position. The lack of contrary information allowed China to present its side of the story for two weeks. That resulted in China being allowed to dictate the terms of crisis resolution. After 15 April (the end of week two), the *New York Times* published only two articles coded as

pro-U.S. This evidence suggests that the Chinese message had become the global message.

As the crisis resolved in China's favor (after week six), *Xinhua* appeared to shift its position, and began to emphasize that the Chinese government was in control of the situation revolving around the EP-3 grounded on Hainan Island. Beijing effectively shifted the focus of the incident away from the collision to a U.S. violation of Chinese airspace. Beginning on 5 June (week nine), *Xinhua* primarily carried a neutral message, illustrating a period of openness and healing between China and the United States. China appeared to opportunistically use the incident to display to the world its willingness to be forgiving and tolerant of a state that had violated its sovereignty. Upon taking this stance, Beijing positioned itself to stabilize U.S.–Sino relations, despite the resumption of EP-3 surveillance flights off the China coast. *Xinhua's* final article on this incident actually cited a great improvement in U.S.–Sino relations.

CHINA'S EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

The data suggests that China's successful perception management campaign may ultimately have influenced the *New York Times's* coverage of the incident. Yet, this is remarkable because, for several months leading up to the aircraft collision, U.S. officials had voiced their concern over increasing aggressiveness by Chinese pilots, and warned of a potential disaster.²³ In fact, three months prior to the collision, the U.S. Commander-in-Chief of Pacific Forces (U.S. CINCPAC) had lodged a formal complaint to Beijing about this very matter. Finally, throughout the crisis China maintained that it had objected to American surveillance in the South China Sea; but before the collision, China had not expressed complaints about the EP-3 surveillance flights via *Xinhua*. Given these facts, coverage of the EP-3/F-8 collision should have been favorable to the United States. But, after the incident occurred, China successfully shifted the focus away from the cause of the collision, to the result that led to the aircraft landing in China. In other words, China focused on its perception of U.S. hegemony close to its shoreline. With the aircrew held in isolation, the U.S. had little information to rebut China's claims.

Through a constant flow of propaganda, Beijing altered the focus and blame for the EP-3/F-8 collision, in spite of the circumstances leading up to the April incident. China's success forced the Pentagon to address the plane's landing at a Chinese airfield, instead of the Chinese action that led to the emergency landing.

China was presented with an opportunity that required a quick and pointed response, and it excelled. The ultimate media portrayal of the EP-3 episode was influenced by years of Chinese claims or conditioning that the U.S. was

a hegemon. After establishing its strategy, Beijing struck via the media with full force. As an official voice, China used *Xinhua* to present its case by effectively creating, through its headlines, the illusion of considerable international support. For those world leaders who were uncertain of the circumstances surrounding the incident, China wanted to make it very clear that its sovereignty had been violated, and that the U.S. was to blame for the crisis.

By appealing to the perception of U.S. hegemony, the message was easy to convey. Through the use of the *Xinhua General News Service*, that message was loud and unquestionable: the U.S. was considered at fault simply for having a “spy plane” off the China coast. As the CIA puts it: “Once an erroneous hypothesis has been settled on, however, it will take a greater quantity of, and more reliable, information to overthrow it than was originally required to successfully establish the hypothesis.”²⁴ Because of China’s successful perception management effort, the United States was not in a position to reverse Beijing’s manipulative process.

Beijing understands how to target world leadership through media coverage. During the EP-3 crisis, Beijing effectively targeted one of the main vulnerabilities of America’s open and democratic society. Through the use of perception management, China turned an incident it had caused into a perceived and affirmed violation of its sovereignty. As with any perception management or deception effort, feedback is critical. In this case, China had to simply watch the news trends in the United States to see if its efforts were bringing success. The *New York Times*’s stories provided that feedback.

Strategic Consistency

A review of how China has dealt with international incidents indicates a consistency in its strategic culture. From 1949 through 1985, China was involved in eleven foreign policy crises. Of these, eight involved territorial matters and resulted in violence.²⁵ If China is prone to violence, then its handling of the EP-3 episode suggests one of two things: Either China allows for a degree of flexibility in handling issues, and utilizes perception management when it is militarily inferior to the perceived threat (in this case the United States); or China is drifting away from its force-based strategy for handling adversaries. Since China is not currently prepared to militarily confront the U.S. on such issues as the loss of its pilot and F-8 aircraft, China sees the implementation of perception management as a means to deter conflict and remain favorable in the world’s eyes.

Ultimately, Beijing’s perception management effort concerning the EP-3 crisis not only swayed international opinion in its favor, it altered the internal decision-making process of the United States government. Following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the George W. Bush

administration was hastily placed in a position of having to expediently collect intelligence in Afghanistan. A method for amassing much needed intelligence included the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, or drones, known as Predators or Global Hawks. Despite the intelligence gap in Afghanistan, America's leaders still had the EP-3 crisis in the back of their minds. As the *Wall Street Journal* noted, "The White House and the State Department, still raw after the downing of the U.S. spy plane over China, feared the international repercussions if one of the armed drones crashed or was otherwise discovered."²⁶ We highlight this, not only because the EP-3 was *not* "downed over China," but also because of the stated concern about an international incident involving aerial reconnaissance.

Based upon such considerations by the senior U.S. leadership, this suggests that the U.S. administration itself had internalized China's message. Despite solid evidence supporting the United States's explanation of how the Chinese F-8 fighter aircraft went down over the South China Sea, Washington was left on the defensive.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF AN OPEN SOCIETY

This study highlights the vulnerabilities of an open society and free press, and the advantages authoritarian states have in media campaigns. Nondemocratic states tend to have a defensive approach militarily, but an offensive approach politically;²⁷ and perception management is used in the political environment. China is attempting to balance a perceived U.S. hegemony by winning the international favor of other leading states. The Chinese government recognizes that it cannot compete with the United States militarily, and will not be capable of doing so during the next twenty to thirty years. In fact, there is a distinct possibility that technologically, it may fall further behind.

In order to combat that separation, Beijing will focus on its own statehood and developing international alliances. Those measures are considered to be the next best method for neutralizing the U.S. Thus, China needs to maintain its status as a legitimate state. When confronted with international incidents, or when lobbying for such approvals as World Trade Organization (WTO) membership, an Olympic bid, or territorial expansion, China has determined that the most efficient way of winning international approval is through manipulating others' perceptions, that is, perception management.

REFERENCES

¹ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication No. 3-58. *Joint Doctrine for Military Deception* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 31 May 1996), GL-2.

² Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Research and Development, *Misperception Literature Survey* (Princeton, NJ: Mathtech, 1979), p. 5.

- ³ Richard O'Neill, "Toward a Methodology for Perception Management," Defense Technical Information Center (Newport, RI: The United States Naval War College, June 1989), p. 15.
- ⁴ Democratic and open societies with media outlets that are free of state control have proven to be more susceptible to manipulation by adversarial states via perception management efforts. As with the Chinese government today, this phenomenon was exploited by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. "Three factors are proposed as source of democratic vulnerability to Soviet deception: the open nature of the democratic system, Soviet ability to exploit weaknesses in democratic government, and differences in the way American and Soviet view the world. The openness of democratic governments and the strong influence of public opinion on policy are extremely helpful in Soviet perception management efforts." Cathy Darlene Walters, *Perception Management: Soviet Deceptions and Its Implications for National Security*. Thesis for the Naval Post-Graduate School, March 1988.
- ⁵ Richard O'Neill, "Toward a Methodology for Perception Management," p. 15.
- ⁶ Roy Godson and James J. Wirtz, "Strategic Denial and Deception," *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Winter 2000, p. 433.
- ⁷ The beauty of a perception management effort is that it is a "soft" tool. "It need not cost large sums of scarce fiscal resources to be effective. And, even if it is unsuccessful, it is likely to go undetected, leaving a clean image in international relations." Richard O'Neill, "Toward a Methodology for Perception Management," p. 32.
- ⁸ Richard O'Neill, "Toward a Methodology for Perception Management," p. 22.
- ⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, *Misperception Literature Survey*, p. 14.
- ¹⁰ One problem with evaluating the effectiveness of a perception management effort with multiple feedback channels is that it is difficult to know what information the adversary is processing and acting upon.
- ¹¹ The loss of the aircraft represented degradation of approximately ten percent of this Navy capability.
- ¹² Michael D. Swaine and Ashley J. Tellis, "RAND Research Brief: Interpreting China's Grand Strategy" (2000). URL: www.rand.org/publications/RB/RB61/.
- ¹³ Yong Deng, "Hegemon on the Offensive: Chinese Perspectives on U.S. Global Strategy," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 116, No. 3, Fall 2001, p. 353.
- ¹⁴ One such example took place at the beginning of the Korean War. With United Nations forces moving north in 1950, China's leaders became increasingly concerned. As a result, China attempted to deter conflict by implementing a perception that they were positioned and ready for armed conflict. Fearful of a protracted engagement with U.N. forces, which would have also seriously damaged China's reputation in the international community, they sent a continuous flow of direct warnings specifically to the United States that China would fight if military forces continued moving to the north. Such communications, which were becoming more intense, included information

about China's capabilities and intentions. China provided the United States with a separate means of verification by not disguising Chinese military deployments in eastern China. (Ultimately, it did not benefit the U.S. because General Douglas MacArthur ignored the indicators.)

- ¹⁵ Scott A. Boorman, "Deception in Chinese Strategy," in *The Military and Political Power in China in the 1970s*, William W. Winston, ed. (New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 315.
- ¹⁶ The Xinhua News Agency is state-run and the largest news and information gatherer and releaser in China. As a state-controlled entity, the Chinese government authorizes all information that is released. The Xinhua General News Service is comprised of newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations. *Xinhua* utilizes the World Wide Web (via Xinhuanet Network News) for daily news releases as well.
- ¹⁷ It should be noted that, according to Patrick J. Haney, should a case comparison examination not reveal something, it does not mean that it did not happen. "American policy decisions combine with many other factors to produce outcomes." See Patrick J. Haney, *Organized for Foreign Policy Crises: Presidents, Advisors, and the Management of Decision Making* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1997). esp. pp. 35 and 43.
- ¹⁸ For example, for the first week following the incident, the *New York Times* published 31 articles with the following values: 0, +1, 0, 0, 0, -1, 0, +1, 0, -1, +1, -1, 0, 0, 0, -1, 0, +1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, +1, 0, +1, 0, 0, -1, +1, and +1. When compiled, the total value was +3. The total value was then divided by the number of articles (31) to determine the average of .097 for that week, which is a slightly pro-U.S. view .
- ¹⁹ China has learned, as did the USSR, that in order to influence the elected leaders of the U.S. it is best to first attempt to influence the American media. China does not reserve such efforts to influence the perceptions of other states for times of war only, but regularly implements such practices.
- ²⁰ When dates are not listed, neither news outlet published an article.
- ²¹ During weeks two through seven, the *New York Times* published 56 articles with an average value of -0.268.
- ²² See Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02 for a list of definitions. Clandestine operations are defined as "an operation sponsored or conducted by governmental departments or agencies in such a way as to assure secrecy or concealment."
- ²³ Previous EP-3 crews had film footage of unsafe flying maneuvers by Chinese fighter pilots, including earlier antics by the Chinese F-8 fighter pilot who ultimately lost his life as a result of the April collision. Additionally, crews were worried that the subsonic turbo prop EP-3 Aries II aircraft was vulnerable to the erratic maneuvers of a supersonic F-8 Chinese fighter aircraft. In fact, had Lt. Osbourne not regained control of the aircraft, it would have been lost in the South China Sea.
- ²⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *Misperception Literature Survey*, p. 48.

- ²⁵ Ian Johnston, in Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identities in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 252.
- ²⁶ Neil King, Jr. and David S. Cloud, "CIA Drones Spotted Bin Laden Camps But Couldn't Shoot," *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 November 2001, p. A1.
- ²⁷ Harlan W. Jencks, "Strategic Deception in the Chinese Civil War," in *Strategic Military Deception*, Donald C. Daniel and Katherine L. Herbig, eds. (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982), p. 288.