

CHINA CROSSROADS

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Dual-Use Technologies and US-China Security Dilemma: What Chinese and Americans Think

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Dual use technologies, such as Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) and those used to purify rare earth elements (REE), can have civilian and military applications. My research team carried out a survey of 800 American and 800 Chinese participants and their views on a hypothetical scenario of a country pursuing an industrial policy intended to bolster such technologies. Our findings reveal that perceptions of dual-use technologies are subject to psychological biases. Presenting the technologies in terms of their military (rather than civilian) applications makes the policy seem more threatening. Being told that the other country (rather than their own) is pursuing the said policy makes the policy seem more threatening. Given that psychological biases play a significant role in how dual use technologies and the policies surrounding them are perceived, potentially affected businesses in the US and China would benefit from proactive steps to build supply chain resiliency, increase people exchanges, and ensure policy compliance.

[Andrew Cheon](#) is Associate Professor of International Relations at Duke Kunshan University. His research focuses on governance, contestation, and conflict in the age of climate change and great power competition. He is currently researching global and regional leadership in the international system and microfoundations of threat perceptions among great powers. His teaching interests at Duke Kunshan include International Politics, Global Governance, and International Politics of East Asia. He is the recipient of the 2025 DKU Teaching Award. Cheon is the author of [Fueling State Capitalism](#) (2023) and the co-author of [Activism and the Fossil Fuel Industry](#) (2018). He has had papers published in reputable academic journals including Comparative Political Studies, Economics and Politics, and Journal of Conflict Resolution. Cheon has an A.B. in Political Science and Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) from Duke University, where he was the founding president of the student organization Duke East Asia Nexus. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from Columbia University. Before joining Duke Kunshan, he was Assistant Professor of International Political Economy at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

[China Crossroads](#) hosts *talks* on all topics related to China, including business, foreign policy, and other areas as they relate to China, the idea being that China is both already a “crossroads” of the world and itself at a “crossroads” in terms of its future global influence. For more information, contact Frank Tsai at editor@shanghai-review.org.