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Gender is a 'safe topic' in China that can be discussed in the media, academia and elsewhere. But gender is still mostly understood as a women's issue. Two leading professors from the prominent [Sun Yat-Sen University](#) (SYSU) based in the capital of the most economically prosperous Chinese province, Guangdong, are challenging that very concept of gender, especially in journalism and media reporting. The Media Diversity Institute (MDI) invited Dr Haiyan Wang and Dr Zhijin Zhong to visit the UK and various universities that have modules on gender and media. They also talked to professors from [MA Diversity and the Media](#), an innovative postgraduate course developed and designed through partnership between MDI and the University of Westminster.

MDI's guests from China also visited Kings College, City University, Goldsmiths, LSE and Cardiff University. They learnt that the average ratio of female to male students attending journalism courses in the UK is 60:40, but also that when it comes to Gender and Media Courses this ratio dramatically changes, as hardly any men join in. For instance, out of 50

Gender and the Media students at Cardiff University, only 6 are men.

Dr Haiyan Wang and Dr Zhijin Zhong met Aidan White from the [Ethical Journalism Network](#) who is working with media partners across the globe on ethics, good governance and self-regulation in journalism. They also visited the Frontline Club in London and met with its chairman John Owen (pictured above).



Summarising their visit to the UK, Dr Wang and Dr Zhong introduce their ideas of developing new courses on diversity and media back in China. They think of running courses in English language because, as Dr Zhong who teaches research methods and new media culture says, “it would be easier to find materials, guidebooks and publications, but also such courses at the SYSU would attract international students”.

Amongst the MA Diversity and the Media students who come from different parts of the world, many are from China. The Chinese students bring their own understanding of gender and diversity, different from the one prevailing among Western students.

“My Chinese students write a lot about so-called Chocolate city, Guangzhou, where many African traders live. Analysing their writings we discuss communicative narrative and how to better understand other people’s perspectives in order to create empathy,” said Dr Rosa Tsagarousianou who is in charge of MA course at the University of Westminster.

