

Cultural Analysis 文化解析

[Physical Distance and Body Language]

Have you ever noticed the physical distance between two Chinese who are talking? What about that of two Americans? The Chinese are said to have closer physical distance when talking together. Does it have anything to do with the lack of privacy for the Chinese? Do you talk with many gestures? Is it true that Americans gesture more than Chinese while talking? Observe when people are talking and see if you can find out the answers to these questions.

In Taiwan, two female friends commonly walk hand-in-hand on the street. But before I went to study in the United States almost thirty years ago, I was seriously warned to quit this habit, in order to avoid any misunderstandings. “You will be mistaken as lesbians if you keep doing this, especially in San Francisco,” I was told.

