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Expo Stories: Trying to Keep up From Afar

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May 2, 2010 in [Uncategorized](#) by [jwasserstrom](#) | [Permalink](#)

When the first World's Fair, the Crystal Palace Exhibition, took place in 1851, it did so amidst much breathless talk of a new technology of communication that was capable of sending information across vast distances at incredible speed. That then novel but now very old "new media" invention was the telegraph, which inspired commentary much like that we've heard recently regarding the Internet. And it is thanks to the wonders of that newest of new media, the Internet, that I have been able to follow the final lead up to and first days of the 2010 World Expo from afar, and indeed to publish this post (written while taking advantage of the free wifi at the Hartford Airport heading home after a series of [East Coast book talks](#)).

Here, for others trying to make sense of China's first World's Fair from a great distance are a few links that I've found particularly interesting. Some their information, some for their visuals, some for their sheer bizarreness.

- 1) An [Al Jazeera video](#) dealing with the opening ceremonies and the way that the current economic state of specific countries and their relationships with China have influenced their displays. (An added plus: for anyone who, like me, has been following Adam Minter's smart reporting on the Expo on his blog, "[Shanghai Scrap](#)," but didn't know what he looked and sounded like, you get to find out toward the end of this clip.)
- 2) Xinhua, always looking for something to run about the Expo, came up with this curious tale of [fans from Portugal](#) driving to the Fair.
- 3) Since my new book is in a Q & A format, I'm kind of partial just now to pieces that pose and provide replies to basic questions, as reporters from Reuters do here in a [short article](#) on why Shanghai is hosting an Expo.
- 4) I'm hopelessly biased here, since I'm quoted in this [New York Times article](#) by David Barboza (and in a nice bit of timing it appeared during the Manhattan stop of my book tour), but it does do a nice job of putting the event into context.
- 5) Some [good photos](#) at the new Forbes.com "China Tracker" blog.
- 6) One of [many reports](#) that highlight the problems (big crowds, sweltering heat, you name it) that don't figure centrally in Xinhua articles.