



Pressing Concerns: Hong Kong's Media in an Era of Transition

Citation

Hutcheon, Stephen J. "Pressing Concerns: Hong Kong's Media in an Era of Transition." Shorenstein Center Discussion Paper Series 1998.D-32, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, September 1998.

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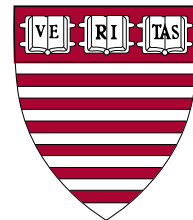
**Pressing Concerns:
Hong Kong's Media
in an Era of Transition**

by

Stephen J. Hutcheon

**Discussion Paper D-32
September 1998**

The Joan Shorenstein Center
PRESS • POLITICS



• PUBLIC POLICY •

Harvard University
John F. Kennedy School of Government

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INTRODUCTION

Contrary to the predictions of most pundits, scholars and journalists that China's takeover of Hong Kong in July 1997 would lead to the erosion of Hong Kong's freedom of the press, rule of law and democratic institutions while its economy would continue to thrive, one year later, just the opposite seems to have happened. Due to the Asian economic crisis, which could not have been predicted before the takeover, the economy has faltered, but Hong Kong's democratic institutions still thrive. Raised in Hong Kong and the China correspondent for the *Sydney Morning Herald* in Australia, Stephen J. Hutcheon makes none of the above predictions in "Pressing Concerns: Hong Kong's Media in an Era of Transition." He wrote this paper while a Fellow at the Shorenstein Center during the fall semester of 1997 when he asserts that it was too early to figure out what would happen to one of Asia's most "vibrant and open media communities." Nevertheless, his paper analyzes the forces that could erode the freedom of the Hong Kong media and the counter forces that might help to protect the media's independence. As his approach suggests, it is still too early to know which of these forces might win out.

He points out that even under British rule, the Hong Kong media was not altogether free. The British imposed laws used in its other colonies to ensure that the press would not oppose its rule. Although in practice these laws were rarely used, freedom of the press came gradually to Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Journalists Association became publicly more outspoken and Hong Kong's citizens became more active in asserting their rights only by the mid-1980s, more than a century after British rule. The major impetus for more democratic procedures came in reaction to the Chinese military crackdown on protestors in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989, when over one million of Hong Kong's six million population demonstrated and demanded more democratic institutions to protect themselves from similar crackdowns after the takeover. When Christopher Patten became British governor in 1992, the pressure for democratic elections increased and in 1995, the first fully democratic elections took place in which the Democratic Party, led by Martin Lee, became the majority party in Hong Kong's Legislative Council (LegCo).

Yet, at the same time that these democratic institutions were being established, Hutcheon reveals that a form of self-censorship emerged in an effort not to upset China or its pro-Chinese allies in Hong Kong. This self-censorship was reinforced by changes in the ownership structure of the media in the 1990s when overseas Chinese business magnets, who held substantial commercial interests in China, bought up important Hong Kong media outlets. They cared more about winning favor with China's leaders than maintaining freedom of the press. Hutcheon shows the impact of this development on the *South China Morning Post*, the oldest and most authoritative English language paper in Hong Kong. Shortly after it was bought by a Chinese businessman from Malaysia, the paper fired its irreverent cartoonist who poked fun of China's political leaders as well as of British rule. Even Western media owners caved in to pressure from Beijing in order to gain access to the Chinese market. Rupert Murdoch, who bought Star TV, won permission to expand from Hong Kong into China proper on the condition that he eliminate its BBC news broadcasts which had antagonized the Chinese authorities.

Despite this self-censorship, however, Hong Kong's media in the year following the takeover, for the most part, has functioned relatively freely. In part this is due to newsmen who are dedicated to their profession. Though Hutcheon observes that the Hong Kong journalist profession is relatively young and inexperienced, the *South China Morning Post* has a number of veteran journalists who continue to report fairly objectively on events in China as well as in Hong Kong. There are also veteran radio and television producers in Hong Kong who refuse to be intimidated. One of them is Ng Ming-lam, who established popular radio call-in and news programs on Radio Television Hong Kong, a government-owned network. These programs criticized political leaders both in Hong Kong and China. When, after the takeover, a Standing Committee member of one of China's rubber-stamp parliaments, Tsui Sze-man attacked Radio Television Hong Kong, for lampooning politicians, Ng then switched to Metro broadcast, but Radio Television Hong Kong continued with its hard-hitting news programs and irreverent call-in shows.

Despite the influx of outside owners of the media, within Hong Kong there are some strong independent media owners who uphold freedom of expression. Hutcheon focuses on Jimmy Law Chee-ying, the publisher of the Chinese language *Apple Daily*, the best-selling Hong Kong newspaper. He has shown himself unafraid of challenging and even insulting China's leaders. He had also been a co-owner of the clothing retailer Giordano, which has stores all over Asia, including China. When in 1993 he called China's then Prime Minister Li Peng, a "turtle's egg with a zero IQ" because he had carried out the orders to crack down on the Tiananmen Square protestors, his stores in Beijing and Shanghai were closed down. He then sold his stake in Giordano and concentrated completely on his publishing empire. Although his publications have not directly insulted China's leaders since the takeover, they continue to report relatively objectively on events in China.

Hutcheon cautions, however, that *Apple Daily* continues to be the largest paper in post-takeover Hong Kong not because of its hard-hitting political reporting, but because of its sensationalist coverage of sex, crime, and scandals and its unique column on Hong Kong's red light district and brothels. *Apple Daily's* large circulation may also be due to the fact that it more closely reflects the concerns of Hong Kong's population than any foreign-owned or Beijing-run newspaper, such as *Ta Kung Pao*. The Harvard intellectual historian, Leo Lee, explains that while on the surface nothing much seems to have changed in Hong Kong, he reveals that underneath much is changing and that change is mirrored in *Apple Daily*. While the former British culture and language has been pushed aside by Chinese culture and language, it is not by the Mandarin culture and language of Beijing, but by the Cantonese culture and language of nearby Guangdong. Cantonese make up the overwhelming majority of Hong Kong's population. Jimmy Lai is Cantonese and his *Apple Daily* expresses that culture and language. Thus, its impact on Hong Kong's population is bound to be much greater than that of the *South China Morning Post* or Star TV. What happens to Jimmy Lai and his *Apple Daily* may be the best predictor of Hong Kong's future under Beijing rule.

Individuals, public pressure groups and LegCo also act as watchdogs. Mr. Tsui's attack on Radio Television Hong Kong was almost unanimously condemned. Hong Kong's chief administrator, Anson Chan has repeatedly

emphasized that a critical media is vital to an open, vigorous economy and society. If Hong Kong lost its freedom of expression and information, she warns, it could not maintain its world economic status. Even though the elected LegCo had been dissolved after the takeover, pro-democratic groups made a spectacular comeback in Hong Kong's first legislative election under Chinese rule. Although the pro-Beijing administration devised the new electoral system, based on restricted proportional representation, to stop the Democratic Party of Martin Lee, in the election to the new LegCo in May 1998, the Democratic Party and their allies took 15 of the 20 directly elected seats. Therefore, for the first time since the 1949 Communist revolution, China has a legally recognized opposition party.

The accepted wisdom has been that Beijing will determine Hong Kong's future, but there is the possibility, as suggested in this paper and as seen in the events since the takeover, that such Hong Kong phenomena as an independent publisher, such as Jimmy Lai, and a legally recognized opposition party, may, in the long run, have a greater impact on China than Beijing has on Hong Kong.

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by Stephen J. Hutcheon

Introduction

Shortly after the crushing of the Chinese pro-democracy movement in June 1989, China's newly anointed leader, Jiang Zemin, hosted a delegation of Hong Kong luminaries. During the reception Jiang reminded his guests of the territory's obligations under the "one country, two systems" formula for co-existence with the mainland after the July 1997 handover. It meant, said Jiang, that China promised to keep its nose out of Hong Kong's business by allowing it a "high degree" of autonomy. At the same time, Hong Kong should refrain from meddling in the mainland's affairs. "China practices socialism, Hong Kong practices capitalism. The well water should not interfere with river water," Jiang told his audience.

The response of the Hong Kong people to the events in China during the spring of 1989 profoundly altered Beijing's perception of the territory. Before the student uprising there was a belief that a sense of patriotic mission would eventually prevail, once the initial nervousness wore off. But when an estimated one fifth of Hong Kong's population staged protests and held vigils in solidarity with the mainland's pro-democracy martyrs, China lost faith in Hong Kong. Subversive elements, it feared, were conspiring to use the territory as a base to undermine the Communist Party's rule on the mainland. Members of certain Hong Kong political parties and elements of the press were viewed as the most potentially troublesome. The press, which had denounced Beijing's heavy-handed tactics, was accused of "fanning the flames of protest."¹ Beijing's immediate response was to add a provision to the draft Basic Law (Hong Kong's post-1997 mini-constitution) that mandated the Government of the Special Administrative Region (the territory's post-1997 political designation) to pass a law against "treason, secession, sedition, subversion" and the "theft of state secrets."

Meanwhile the Hong Kong branch of Xinhua (the New China News Agency, Beijing's *de facto* embassy in the colony) was instructed

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to step up its monitoring and "guidance" work among the Hong Kong press. Using tactics ranging from gentle persuasion to outright threats, the agency sought to bring the press to heel.² Xinhua even drew up a blacklist, classifying Hong Kong media into one of four categories ranging from China-controlled to hostile. Favors were dispensed and withheld accordingly. Appealing to Hong Kong journalists' sense of patriotism,³ high-ranking Chinese officials went on the record in 1996 to lay down guidelines for Hong Kong journalists. In May 1996, the director of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, Lu Ping, told CNN that journalists would not be allowed to advocate independence for Taiwan. Elaborating he said: "To advocate for independence and to report objectively are two different things." Advocacy, he said, was tantamount to calling for action and when journalists called for action "they have to be careful." In October of that year, the Chinese foreign minister and vice-premier, Qian Qichen, told the *Asian Wall Street Journal* (17 October 1996, p.1) that Hong Kong journalists would not be allowed to spread lies, rumors or launch personal attacks against Chinese leaders.

The message was aimed at one of Asia's most vibrant and open media communities. In 1997, the territory's news media included 58 daily newspapers, 625 periodicals, two commercial television companies, a cable television provider, one government-owned (but independently run) radio broadcaster and two commercial radio stations. During the past two decades Hong Kong also became the preeminent regional hub for scores of foreign publications and broadcasters including STAR Television (owned by News Corporation), *Asiaweek* magazine (owned by Time Warner), the *Asian Wall Street Journal* and the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (owned by Dow Jones).

Since the early 1990s, however, the ownership structure of the press has been metamorphosing. Many Hong Kong companies with media assets in the territory also hold substantial non-media commercial interest in the mainland or are banking on expanding their Hong Kong media interests into the Chinese hinterland. They are well aware of the need to avoid offending the neighbors. Institutionalized weaknesses in the profession of journalism in Hong

Kong also means that the practitioners are more susceptible to government and corporate coercion. Hong Kong journalists are on the whole inexperienced, highly educated, poorly paid and prone to change jobs frequently. According to a survey carried out in 1996, by the Chinese University of Hong Kong,⁴ 53.9 percent of the surveyed journalists had worked in their present organizations for less than two years and 52.9 percent were below the age of 30. There are few, if any, models of highly regarded crusader-journalists and even the tradition of a free and vigorous press is by and large a recent phenomenon. Moreover, the Hong Kong Government has inherited a legal quiver containing a variety of laws and regulations designed to muzzle the press. The cumulative effect of all this has been to produce a landscape that encourages the growth of self-censorship and sycophancy.

Self-censorship as practiced by the press is both difficult to define and detect because it can be both premeditated and subconscious. As Michael Scammell, a former editor of *Index on Censorship*, argued, self-censorship is generally seen as a "direct product of systematic, external censorship." It comes about, he wrote, when a journalist or writer is forced by "internal fears" to concur with the views of the censor.⁵ This definition does not apply in the case of the Hong Kong press as there is no formal system of censorship. In deciding what to write, what to publish, what to broadcast and where to place news reports and commentary, reporters, editors and producers are required to exercise news judgment. This is a highly subjective skill that is influenced by a myriad of exogenous and endogenous factors. In Hong Kong's case, these factors include the oft-cited need to find a balance between freedom and responsibility in order to preserve social stability. Therefore in Hong Kong's case I define self-censorship as the inclusion, exclusion or soft-pedaling of news and commentary intended to please or deemed likely to upset authorities in China in particular and pro-China interests in general. Not that being "pro-China" is wrong *per se*, as *South China Morning Post* editor Jonathan Fenby argued. "It is generally accepted in places where there is a free press that part of the freedom of the press is the freedom of a newspaper to decide what line it is going to take. In Hong Kong if you have newspapers which are, say, more pro-China, more sympathetic to China in her political stands, it is seen as selling out."⁶ However being pro-China may at times make it difficult to be pro-Hong Kong.

That said, one myth first needs to be put to rest. Hong Kong's press has not always been as unfettered as many believed it to be on the eve of the colony's return to China. Free perhaps as defined by Mitchell who in 1969 identified the colony as being home to a "great number of newspapers" and a "variety of clearly defined editorial perspectives."⁷ But that "freedom," argued Chan and Chin, was largely a "freedom to attack Chinese rulers from the Manchurian Qing emperors of imperial China to the current Nationalist and Communist leaders—but it has never been allowed to jeopardize the vital interests of British rule."⁸

Press Freedom During the Colonial Era

The incident that defined the nature of Hong Kong's press in the second half of the 20th century took place in 1952, three years after the Communist Party came to power in China. Fearing an attempt to forcibly recover Hong Kong, London dispatched 30,000 additional troops to bolster the local garrison.

Concurrently, to prevent the regime from being undermined from within, the Hong Kong Government began assembling a formidable battery of laws intended for use against *agent provocateurs*. Many of these laws targeted the press. These were in essence the same laws used by British authorities in other colonies and dominions to ensure that the press could not be harnessed to oppose British rule and interests.

"The colonial government had in place, as in Britain's colonies elsewhere, a battery of laws designed to suppress publications if they threatened Hong Kong's security, public order, safety, health or morals; to vet and prohibit television and radio programs and to revoke a TV license for security reasons; to punish those who were treasonous or seditious; and to suppress and censor publications under the broad sweep of emergency legislation," according to the Hong Kong Journalists' Association 1997 Annual Report. "Until the late 1980s, the legal framework for the protection of colonial authority in the event that it was challenged directly by free speech, free assembly or free association, or in the event other conflicts (notably between China and Taiwan) threatened public order or security, was essentially oppressive."⁹

On March 1, 1952 serious rioting erupted after rumor spread that the colonial authorities had denied entry at the border to a Chinese delegation. The group was on its way to console mainland refugees left without shelter after a fire had razed their temporary camp. Thirty

demonstrators were injured; one later died of his wounds. The mainland press and Hong Kong's left-wing papers denounced the colonial regime's handling of the incident in shrill unison, calling it a "bloody atrocity." "Hong Kong is built by the Chinese people with their blood and tears and we can never permit it to be used by imperialism as a slaughterhouse for butchering Chinese people and an advanced excuse for aggression on China," the *Ta Kung Pao* thundered.¹⁰

On March 5, Hong Kong's left-wing press reprinted a commentary published on the mainland the day before in the Communist Party's mouthpiece, the *People's Daily*. The missive warned that by perpetrating "brutal acts" of persecution the British authorities in Hong Kong would "certainly suffer crushing blows before the great strength of the Chinese people." The Hong Kong Government responded by laying charges against the editors, publishers, proprietors and printers of the three main Hong Kong left-wing newspapers (the *Ta Kung Pao*, *New Evening Post* and the *Wen Wei Po*) for publish-

ing seditious material. "The charges arose out of the publication by those newspapers of what the Crown claimed to be untrue accounts of the disturbance . . .," according to the Hong Kong Government's 1952 annual report. "It was the Crown's case that the articles were calculated to bring the Hong Kong Government into contempt and to raise discontent and disaffection amongst the inhabitants of the Colony."¹¹ On May 5, the editor and publisher of the *Ta Kung Pao* were found guilty. They were ordered to pay a fine or face a six and nine month prison term, respectively. The court also suspended publication of the newspaper for six months.

On appeal, although the convictions were upheld, the suppression order against the newspaper was lifted and the charges against the two others dropped. The Government said it had made its point and did not wish to appear "vindictive." According to Chan and Yau¹² and others, however, the colonial administration had been forced to back down after China's Foreign Ministry denounced the Government for

Recent Newspaper and Periodical Closures

December 1996	<i>Sing Tao Evening News</i>	a 58-year-old afternoon daily owned by the Sing Tao Group
December 1996	<i>Window</i>	a pro-China, English-language weekly
June 1996	<i>The Eastern Express</i>	a two-year-old English-language newspaper run by the Oriental Press Group
January 1996	<i>Fresh Weekly</i>	owned by Culturecom
February 1995	<i>The Contemporary</i>	a China-watching publication founded in 1989 by a former chief editor of the Beijing-controlled <i>Wen Wei Po</i>
March 1995	<i>Sunday Weekly</i>	estimated to have lost HK\$60 million over its 16-month existence
December 1995	<i>Hong Kong United Daily</i>	opened in 1992 by Taiwan's United Daily News group
December 1995	<i>China Times Weekly</i>	opened in early 1992 by Taiwan's China Times group
December 1995	<i>Express News</i>	owned by South China Holdings, a listed company with securities and industrial interests, the paper resumed publication in September 1996
December 1995	<i>Huanan Jingji Journal</i>	<i>Southern China Economic Journal</i> , owned by Culturecom
December 1995	<i>Television Daily</i>	a boutique paper with a circulation of 3,000
January 1995	<i>Wah Kiu Yat Pao</i>	<i>Overseas Chinese Daily News</i> , established in 1925
November 1994	<i>Hong Kong Today</i>	a tabloid launched in November 1993 by the Ming Pao group
February 1994	<i>Hong Kong Times</i>	a pro-Taiwan paper established in 1949
1994	<i>Pai Shing</i>	a fortnightly China-watching magazine
March 1991	<i>Ching Pao</i>	a PRC-controlled, pro-working class newspaper

“trampling on Hong Kong Chinese’s basic freedom and rights.” The conclusion is that thereafter, the Hong Kong authorities virtually abandoned the use of the legal stick. The one other time these draconian laws were leveled at the press was during the leftist riots of 1967. On that occasion, even though all the left-wing publications had participated with equal anti-British ferocity, the Government reacted by closing three fringe left-wing papers.¹³

The system of press control that developed in Hong Kong therefore was rare if not unique in the annals of colonialism. Had the laws and regulations designed to curb free speech “all been faithfully executed,” mused Chan and Lee, “Hong Kong would have written a very dark page in the history of press freedom.”¹⁴ Instead, they were only rarely invoked. China’s intervention in 1952 meant that the intended tool of press control would in future have to be used as a deterrent. This in turn obliged the colonial regime to rely on a combination of cajolery and manipulation to corral the press in order to prevent dissent at the margin from percolating into the mainstream.

With the signing in 1984 of the Sino-British Joint Declaration the framework and timetable for Hong Kong’s return to China was formalized. And in a bid to assuage community concerns over the question of post-1997 freedoms, the colonial authorities began purging the statute books of these dormant but potentially virulent press-gag laws and regulations. Progress was slow due in part to China’s unwillingness to cooperate with what was seen as preemptive sabotage. Despite the foot-dragging some laws were overhauled. In March 1987, for instance, Hong Kong’s libertarians hailed as a significant victory the repeal of the Control of Publications Consolidation Ordinance, a law that conferred the authorities with wide-ranging powers over the media. In 1991, to assuage the fears of Hong Kong people after the violent suppression of China’s democracy movement two years before, the Government introduced a Bill of Rights, which among other provisions, for the first time expressly guaranteed freedom of expression. However in February 1997, Beijing announced that the bill would be adjusted after the hand-over to ensure it did not emasculate pre-existing legislation nor restrict the scope for future law making.

By the time Hong Kong was returned to China, the British administration claimed victory in successfully neutralizing 30 offending sections from 17 acts said to contain the majority of the

press control laws. However, the Journalists’ Association argued that too little was achieved and that a legal platform still existed which could be used to gag the press and muzzle free speech. It also chided the outgoing Government for failing to convert its administrative code on access to government information into a full-fledged freedom of information law. “Far from being a successful review of legislation, as the [Colonial] administration often claims, some of the most powerful and draconian laws will remain following the end of British rule,” according to a downbeat assessment in the association’s 1997 annual report. “As laws with the tag of British-approval, these may then represent an open invitation to abuse.”

It is conceivable that despite the absence of the checks and balances that existed in pre-handover times, the tradition of deterrence will continue to be observed. On the other hand, those who favor using the stick will have at their disposal a far more potent set of legal tools when the existing stable of laws are eventually augmented by a batch of new subversion-treason-secession laws mandated under Article 23 of Hong Kong’s new constitution.

Who’s Who in the Hong Kong Media

Meanwhile, maneuvering ahead of the handover and, more recently, a tumultuous circulation war, has resulted in a major shake-up in the composition of the local media industry. Since 1984, ownership of two influential newspaper groups (*South China Morning Post* and *Ming Pao*) has changed hands; two other dailies (*Express News* and *Hong Kong Daily News*) were also taken over; and two new titles (*Hong Kong Economic Times* and *Apple Daily*) entered the fray. *Apple Daily*’s launch in 1995 precipitated the circulation battle that also erupted at a time of a 70 percent hike in newsprint costs and a shrinking advertising revenue base caused by an economic slowdown. This resulted in the closure of half a dozen newspapers, several periodicals and a spate of poor corporate results. In the 1995–96 fiscal year, Oriental Press Group’s earnings plunged 94 percent to \$US3.2 million while the combined losses of *Ming Pao*, *Hong Kong Daily News*, *Sing Tao* and *Culturecom* amounted to \$US60 million compared with collective profits of \$US79.5 million a year earlier. *Apple*’s arrival and its hyper-tabloid style of presentation have also been blamed for a general lowering in the standards of journalism.

By the late 1990s, the Hong Kong press was much changed in structure, affiliation and even

content from that which had been the norm between 1949 and 1984. For all of that period the Hong Kong media comprised a pro-government core sandwiched between the right- and left-wing partisan press. The right supported the Chinese Nationalists on Taiwan and the left the Chinese Communists on the mainland. During the final decade or so of British rule, however, this spectrum of opinions contracted significantly. With the closure in early 1995 of the last pro-Taiwan daily, the voice of what was the

right-wing press was silenced. The shape of today's media industry is summarized below.

South China Morning Post

The English-language *South China Morning Post* is the territory's oldest and one of its most authoritative newspaper.¹⁵ Its cross-cultural readership profile gives the *Post* a much greater influence than is suggested by the 5 per cent of total daily newspaper circulation it commands.¹⁶ The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking

Major Hong Kong Newspapers

		Year Founded	Proprietor/ Corporate Owner	Credibility Ranking	Readership (000)	Market Share
Mass Market	<i>Oriental Daily News</i>	1969	Ma Ching-fat (Oriental Press Group)	7	1738	31%
	<i>Apple Daily</i>	1995	Jimmy Lai Chee-ying (privately held)	13	1573	28%
	<i>Tin Tin Daily News</i> (<i>Everyday Daily News</i>)	1960	Sally Aw Sian (Culturecom Holdings)*	11	307	5%
	<i>Sing Pao</i> (<i>Success News</i>)	1939	Ho Man-fat (privately held)	8	529	9%
	<i>Hong Kong Daily News</i>	1960	Albert Yeung Sau-shing (HK Daily News Holdings)**	10	NA	>1%
	<i>Express News</i>	1963	Robert Ng Hung-sang (South China Strategic)	#	NA	>1%
Quality Chinese- Language	<i>Sing Tao Daily</i> (<i>Star Island Daily</i>)	1938	Sally Aw Sian (Sing Tao Group)	5	217	4%
	<i>Ming Pao Daily News</i> (<i>Enlightenment Daily News</i>)	1959	Tiong Hiew King (Ming Pao Holdings)	3	329	6%
	<i>Hong Kong Economic Journal</i>	1975	Lam Shan-muk (privately held)	1	58	1%
	<i>Hong Kong Economic Times</i>	1988	Lawrence Fung (privately held)	4	112	2%
	Quality English- Language	<i>South China Morning Post</i>	1903	Robert Kuok Hock Nien (SCMP Holdings)	2	280
<i>Hong Kong Standard</i>		1949	Sally Aw Sian (Sing Tao Group)	6	NA	>1%
China- Controlled	<i>Ta Kung Pao</i> (<i>Impartial Daily</i>)	1948	PRC-interests	16	NA	>1%
	<i>Wen Wei Po</i> (<i>Literary Daily</i>)	1948	PRC-interests	15	NA	>1%
	<i>Hong Kong Commercial Daily</i>	1952	PRC-interests	14	NA	>1%

Notes:

The proprietor is defined as the largest shareholder of the controlling corporate owner.

Readership figures are for 1997 and are provided by AC Nielsen-SRG, Hong Kong.

Media credibility ranking comes from a survey of journalists conducted by researchers at the Department of Journalism and Communication at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Express News had suspended publication in 1996 when the survey was conducted, but a 1990 survey placed the newspaper in 13th position out of 19.

* The Sing Tao Group holds a 43% stake in Culturecom, publisher of the *Tin Tin Daily News*.

** HK News Daily is controlled by the Emperor International Holdings where Albert Yeung and associates are the largest shareholders.

Corporation, the territory's largest bank, controlled it prior to its sale to Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation in 1986. In 1993, News Corporation quit the local newspaper business after it paid \$US525 million to take control of a Hong Kong-based regional satellite broadcaster, STAR Television. Control of the *Post* passed to a Chinese-Malaysian businessman, Robert Kuok Hock Nien, who paid Murdoch \$US349 million for a 34.9 percent stake in the newspaper company. Another Chinese-Malaysian businessman, Khoo Kay Peng of the Malayan United Industries Group, purchased a 25.8 percent stake in the *Post*. This was not Kuok's first foray into the Hong Kong media. In 1988 he acquired a 24 percent share in Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB), one of the two terrestrial television broadcasters. Today Kuok's Kerry Group holds 33 percent of TVB's issued capital, making it the second-largest shareholder.

Kuok's close ties with Beijing were underlined when, in the 1980s, he was appointed by Beijing to a number of advisory positions on committees dealing with Hong Kong's future. In 1997 the *Economist* newspaper described Kuok as the "largest individual investor in China" (8 March, p. S3). In a June cover story, *Fortune* magazine dubbed Kuok "the world's shrewdest businessman" and estimated his net wealth at \$US7 billion. Kuok's Kerry Group has Asia-wide investments in food processing, beverage bottling, luxury hotels, real estate, retailing, plantations, infrastructure, manufacturing, securities and shipping. In China, Kerry owns or controls eight Coca-Cola bottling plants, 17 hotels (with eight more under construction), a host of food processing plants and extensive real estate investments.¹⁷

Given Kuok's impeccable China connections it was no surprise that his sudden emergence as a local media mogul in the 1990s heightened concerns in the colony that the *Post* would evolve into a mouthpiece for pro-China interests. Although the *Post* has made a few puzzling calls (for examples, see the following section), it was praised by *China Perspectives*, a respected China-watching journal, for its "consistently good, even enhanced quality of . . . news reporting and coverage" which was "a redeeming feature of an otherwise uninspiring media scene . . ." ¹⁸ Kuok stepped down as chairman and director of the *Post* at the end of 1997 and was replaced by his son, Kuok Khoon Ean.

Ming Pao (Enlightenment Daily)

The Malaysian-Chinese businessman Tiong Hiew King controls the *Ming Pao* group.

According to *Fortune* (28 July 1997, page 120), Tiong's personal wealth amounts to \$US2.7 billion, a fortune largely amassed through his extensive timber interests. The *Asian Wall Street Journal* reported that in 1994 Tiong's family company, Rimbunan Hijau (Green Lushness), has forestry interests stretching from Borneo in Malaysia to New Zealand. Tiong has other investments in China, Singapore and Australia. In Malaysia he also owns plantations, property and a publishing business that prints the *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, Malaysia's largest Chinese-language newspaper. In 1993, Tiong made his first foreign foray into the media business with the opening of a newspaper in Papua New Guinea—where he is the largest player in the local timber industry—called *The National (New Straits Times)*, 1 April 1996).

In 1995, he acquired control of the *Ming Pao* group from Yu Pun-hoi, a Hong Kong businessman and would-be media magnate who had bought the company from its founder, Louis Cha, just four years before. *Ming Pao* has always been considered to be a high-brow newspaper, a publication that won plaudits for its coverage of China during the tumultuous Cultural Revolution (1966–76) when the mainland was all but closed off to the outside world. Cha, who was both editor and proprietor during that era, toned down his criticism of the Beijing regime, after the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping introduced plans for sweeping economic liberalization in the early 1980s. During and after the 1989 democracy movement, the paper once again became a trenchant critic leading Beijing to label it a "hostile" publication and blame it for instigating sympathy protests in Hong Kong.¹⁹

Relations between Beijing and the newspaper hit rock bottom in 1993 when one of *Ming Pao*'s reporters, Xi Yang, a mainlander who had just moved to Hong Kong, was arrested during a reporting trip in China. In 1994 he was sentenced to a 12-year prison term for "stealing state secrets." Xi's crime was to report that the Government was about to raise official interest rates and sell some gold holdings. According to some accounts, the information had already been published in other Hong Kong newspapers including the Chinese-controlled *Wen Wei Po*.²⁰ When Tiong bought the paper in 1995 "positioning *Ming Pao* for the return to Chinese rule became a leading concern," according to the *Asian Wall Street Journal*. The report insinuates that the toning down of its coverage of China and its support for the incoming SAR

Government was part of Tiong's strategy to win favor with Beijing in the hope of "realizing business ambitions there." The Hong Kong Journalists Association in its 1997 annual report accuses *Ming Pao* of "positioning itself for the new era by further expunging itself of critical columnists." *China Perspectives* (Number 12, July/August 1997) believes the paper is adopting a "more conciliatory editorial line on China and its local supporters" and that it had emasculated its once vaunted China pages. In February 1997 China released Xi Yang from prison. This was nine years before his term was due to expire and significantly, five months before Hong Kong was due to be returned to China. Two months before the handover Xi was quietly posted to *Ming Pao's* Toronto office.

Apple Daily

Within two years of its 1995 launch *Apple Daily*²¹ had established itself as the second largest selling newspaper in Hong Kong and was closing in on the long-time undisputed market leader, the *Oriental Daily*. According to *Apple* executives, the paper moved into profitability just 12 months after its launch (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 July 1997, p. 62). *Apple's* success is based on an aggressively sensationalist style of reporting and presentation that is strong on sex, crime and scandal. Its regular offerings include a steady stream of soft porn and gruesome crime stories accompanied by lurid crime-scene photographs. It also publishes a daily review of the latest pornographic videos. But its most inglorious contribution to journalism is the "Portland Street" column, named for a street in Hong Kong's most celebrated red light district. The writer goes by the pseudonym of Fat Dragon, who provides readers with tips on where to find the best brothels in Hong Kong's most frequented red light district. Justifying its coverage, *Apple Daily* editor-in-chief Ip Yut-kin, told the *South China Morning Post* (3 June 1996) that "a newspaper should reflect society. We have a court page, a political page [and] we have a page about night life."

Apple Daily is the creation of Jimmy Lai Chee-ying, a businessman who first made his mark with a chain of clothing stores specializing in inexpensive casual clothing. In the early 1990s he branched out into publishing with the release of a magazine-version of what was to become his newspaper. *Next* magazine was an instant success and spawned a host of imitators. It was in one of his regular missives in *Next* that Lai incurred the wrath of Chinese officialdom.

Writing in 1993, Lai referred to Li Peng, the Chinese Premier and leading proponent of the crackdown on the Tiananmen Square protestors, as a "turtle's egg with an IQ of zero"—a slur that roughly translates to mean "dumb bastard."

Retribution was swift. Local authorities in Beijing and Shanghai shut down Lai's clothing stores there. Although there was never any official explanation for the move, it looked very much like an act of revenge. Lai eventually sold his holding in the publicly listed clothing company as a prelude to taking his media empire public. Even then, he found obstacles. Just months before he intended to list shares in his *Next* Media group, the principal stockbroker underwriting the issue pulled out of the deal. And in the middle of one of the biggest bull runs the Hong Kong stock market had ever experienced, Lai was unable to find another broker to back the issue. In another indication of China's displeasure, *Apple* and *Next* journalists were barred from entering the mainland to work.

Sing Tao Jih Pao (Star Island Daily), Tin Tin Daily News (Everyday Daily News), Hong Kong Standard

The *Sing Tao* newspaper group is unique in Hong Kong in that it publishes both English- and Chinese-language mainstream dailies—the latter subsidizing the former. The late Aw Boon Haw founded the group in 1938; a Communist-hating Chinese *émigré*, he made his fortune in South East Asia selling a medicinal ointment called Tiger Balm. Today control of the group rests in the hands of Aw's daughter, Sally Aw Sian. In an interview in June 1997 Aw said she wanted to sell her stake in the company. "I'm getting to a retiring age and I don't have any descendants. I'm looking for the right partner who I can work with . . . and if everything is going well, I will sell out."²² The decision to quit publishing had nothing to do with the political changes in Hong Kong, she added.

It may have more to do with the fact that the *Sing Tao* group is not the force that it used to be. Its finances were severely weakened by the newspaper circulation war that beset Hong Kong in 1995 and 1996. A profit of \$US36.7 million in 1995 became a loss of \$US18.8 million the following year. In 1996 the group closed the *Sing Tao Evening News*, an afternoon daily. The *Hong Kong Economic Times* has made considerable inroads into what was once *Sing Tao Daily's* monopoly in the lucrative real estate advertising market. And *Tin Tin Daily's* circulation is being hammered by *Apple Daily*. The

precarious position of the English-language *Standard* was highlighted in June 1997 when the Independent Commission Against Corruption launched an investigation into allegations that the company was fiddling with circulation figures.²³ *Sing Tao* is alleged to have printed an extra 15,000 to 23,000 copies of the *Standard* a day and then selling these directly to scrap paper recyclers. In June 1997, six company officials, including the chairman, were taken in for questioning. In an interview with this writer the following day, Aw denied the allegation and claimed it was part of a campaign by her political enemies.

A fact that has not escaped Beijing's notice is that the group also wields influence among the Chinese diaspora in North America, Europe and the Australasia region through overseas editions of the *Sing Tao* which now claims a worldwide circulation of over 160,000. In the early 1990s, Beijing began courting Aw Sian. Her father (who had supported the losing side in the civil war) was posthumously rehabilitated and declared a patriot and confiscated family property was later returned. In 1992, Aw made her first official visit to China. Since then, Aw has signed several deals with mainland partners, although most have either fallen through or appear to be in limbo. They included a joint venture with the *People's Daily* in Beijing to produce a leisure magazine called *Xing Guang Monthly* (*Starlight Monthly*), a television guide in Guangzhou, a financial newspaper (*Shenxing Times*) in Shenzhen, and a deal to have the *Standard* printed and distributed in Beijing. On April 1, 1993, the *Sing Tao* took a symbolic step of cutting its ties with the past. It dropped the Chinese Nationalist Party's dating method from its masthead, a system employed since the paper's inception that takes as a starting point the birth of the Republic of China in 1911 and which is still used in Taiwan.

Oriental Daily News

The other major newspaper publishing enterprise is the Oriental Press Group (OPG) and its flagship paper is the mass market *Oriental Daily News*, Hong Kong's biggest-selling newspaper and the main rival of the upstart *Apple Daily*. As such, it offers a similar fare of sex, crime and scandal. Seven years after it was first published in 1969, the title became the biggest-selling newspaper on the local market—a position it still retains. The newspaper "boasts a contingent of 80 spot news reporters and 30 others covering 'societal news.' By contrast, the paper only has 10

political reporters and 20 economic reporters."²⁴ In 1977, police smashed "the largest drug syndicate ever to operate in Hong Kong" and named OPG founder, Ma Sik-chun, as one of the ring-leaders.²⁵ Ma escaped arrest and fled to Taiwan where he now lives. Day-to-day running of the group passed to his brother Ma Ching-kwan who stepped down from the helm in 1996 in favor of his brother Ma Ching-fat.

Although the Ma family has not been one of Beijing's natural allies the *Oriental Daily's* long-term domination of the Hong Kong newspaper market has meant that they could not be ignored. In 1993 Ma Ching-kwan accepted an invitation to visit Beijing and meet senior Chinese leaders. The following year, the Oriental Press Group launched the *Eastern Express*, its first English-language title. Backed, it was said, with the (non-financial) support of the colonial Government, the new paper was designed to challenge the *South China Morning Post*. The belief was that under its new pro-China owner (Robert Kuok), the *Post* would lean more towards Beijing's point of view, thereby losing credibility and readership. The *Eastern Express* would then fill the gap. In 1996, after two years of losses, Oriental Press closed the *Eastern Express*.

Of the remaining major Hong Kong newspaper, three dailies (*Ta Kung Pao*, *Wen Wei Po* and the *Hong Kong Commercial Daily*) and an afternoon stablemate (*New Evening Post*) are all controlled by mainland interests. While generally faithful to the cause, all condemned Beijing over the suppression of the 1989 democracy movement. Beijing retaliated by purging the ranks. The papers enjoy only a small circulation and derive their influence from their China connections.

Aside from *Apple Daily*, private interests control three other newspapers. Two of them—the *Hong Kong Economic Journal* and the *Hong Kong Economic Times*—were established by respected journalists. Lam Shan-muk was a writer for *Ming Pao* before he set out on his own. A passionate free marketeer, Lam made his name as a trenchant critic of Beijing's policies of the 1960s and 1970s. Those views have mellowed since 1978 when China adopted the pro-market economic policies of former Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. The newspaper's small readership belies its excellent reputation. Lawrence Fung, owner of the *Economic Times*, was a writer with the leftist *Wen Wei Po* before he established his own successful paper. The

Times is less high-brow than the *Journal*. Although the circulation war of 1995–96 forced the *Journal* to cut its Sunday edition and the *Times* to ax a weekly magazine insert, they avoided more lasting damage. The other independent, *Sing Pao*, which was once the second-biggest selling newspaper in Hong Kong behind the *Oriental Daily*, was not so fortunate. Between 1991 and 1997 its readership slumped by a precipitous 36 percent and it was pushed out of the number two spot by *Apple*. *Sing Pao* is owned by the very low profile Ho family.

Hong Kong Daily News Holdings Limited owns the *Hong Kong Daily News*. It is a subsidiary of Emperor International Holdings, a diversified group that controls listed companies with interests in media, property and financial services. The company claims to have a contract to distribute one of its other publications, *Economic Digest*, in China. The group boasts an equity and business relationship with the Chinese Ministry of Justice.²⁶ Emperor has a banking interest in Cambodia and is also building a \$US180 million hotel-casino development in North Korea where it is one of the biggest foreign investors (*Korea Herald*, 19 August 1997). The Emperor group's chairman and largest shareholder is Albert Yeung Sau-shing, a colorful business identity who has convictions for attempting to pervert the course of justice (in 1980) and illegal bookmaking (in 1986). In 1995, Yeung was acquitted of another charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice and of criminal intimidation and false imprisonment after key prosecution witnesses failed to recall details of the alleged offenses.

The *Express News*, which suspended publication for nine months in 1995–96 at the height of the circulation war, is controlled by South China Strategic Limited, a subsidiary of South China Holdings, a conglomerate with very close China connections and interests in media, manufacturing, property and financial services. Robert Ng Hung-sang and two others formed the South China group in 1988. The company made its mark through a series of deals with parties in China. Yue Xiu Enterprises, the commercial arm of the municipal government of the Southern Chinese city of Guangzhou purchased a 9 percent stake in South China's stockbroking offshoot in June, 1997.

The scope of this discussion paper does not allow for a detailed look at the state of Hong Kong's television and radio sectors, in part because they play second fiddle to newspapers in terms of influencing public opinion. However,

because several of the most egregious acts of self-censorship were perpetrated by the two terrestrial television broadcasters, it should be pointed out that here too there is an unhealthy confluence of pro-Beijing interests. As mentioned above (see *South China Morning Post*), Robert Kuok's Kerry Group is one of the major shareholders in Television Broadcasts Ltd (TVB). The other is Shaw Brothers, Hong Kong's leading movie production house. The chairman of Shaw Brothers is Sir Run Run Shaw, a senior adviser to the Chinese Government. The other broadcaster, ATV, is controlled by Lim Por-yen (50.8%) and his Lai Sun Development group (16.67%). The Lai Sun group has interests in hotels, retail, manufacturing and infrastructure developments—many of these in China. The commercial arm of the Beijing Municipal Government and a subsidiary of the Bank of China hold a 5.7 percent stake in one of Lai Sun's branch businesses. In April 1997, the Hong Kong subsidiary of China's main state-owned shipping company purchased a 20 percent share in Lai Sun's hotel business.

Cause for Concern—A Catalogue of Questionable Conduct

Although allegations of self-censorship by and proprietorial interference in the Hong Kong media have intensified over the past few years it is not the first time they have cropped up. After studying Hong Kong newspaper editorials between 1956 and 1966 Mitchell, for instance, concluded that the *South China Morning Post* was "anything but a member of the non-existent loyal opposition to Her Majesty's Government." The editorial line, he wrote, was more critical in 1935–36 than was the case thirty years later. "This newspaper infrequently criticizes and rarely gives suggestions to Government on how present programs might be improved or on what new policies might be necessary for the community."²⁷

Today, however, opinion polls indicate that both journalists and the wider community believe that self-censorship is rife. A poll conducted by the University of Hong Kong's Social Science Research Center and published in September 1997 found that 68.4 percent of respondents believed that newspapers avoided criticizing the Chinese Government. Moreover, 44 percent thought Hong Kong media practiced self-censorship and almost 50 percent said there had been a misuse or abuse of press freedom. More telling was a 1996 survey of journalists conducted by the Department of Journalism and

Communications at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in which half (50.3%) of the respondents felt that fellow journalists “censored themselves when writing critical reports or commentaries about the Chinese Government.” More than half (52.3%) expressed concern that freedom of the press in Hong Kong would be affected after the handover.

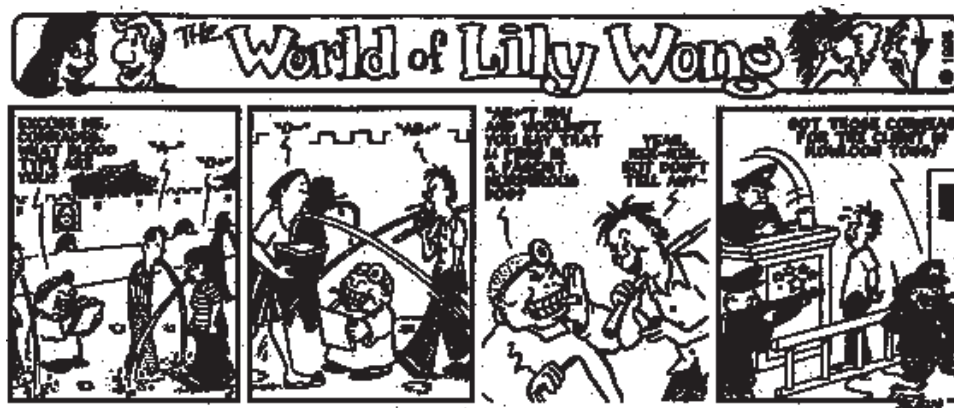
In the print media, one frequently cited development has been the silencing of certain columnists and contributors. In March 1997, the *Ming Pao* newspaper “got rid of, or significantly reduced, column space for the regular features most likely to upset [Beijing] which it had carried hitherto.” (Michel Bonin, *China Perspectives*, No. 12, July/August, 1997.) And *Ming Pao* is not the only paper guilty of this practice. Liu Kin-ming, a vice-president of the Hong Kong Journalists’ Association and a former reporter with the *Sing Tao Daily*, told a conference in June 1997 that he resigned after his editor repeatedly spiked his column and stopped running his stories which had been judged to be critical of China.

One of the more celebrated incidents of this type took place in 1995 at the *South China Morning Post*. The editor at the time, David Armstrong, summarily canceled the satirical comic strip “The World of Lily Wong,” a long-running daily cartoon strip about the life and times of a Hong Kong Chinese woman and her American husband. Larry Feign, an American cartoonist who still lives in the territory, created the strip. In the weeks before its cancellation, the cartoon strip was lampooning the trade in live human organs—a practice whereby Chinese authorities allegedly sell organs taken from executed prisoners to Hong Kong patients. The last cartoon (see below) also contained a reference to the Chinese Premier, Li Peng, as a

“fascist murderous dog.” Armstrong insisted that the decision to cancel the cartoon was a cost-cutting measure and had nothing to do with censorship. Feign told a Hong Kong radio station that the paper had rejected an offer to cut his fees and also declined to run a week’s worth of pre-paid cartoons.

The *Post* was back in the spotlight in early 1997 when news leaked that the paper was about to appoint Feng Xiliang as a consulting editor. Feng, a member of the Chinese Communist Party, was the founding editor of China’s official English-language daily, the *China Daily*. He was also a consultant for the short-lived Hong Kong-based pro-China *Window* magazine. The editor of the *Post*, Jonathan Fenby, argued that his role would be confined to helping the paper improve its access to decision-makers and senior leaders on the mainland. Feng was not going to vet the *Post*’s coverage, Fenby said.²⁸ Nevertheless, the move was roundly criticized for the poor timing.

The broadcast media has also been guilty of some highly irregular behavior. Most notable was the decision in 1994 by ATV, one of the two licensed terrestrial broadcasters, to cancel a provocative and high-rating current affairs program called “News Tease.” The show was hosted by Raymond Wong Yuk-man, the former department head at the faculty of journalism at a local Taiwan-affiliated college and someone who has developed a reputation as a professional muck-raker and specialist China-baiter. ATV executives said the decision to pull the plug was made because after 15 months on the air, the show was apparently becoming stale. Wong had a different view: “News Tease was dropped solely because of pressure from Xinhua [the New China News Agency],” he told an interviewer in 1995. In June of that year, the same ATV management canceled



The last *World of Lily Wong* cartoon to be published in the *South China Morning Post*, May 19, 1995. Reproduced with the permission of Larry Feign.

a planned broadcast of a Spanish-made documentary about the 1989 demonstrations in China, only to reinstate the show after six senior journalists resigned in protest.

The other terrestrial broadcaster, TVB, was also criticized in January 1994 for first buying the rights to a BBC documentary about the private life of the late Chinese leader, Mao Zedong, and then refusing to broadcast it. The program was based on a controversial book about Mao written by his personal physician. And a Hong Kong-based regional satellite broadcaster, STAR TV dropped BBC World Service Television from its service in 1994 after Chinese authorities made known their displeasure with the BBC's coverage of China. STAR's owner, News Corporation, believed that removing the BBC would help it to expand its business in China. In September 1997, after years of being rebuffed, STAR became the first foreign satellite television operator to win permission to broadcast its signal through a cable network in southern China.

Conclusion

The developments outlined in this paper make it, I believe, highly likely that the Hong Kong media is going to experience a further contraction of the type of freedom it has enjoyed over much of the 1980s and 1990s. This will be achieved, in part, by a continuing shrinkage in the number of outlets and this in turn will add momentum to further erosion in the diversity of media opinion. This change is unlikely to be the result of a direct intervention by Beijing. Instead, it will be gradual and self-inflicted. Hong Kong will modify its behavior by sheer force of China's proximity, culture and its burgeoning direct involvement. The trend is already evident.

The endangered list includes small independent newspapers that will fold under the weight of competition from larger, more market-driven ones. In that do-or-die environment it makes no sense for newspapers fighting to survive to antagonize the authorities or scare off advertisers. So expect more conformity. The two English-language television news services operated by the domestic broadcasters will also be looking down the barrel of extinction over coming years. The territory's sole cable operator closed its English-language news department in January 1998 and the two English-language channels operated by TVB and ATV have only survived by virtue of a legal obligation to broadcast what was once Hong Kong's only official language. Satellite

television, cable and the expected launch in 1998 of a video-on-demand service by Hong Kong Telecom, the phone company, is making life tougher for the terrestrial broadcasters—which already run their English-language channels at a loss. Another franchise in the firing line is Radio Television Hong Kong's (RTHK) radio service. Government-owned, RTHK is modeled on (and behaves like) the British Broadcasting Corporation. Unlike the BBC it has no formal guarantees of independence.

Ironically, the left-wing press may also become a casualty. *Ta Kung Pao*, *Wen Wei Po*, the *Commercial Daily* and their evening stablemate have existed thanks to the largesse of pro-Beijing advertisers and then only because it was in the interests of Beijing to have a local mouthpiece during the colonial era. The main task of the leftist press was to criticize the colonial Government and win over those non-believers to the motherland's cause. Now the British have departed and Beijing is able to communicate directly with the people of Hong Kong. The word irrelevance comes to mind. "For years, one of the key responsibilities of the local left-wing papers was to defend China's policy—by extension, it meant that whoever was found to be anti-Beijing had to be condemned," according to the *South China Morning Post's* Fanny Wong. "But the handover changed the scene, making it more difficult for the left-wing commentators to come up with inspiration."²⁹

To remain unfettered, the press needs either a tolerant Government, committed owners who can juggle the need to make money with the need to pursue excellence, a corps of newspeople dedicated to their profession or public pressure groups acting as watchdogs. That's not to say these do not exist in Hong Kong today; it's just that there are not enough of them. The last words go to the editor one of Hong Kong's most respected newspaper: "The interesting thing to watch is whether this process will be driven by the Chinese political establishment or whether it will be driven—as has been the case—by the motive to curry favor by the new [Hong Kong] leaders," said Dr Y. Joseph Lian, editor of the *Hong Kong Economic Journal*. "If it is the former, we can direct our criticism at the Chinese Government. If it is the latter, we have just ourselves to blame. I believe it's going to be more of the latter."³⁰

Notes

1. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 December 1995, p. 78.
2. The Hong Kong Journalists' Association and *Article 19, 1996 Annual Report*, pp. 16–20.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 15. The report refers to a speech given by a Xinhua official in 1995 in which he called on Hong Kong journalists to “love their mother country.”
4. *Press Freedom and Political Transition in Hong Kong: A Summary of the Hong Kong Journalist Survey 1996*. Department of Journalism and Communication, Chinese University of Hong Kong. Web site: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/97event/research.renglish.html>
5. Kevin Boyle (ed), *Article 19 World Report 1988: Information Freedom and Censorship*, Times Books, New York, 1988, p. 17.
6. Interview with Stephen Hutcheon, Hong Kong, June 1997.
7. Robert Edward Mitchell, *Asian Survey* Vol. 9, 1969, p. 669.
8. Joseph Man Chan and Chin-Chuan Lee, *Mass Media and Political Transition: The Hong Kong Press in China's Orbit*, The Guilford Press, New York, 1991, p. 7.
9. Joint Report of the Hong Kong Journalists' Association and *Article 19, 1997 Annual Report*, Hong Kong, June 1997.
10. *Ta Kung Pao*, 11 March 1952.
11. *Colonial Reports Hong Kong 1952*, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1953, p. 215.
12. Joseph Chan Man and Yau Shing-mou, *The Prospect of Press Freedom in Hong Kong from a Power Perspective*, and in *Ming Pao Monthly*, May 1987 (in Chinese) as cited by C.K. Lau, *Hong Kong's Colonial Legacy*, Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, 1997, p. 160.
13. A number of left-wing journalists who claimed to be covering the protests were also arrested, charged and imprisoned for participating in demonstrations.
14. Joseph Man Chan and Chin-Chuan Lee, *Mass Media and Political Transition: The Hong Kong Press in China's Orbit*, Guilford Press, New York, 1991, p. 8.
15. Joseph Man Chan, Eric K. W. Ma and Clement Y. K. So, *Back to the Future: Retrospect and Prospects for the Hong Kong Mass Media in The Other Hong Kong Report 1997*, Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, 1997. See table on p. 462.
16. Chin-Chuan Lee, *Media Structure and Regime Change in Hong Kong*, in *The Challenge of Hong Kong's Reintegration with China*, Ming K. Chan (ed), Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, 1997, p. 127.
17. *Fortune*. 28 July 1997, p. 91.
18. Michel Bonin, *China Perspectives*, Number 12, July/August 1997, p. 35.
19. Joseph Kahn, *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 1 March 1997, p. 1.
20. Chin-Chuan Lee, *Media Structure and Regime Change in Hong Kong* in *The Challenge of Hong Kong's Reintegration with China*, Ming K. Chan (ed), Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, 1997, p. 129.
21. Why *Apple*? According to Lai, the name evokes Eve because “without Eve biting the apple, we wouldn't be in business—there wouldn't be any sin and there wouldn't be any newspapers.” Edward Gargan, the *New York Times*, 19 March 1995.
22. Interview with Stephen Hutcheon, Hong Kong, June 1997.
23. Audited circulation figures for 1997 show the *Standard* circulation growing to 57,000 from 38,000 the year before. The market leader English-language daily, the *South China Morning Post*, averages 115,000 copies a day.
24. Chin-Chuan Lee, *Media Structure and Regime Change in Hong Kong*, in *The Challenge of Hong Kong's Reintegration with China*, Ming K. Chan (ed), Hong Kong University Press, Hong Kong, 1997, p. 130.
25. *South China Morning Post*, 26 August 1977, p. 1.
26. Nisha Gopalan, interview with Vanessa Fan-Man-seung, managing director of the Emperor group, *South China Morning Post*, 13 July 1997, Sunday Money, p. 3.
27. Robert Edward Mitchell, *Asian Survey*, Vol. 9, 1969, p. 681.
28. Interview with Stephen Hutcheon, Hong Kong, June 1997.
29. Fanny Wong, *South China Morning Post*, 27 Sept 1997, Focus Section.
30. Interview with Stephen Hutcheon, Hong Kong, June 1997.

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Alan Knight Homepage: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/2365/>

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