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Sex Roles

Talking Politics, Performing Masculinities: Stories of Hong Kong Men before and after the Umbrella Movement

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Title page

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Abstract

The present paper addresses the under-explored issue of the role of politics in the construction of masculinity, focusing specifically on political Confucianism and men's doing of gender in the context of Hong Kong's recent turbulent history. Between 2014 and 2016 we conducted a series of paired interviews and focus groups with 10 Hong Kong men from differing social backgrounds. Through cooperative grounded inquiry, we demonstrate how political events and figures provided points of reference for these men in the construction and performance of masculinities. We emphasize the importance of Confucian hierarchical harmony to gender performance, elaborating three cultural logics—respectability, responsibility, and romance—underpinning the doing of Hong Kong masculinities. We thereby shed light on the mutual constitution of personal and political selves and how men define and redefine masculine ideals in times of political turbulence.

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Talking Politics, Performing Masculinities: Stories of Hong Kong Men Before and After the Umbrella Movement

The political turbulence surrounding the recent "Umbrella Movement" campaign for democracy in Hong Kong had a major impact on everyday social life, offering a unique opportunity for researchers to investigate the gendered intersections between personal and political space. In the present paper we focus specifically on the construction and performance of masculinity in the context of the protest and its aftermath. In so doing we address the underexplored role of politics in the making of masculinities, in particular, the interrelationship between political Confucianism and gender relations in a Chinese society. We analyze the ways men do gender in their everyday lives and what this reveals about the reciprocal interaction between the (re)negotiation of masculinities and contested politics, as well as how they locate themselves in relation to the Chinese nation and to local patriarchal figures. In exploring the multiple and shifting positions men take up in relation to political events, personalities, and the state, we also evaluate the conceptual utility of the concept of hegemonic masculinity—the dominant or "culturally exalted" ideal of manhood within a given culture (Connell 1995, p. 77). As is widely acknowledged, however, hegemonic masculine ideals are rarely attained by most men but rather serve as exemplars in relation to which men can define themselves (see Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

The relationship between Confucianism and male domination has been well documented (Evans 1997; Louie 2002) and is central to any study of Chinese gender relations. The relationship between Chinese politics and Confucianism has also received attention (Bell 2008). But what happens when the political Confucianism that legitimates gendered, generational, and wider social hierarchies is challenged? The Umbrella Movement constituted such a challenge

and thus enables us to explore how ordinary men respond to the consequent unsettling of hegemonic masculine norms. In tackling the complex interrelationships between hegemonic masculinity, political Confucianism, and everyday gender performances, it is necessary to take account of the particular forms of hegemonic and subordinate masculinities characteristic of Hong Kong. In so doing we draw attention to the "hierarchical harmony" that underpins both familial relationships and the relationship between individuals and the state (Ho, Jackson and Kong 2017, p.5). We argue that the Confucian focus on harmony and hierarchy—rather than freedom, participation, and autonomy—interacts with gender ideals to shape men's life choices and political views. Adapting Fosse's (2010) concept of cultural logics, we identify three cultural logics that have emerged from our data and which underpin men's negotiation of local, Confucian-inflected, masculine ideals: respectability, responsibility, and romance. *Respectability* refers to the ways in which men seek to represent themselves as morally upright husbands, fathers, and citizens. *Responsibility* concerns the expectation that men provide moral leadership in their families. *Romance* denotes the small space men carve out for themselves through extramarital adventures that could compromise respectability and responsibility if not kept within acceptable bounds.

Masculine subjectivity is a result of constant negotiation of self and cultural ideals in different domains of life, including men's roles as citizens and national subjects. Feminist scholars have, for some time, been aware of the ways in which the construction of nationhood is gendered (Nagel 1998; Yuval-Davis 1997), and in recent years there has been a growing interest in the relationship between masculinity and the resurgence of nationalism in various countries (Banerjee 2012; Riabov and Riabova 2014). Little attention, however, has been paid to how the politics of the nation relate to men's everyday lives, which is our concern here. The relationship

between Hong Kong and China, and thus the relationship between individuals and the nation, is central to the recent protests in Hong Kong.

Our study involved a series of paired and focus group interviews with 10 Hong Kong men from different backgrounds, who varied by age, social class, sexual identity and political orientation, and conducted in the period from 2014 to 2016 when discussions of politics and protest permeated Hong Kong people's daily lives. In exploring how Hong Kong men do gender in times of political turbulence, we focus specifically on how their participation or non-participation in the campaign for democracy has influenced the construction and performance of masculinity. In bringing issues of politics and citizenship into the conceptualization of masculinity, we will analyze the interplay between politics and gender: how political circumstances are implicated in gendered ideals and performances and, conversely, how gender informs individuals' understanding of and engagement with political events.

The Political Background

When Hong Kong was handed back to China in 1997, it was under an agreement between China and the United Kingdom whereby Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China that would retain a degree of political and legal autonomy. The limited democratization Hong Kong was permitted has since been "carefully managed from above" by the central government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) (Ma 2011, p. 55). As a result, China is believed by many Hong Kong people to have reneged on the "one country, two systems" agreement that was integral to the terms of the handover (Davis 2015, p. 101).

The organization Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP) was established in March 2013 to campaign for a genuinely democratic election of the city's Chief Executive in 2017. OCLP organized seminars, conducted a referendum, and planned to block roads in the Central

Business District (CBD) if the government did not provide an electoral system that satisfied international standards of universal suffrage (Lee and Chan 2016). The OCLP movement received much attention from the PRC and dominated local media coverage throughout 2013 and 2014. In August 2014, the PRC proposed a committee of only 1,200 people to elect the Chief Executive. In response, OCLP leaders resorted to their plan to occupy the CBD, but it was student protesters who were the first to take to the streets in late September. When riot police fired rounds of tear gas on September 28, 2014, many more citizens joined them. The scripted Occupy Central became a decentralized movement. Because umbrellas were used as protection against pepper spray and tear gas, the protest became known as the Umbrella Movement. Demonstrators occupied major roads in some of the city's busiest districts (Admiralty, Mongkok and Causeway Bay), setting up tents and makeshift barricades. The protests lasted for almost 3 months until December 15 when the police cleared the last occupied site.

Although the Umbrella Movement gained considerable public support, this was far from universal. Many objected to the disruption it caused and saw it as socially divisive. In talking to men with a variety of views on the occupation and the wider democracy campaign, the links between their politics and their understandings of masculinity and their roles as men came to the fore. As we will go on to elaborate, it became clear that men's gender performance was contingent on political circumstances and the political discourses circulating in Hong Kong society.

Masculinities as Contextualized Social Practices

Masculinity is not monolithic (Connell 2005); even in a single sociocultural context there are multiple ways of being masculine and performing masculinity. The gap between hegemonic masculine ideals and men's actual practices and experiences, as well as the varied contextual and

structural conditions men face, means that contradictions and compromises are inevitable (Boratav et al. 2014; Choi and Peng 2016) and is indicative of the potential for change and fluidity in the meanings and practices of masculinity (Johansson and Ottemo 2015; Kimmel 2005; Messerschmidt 2012). Those who are unable to aspire to idealized or dominant standards of masculinity can find alternative way of being men. Walker (2006, p. 5) observed what he calls "protest masculinities" among working class American men, enacted through forms of sexual banter and horseplay. Although these particular practices may not apply to Hong Kong Chinese men, the idea of protest masculinity, through which men can create a sense of comfort and solidarity in the face of more powerful men, is potentially applicable to the Hong Kong setting.

Studies of masculinity have demonstrated increasing awareness of intersectionality, the interconnection between gender and other social divisions such as class, race, and sexuality (Pompper 2010), and the multiplicity of masculinities across different local contexts (Beasley 2008; Boratav et al. 2014; Lusher and Robbins 2009). In one of the few studies to have focused on the interaction between politics and gender, Strier (2014, p. 4) focused on the fathers of children who were "disappeared" by the Argentinian government between 1976 and 1983. He found that this traumatic personal loss transformed the previously accepted definition of masculinity as predominantly authoritarian, indicating that large-scale political events may have substantial and long-lasting influences on gender hierarchy.

Such dramatic political moments provide new contexts for "doing gender," which might modify gendered subjectivities. "[T]o 'do' gender is not always to live up to normative conceptions of femininity and masculinity; it is to engage in behavior at the risk of gender assessment" (West and Zimmerman 1987, p. 136). In times of political turbulence men may face new gendered expectations. Participants in social movements may experience disruption of their

everyday habits and assumptions (King 2006; Yang 2000), which may influence their perception of gender norms. Momentous events such as the Umbrella Movement not only affect participants. Furthermore, whether nonparticipants are supportive or unsupportive may make a difference (Hensby 2015), which may have consequences for their doing and understanding of gender; their perceptions of gender ideologies may be either reconstructed or reinforced due to varying political stances. Normative gender order can also be re-established even through doing gender differently; new configurations of masculine practices may take the position of hegemony (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005), especially in times of political instability.

In applying the concept of hegemonic masculinity to China, Louie (2002) conceptualizes Chinese masculinity as a balance of *wen* (cultural attainment) and *wu* (martial valor). He contends that this wen-wu mechanism still operates in a hierarchical gender order that enables certain men to dominate others (Louie 2012). "Soft" or wen masculinity is highly valued and resonates with the neoliberal logic of globalization and business culture (Jankowiak and Li 2014), which prioritizes an adventurous spirit, metropolitan lifestyles, and global connections. Jankowiak and Li (2014, p. 11) observe that even "deceitfulness" is rewarded as a masculine trait within the "new risk economy." Economic or earning capacity is seen as central to the construction of contemporary Chinese masculinity (Hird 2016). Chinese hegemonic masculinity is emerging as entrepreneurial and bound up with the maintenance of men's dominance of women (Zheng 2012). Within this context, failure to fulfill the breadwinning role can lead to a masculinity crisis (Leung and Chan 2012). As in many other regions (World Health Organization 2014), Hong Kong men have higher rates of suicide (Hong Kong Jockey Club Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention 2014) and lower levels of satisfaction with career and life in general (Leung and Ip 2007) than women do, possibly as a result of economic pressure. In pursuit of

more autonomy, self-esteem, and romantic attachment that are seemingly absent from their marital relationships, Chinese men resort to extramarital relationships to fulfil their needs for affiliation, recognition, and achievement (Ho, 2012).

In the macro political context, Confucian precepts have been incorporated into Chinese nationalism and attitudes toward foreign powers (Bell 2008; Jiang 2013), leaving Western democratic ideals little foothold in mainland China. Yet comparative political studies have failed to engage with Chinese feminist theorizing in addressing political Confucianism, thereby ignoring its gendered constitution and implications (Blanchard and Lin 2016). Confucian ideology is gendered at its core in that male authority starts with the family and permeates every level of the societal hierarchy until it reaches the center of political power, be that the emperor or president (Sung and Pascall 2014). It is important to understand and take account of how the Confucian focus on harmony and hierarchy interacts with gender ideals to shape life choices and political views.

Social movements in China have been analyzed through the lens of microfoundations such as relational repression (Deng and O'Brien 2013), bargained authoritarianism (Lee and Zhang 2013), and informal concessions (Distelhorst 2015). The gendered aspects of Chinese activism, however, remain relatively underexplored (see Zeng, 2016, for an exception). In what follows, we contribute to addressing this gap in the literature through considering linkages among political Confucianism, hegemonic masculinity, and the everyday doing of gender in Hong Kong men's accounts of the impact of the Umbrella Movement. We show how men's perceptions of social order and disorder are related to their orientations to their families and their sense of their masculine obligations.

Method

Data Collection

We employed cooperative grounded inquiry (Kong 2016) in our study which merges the principles of cooperative inquiry (Heron 1996) and grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Grounded theory begins with a question or even just with the collection of qualitative data. As researchers review the data collected, repeated ideas, concepts or elements become apparent and are tagged with codes. As more data are collected, and as data are re-reviewed, codes can be grouped into concepts, and then into categories. These categories may become the basis for new theory. Cooperative grounded inquiry (CGI) is an offshoot of this methodology that aims for a more democratic production of knowledge in aid of grounded theory technique of constant comparative analysis (Kong, 2016). Participants are considered as co-researchers in a CGI because they are constantly invited to create concepts (linguistic constructs) to make sense of the lived experiences discussed in the interview(s). By constantly comparing and contrasting the lived experiences of participants and making sense of the similarities and differences together, languages used by the initiating researcher and the participants are open to scrutiny by each other.

In keeping with our cooperative grounded theory methodology, our research evolved over time and in response to issues raised by our participants. This evolution was influenced by external events—the OCLP campaign for democracy and the Umbrella Movement occupation and its aftermath—and the way our participants made sense of them. We have identified five phases of data collection each one informing the next and raising new research questions. As a result of this process and the political context, our research focus shifted over time. Because of this shift, the data we present here comes only from Phases 2 to 5.

Phase 1. The first author, with the support of the General Research Fund, conducted a study of Hong Kong men's sexual choices based on a sample of 20 men from diverse backgrounds who had cross-border relationships and who were recruited through snowball sampling. This step informed Phase 2, at which point the research focus began to shift, so that this first phase simply forms the backdrop to the present study.

Phase 2. This second phase was initially conceived as building on the findings from Phase 1, exploring further men's understandings of good and bad behavior in intimate relationships. Three pairs of participants were interviewed, including two men from the Phase 1 study. Participants were purposively sampled to maximize diversity in age, class, occupation, sexual orientation, and social/family background. They ranged in age from 28- to 70-years-old, with education levels from primary through to postgraduate and a range of occupations, some of which changed over the period of the project of the project. They had varied political stances (see Table 1; pairings 1–3).

We adopted unstructured in-depth interviewing in which participants were invited to narrate their life experiences and express their political opinions in an informal conversational setting. Each interview was conducted with two paired participants and lasted for 2–4 hours. We chose this unusual method of paired stranger interviews to establish a homosocial environment for "men talk." The presentation of masculinity in everyday life varies in different social contexts, and men are observed to talk differently among themselves from the way they talk to women (Johnston and Morrison 2007; Kimmel 2005). Because the interviewer was a female scholar, pairing men was intended to provide an immediate point of male reference and a space for male-on-male narratives (Wade 2000). All interviews were video-recorded with participants' consent and transcribed using pseudonyms chosen by participants.

The interviews took place from July to early September 2014, just before the Umbrella Movement began, when the OCLP campaign was much in the news. A central question put to them was what makes a *puk gaai* [bastard, cad]? The responses to this question proved pivotal to our shift of focus because the men constructed their narratives around political events and figures in Hong Kong. It became evident that the contentious politics of Hong Kong were central to how these men understood and accounted for their conduct and that this informed the further development of our project. It was then that the occupation began, disrupting everyday life, and our research was put on hold for the duration.

Phase 3. A few months after the occupation ended, we resumed work on the project and interviewed these three pairs of men again. In the meantime, two of the men had joined the protest, but were not centrally involved. This second round of interviews enabled us to explore changes in the men's construction of masculinities. We began each interview by showing the men extracts from the video recording of their first interview and discussing this visual data. This opening helped to further inform them about the project and deepen their understanding of what they had consented to do. It also facilitated recall and enabled them to discuss interpretations of their interaction with the researchers (Collier and Wyer 2016) in keeping with the precepts of cooperative grounded inquiry. The interviews subsequently focused on their views and experience of the movement, the impact it had on their personal lives, and their changing perception of themselves.

Phases 4 and 5. In order deepen our understanding of the interrelationship between gender and politics, we then organized a mixed focus-group discussion with six women and five men in May 2016 (Phase 4). We sampled purposively to include individuals with a variety of social characteristics (occupation, education, sexuality, etc.) and who had a variety of political

stances from those who had been very actively involved in the occupation to those who opposed it. The discussion was organized around the ways the Umbrella Movement had influenced people's intimate relationships. Of the five men in the focus group, four were new recruits (Thomas, Hing, Shmily and Keung, see Table 1 for further details). Because we needed an additional man to obtain a better gender balance in the group, we included one from Phase 2, Hei. He was chosen because he had been open and provocative in his narratives, which we judged would encourage others to talk, and which proved to be the case. In Phase 5, the four new male participants in the focus-group were formed into two pairs Pairings 4 and 5 in Table 1) and were interviewed twice, following the same procedures as in Phases 2 and 3.

Data Analysis

Analysis was ongoing throughout in keeping with the grounded theory method so that data collection and analysis went on in parallel and the analysis was continually reappraised by the team. From Phase 2 onwards, transcripts of the recordings were analyzed using line-by-line coding and thematic coding, and, in keeping with the constant comparative method (Charmaz 2014), the emerging themes guided the interviewer's questions in later phrases. We sought to reflect on instances of agency, contradiction, and conflict in the narratives in order to investigate change and fluidity in gender identities and ideologies (Johansson and Ottemo 2015). Due to the political events occurring during our study, some of the narratives were not coherent and changed through the span of the project. Their formation was an ongoing process that responded to events as they unfolded.

Results

We begin this discussion of our data by showing how participants drew analogies between the personal and the political in a time of political instability. We then elaborate on the

three main themes emerging from our coding—respectability, responsibility and romance—which we identify as elements of the local "cultural logics" (Fosse 2010) of masculinity. These themes and their subthemes, along with coding descriptions and prototypical personal and political examples, are reported in Table 2. In addition, more information about the men quoted in the following can be found in Table 1.

During the interviews, our discussion always flowed back-and-forth between personal matters and the current political situation in Hong Kong. The links were often established through drawing an analogy between gender and macro-politics. We found that all participants made use of familial metaphors when they talked about Occupy Central and the Umbrella Movement. When they talked about masculinities in their personal life, they often cited examples of the wrongdoings of public figures to justify the discrepancy between their perceptions of ideal masculinity and their own behavior. Alternating between personal and public sites of masculine identities constituted a cultural logic for self-formation and self-justification. More importantly, we argue that these cultural references drawn from Chinese patriarchy reflect the political environment in Hong Kong where different representations of masculinity serve as metaphors for different models of political authority (see Dudink et al. 2012).

Paul expressed a widely held view: "The relationship between Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China is like that of father and son. China is the father and Hong Kong is the son." This can be regarded as "common sense" for Hong Kong people where, after the handover, the central government of the PRC is colloquially referred to as "grandpa" [Ah Yae]. The HKSAR government is then imagined as the "father," and Hong Kong citizens take the position of "son." It was apparent in some men's discourses that Hong Kong politics was closely intertwined with Chinese patriarchy where unequal power relationships were taken as part of the

natural order. This familial hierarchy was seen as too deep-rooted to shake or too costly to fight against. For example, Tom believed that Hong Kong people should present themselves as "humble and harmless to grandpa," because that was where the real power lay and the child had no choice but do what he was told. Whether seniors were right or wrong was irrelevant. According to Wah, to resist was to "stab oneself with two knives." He equated the Umbrella Movement with public suicide. Hei, who also described the Umbrella Movement as a suicidal gesture, chose to adopt a strategy of faking obedience to the senior power; he said: "I am 'yellow ribbon' [pro-democratic] in my heart, but to survive, I would say: 'I love my country!'"

Although most participants accepted the authority structure, we also observed significant moments of dissent when some participants, inspired by the Umbrella Movement, broke away from social and political expectations and reinvented moral relationships in both their personal and political lives (Thomas, Keung). Throughout our study, there was affirmation, reflection, negotiation, and contestation in relation to conventional gender prescriptions, which were illustrated through the themes we now discuss.

Respectability

When talking about the respectability of a masculine subject, either a man or a masculinized state, the narratives of our participants were constructed around two interwoven issues: first, the dominant and submissive characteristic of Chinese familial and political culture; secondly the ability to earn or accumulate wealth so as to fulfil the central role of breadwinner.

With the putative grandfather-and-grandson relationship between Beijing and Hong Kong citizens, some participants believed that the Umbrella Movement was not a desirable strategy because it created rifts between "family members," even when they agreed that the oppression by the government had become increasingly blatant (Tom, Hei). This view was frequently

buttressed by paternalistic metaphors, constituted by the traditional Confucian values of filial piety infused with neoliberal logic. Respectability was predominantly demonstrated through monetary support of the family and financial dependability. This also reflected the economic relationship between China and Hong Kong:

> However you organize [the protest], it'll be Hong Kong's loss. Mainland's attitude towards Hong Kong has changed from very nice to assertive in recent years. Like in a family, parents will treat the son better if the son makes a lot of money, and change their attitude when he doesn't. (Wah)

Here we see a post-socialist model of materialistic subjectivity (Rofel 2007) that underpinned Paul's and Wah's notion of familial sovereignty. The political relationship between China and Hong Kong was not only narrated as familial but also financial. Respectability is gained through reciprocal financial support: the father provides for the son who is then expected to make money to repay the paternal investment. From an economic perspective, the integration with China and the opening up of business opportunities has restructured Hong Kong's society (Lui 2009). This has led to Hong Kong's increased economic dependence on China (Kaeding 2014), which reinforces the relationship of father and son. In the Beijing inspired anti-Occupy propaganda, the movement was depicted as the deliberate destruction of economic activities led by foreign forces (Hua 2014). Within the familial analogy, Hong Kong was depicted as losing out to its brothers, such as Shanghai and Shenzhen, in terms of economic contribution, productivity, and strength by becoming the "disobedient son" who deserved to be punished. Half of the men (Tom, Wah, Hei, Hing, and Shmily) disagreed with the tactics of Occupy Central because of its potential to harm the economy without making positive political gains. Hei was the only one who changed his view. Once it had happened he came to think that the Umbrella

Movement had been successful in terms of gaining international attention, although he had not joined the protest.

The association between respectability and financial dependability aligned with most participants' perception of ideal masculinity as equating with material achievement. When discussing what it was to be a good man, most of them said that it involved providing sufficient material support to partner and family to gain respect. Paul and Hei saw their partners' financial dependency on them as confirmation of their role as men; for them, providing material support justified their expectation that their partners would respect them and legitimated their dominance in the relationship. Paul said: "My wife totally depends on me financially, so of course she has to listen to me as I'm the boss." This sexist intertwining of financial dependency and obedience was extended from romantic relationships to the rest of the family. As Hei described it: "Because I am the boss of the house … there is no one holding an opposite stance in my closest circle…. It is not limited to this event [the Umbrella Movement]. It applies to everything." He then justified this undemocratic practice: "I do not provide democracy [to my partner] but I am very loyal. She can accept me being undemocratic but loyal. Deal!" (Hei)

Whereas this pair of participants (Paul and Hei) both took pride in their financial dependability, another pair of participants (Joe and Chiu) struggled with the pressure of providing for their families, especially Joe who suffered during the economic downturn in 2008 and had a life-threatening bout of avian flu in 2014. Joe's need for social recognition and self-esteem was fulfilled by his partner's financial dependence on him, without which she would be unlovable in his eyes: "I used to date many women who earned more money than me and were comparatively demanding. They were good women but I didn't feel good…. I like my wife very much because she does whatever I say." Similarly, Chiu, a journalist, who earned less than his

wife, expressed intimate insecurity: “I advanced pretty quickly [in the journalistic industry], but I cannot help that the industry is shrinking. It is like when the Titanic was sinking, you can climb up to higher levels, but you are still doomed to sink.” When we conducted the second paired interview after the Umbrella Movement, Chiu had left journalism and worked in a transport company in mainland China.

Joe and Chiu shared strong feelings of resentment toward successful capitalists. In talking about Li Ka Shing, a local legend of entrepreneurship, and his dominance over the Hong Kong property market, Chiu said: “The worst thing is that these bad rich guys manipulate Hong Kong people’s lives…. He has sold out the entire Hong Kong society.” For them, the real puk gaai [bastard, cad] were those who exploited others and took away their life chances, reflected on a larger scale in the masculinized global finance industry (Griffin 2012). Both of them supported the Umbrella Movement, in a pragmatic way. Joe said: “Once people’s interests are threatened, they will stand up.” Although these participants (Paul, Hei, Chiu, Joe) expressed similar desires for social recognition through providing for their partners and families, they took different stances on politics due to their own differentiated economic power. In general, Chiu and Joe felt their respectability as men was endangered by economic inequality.

Respectability for most participants was also linked to the acceptance of authority. This had been naturalized through inculcation into submission since childhood when most had to submit completely to a superior male figure (e.g., a father or eldest brother) who represented absolute authority. Challenge to this authority was not allowed, in one case even into adulthood:

> My eldest brother is in charge of everything. We dare not say “no” to him. I have tried to tell him my opinions and he has beaten me up to a point I was

> hospitalized, several times. Therefore, I never dare to say "no." I lived in terror. (Keung)

In this kind of authoritarian familial relationship, children learn to satisfy the authority figures' demands and expectations through absolute obedience and self-oppression (Yeh 2009). For over 2,000 years the ruling powers in China, whether dynastic or communist, have drawn from Confucianism—overtly or covertly—to strengthen their political sovereignty. In particular, the notion of filial piety has been utilized to enforce the ideology of "patriarchal parental authority as a representation of the emperor's absolute authority" (Yeh et al. 2013, p. 279). Therefore, resistance tactics suggested by the Occupy Central Movement throughout the year of 2013 were seen as useless and stupid (Tom, Wah, Hei, Paul, Joe, Hing, Chiu), even though some of them supported universal suffrage (Hei, Paul, Joe, Chiu). They believed that the protest would only provoke the PRC into becoming violent and more autocratic. Hong Kong citizens would suffer in the long term. Some participants (Paul, Chiu) believed that only when the movement's leaders adopted a radical and violent path, instead of calculating every strategic move, could the people win the right to bargain for political reforms.

There were participants who adjusted their political stances through a process of personal and political reflection during and after the Umbrella Movement. Self-identified as pro-democratic at heart, Hei reflected on his roles as son and "the grandson of Beijing," as well as his privileged position in his own household:

> I did not challenge my father's decisions because I trusted him to a certain extent. I thought it was okay to let him choose. Now I have grown up and I do not want the government to choose for me, but the government dare not let us choose….
>
> When I think about my relationship with the people below me in my family, on

> what grounds can I believe that the younger ones can choose a better path for themselves, rather than the decisions made by me? (Hei)

Throughout the span of our project, Hei expressed complex emotions and took contradictory stances toward Occupy Central/the Umbrella Movement. Before the occupation, he said youngsters were being manipulated and used as a tool. After the movement, he said the student protestors had persuaded him, although he did not participate in the protest. He was moved by the spectacle but the matrix of patriarchal views to which he had subscribed led to confusion. He was unsure how far he could go to challenge both the familial and political hierarchies and was constrained to conform by his role as a civil servant.

Another participant, Thomas, camped on the street for 60 nights of the 79 days of the occupation. For him the Umbrella Movement was a site of personal reflection on his own position in his family. He wrote several letters to his daughters from the occupation after pondering about his life. He was a businessman and had several factories in mainland China:

> That was the first time I apologized [to my elder daughter from my first wife]. I was an autocratic person because I am an elder son. I decided most of the things, big and small. And I told her I was wrong. When my wife read the letters she found it so strange…. The biggest effect of the whole movement on me was that I have become softer. I thought I was a really tough person in the past. (Thomas)

Here we see a personal consequence of the political. For Thomas, the Umbrella Movement was a site of political protest that also led to personal transformation. Although he kept saying that he was a terrible husband and father throughout the interviews, he had become more communicative and open-minded. He also said he stopped being homophobic after spending some time with gay

protesters. In the pursuit of a democratic relationship between the government and citizens, he also sought to democratize his personal life.

Responsibility

In addition to the primary financial responsibility of supporting one's family, the men talked about a range of responsibilities which, as leaders of their family, they should perform publicly as male citizens. For pro-establishment participants, there was a perceived moral responsibility to teach young people correct thinking and rescue them from being swayed by evil (pro-democratic) politicians. Moreover, two of our participants (Joe, Chiu) perceived the wider political upheavals as compromising their ability to be good men in private life and thus held a pessimistic view that "causing less harm" was an ideal quality as a responsible man in public life.

When talking about masculinity, most of the interviewees referred to their own fathers. As was the case with puk gaai and public figures, they made sense of themselves as gendered beings in relation to others. They typically did not want to replicate the way their fathers treated women: "He hated trouble. When I was born, he ignored my mum. She cycled to the hospital on her own" (Chiu). Some other participants were abandoned by their fathers (Joe, Shmily), an act seen as the ultimate irresponsible male behavior. When these men became fathers themselves, they attempted to embody the role of a wise teacher for their children and distance themselves from the puk gaai in the political sphere who, they thought, led young people down the wrong path. Some (Tom, Wah) insisted that it was "irresponsible and immoral" of political leaders to involve young people in illegal actions, which "may well tarnish their future":

> [The Occupy Central leaders] mislead young people into causing unnecessary harm and destruction in this city. All the people they negatively influenced, be

> they police officers, storekeepers or drivers, are just common citizens when they get off work. Protesters will only screw up these people's lives. (Tom)

Similarly, Shmily saw young people as being influenced by irresponsible leaders: "A lot of people are behind these students' actions. They are grown men. They should know how to be responsible…. Young people just make excuses to camp outside. I have heard that there were a lot of condoms around."

In taking up a position "outside the game" and above the crowd, these participants attempted to emerge as rational subjects who were obliged to teach these young people as "good fathers" and protect them from "bad fathers" or "dangerous men." Taking up such a protective role can enhance men's dominance in relation to those they seek to protect. By comparing themselves with selfish politicians and social movement leaders, these men reinforced their superior position in the family and society with this imaginary heroic stance.

Other participants (Joe, Chiu) reacted differently to the challenge of being a responsible man at a chaotic time. The participants who supported the democratic camp witnessed the spectacle of, and then the crackdown on, the Umbrella Movement. They were forced to accept that it had not brought about universal suffrage. In the face of this reality, some of them retreated to the position that a family focus and attempting to cause less harm was sufficient. Their high ideals seemed unattainable and sometimes interfered with them performing well as ordinary men. As Chiu put it: "When your claims are too big, they get the better of you and you start to deceive yourself." Joe, too, expressed concern about the consequences of political action:

> Let's leave our fate to God. I would just follow the rules and not get into trouble. I do not want to end up in jail…. When you are married and have kids, you cannot

> do much. I need to work hard and bring money home, so my wife will not suffer and my kids will not stay poor. I have to face reality. (Joe)

Contrary to the movement's motto, "sang yu luen sai yau jung jaak yum" [Being born in a dark time comes with certain responsibilities], these men wanted to retreat from the public scene and fulfill their responsibilities in their personal lives as a way of preserving what security they had. Responsibility as a breadwinner remained a pivotal masculine trait, and it was used as a strategy to compensate for their powerlessness in the public arena. As Hei put it: "Under these circumstances it is important not to let myself be apathetic. Actually this is already sufficient."

This is a reversal of using the misdeeds of public figures to justify their personal misconduct. Here they argue that being a responsible man in private life can be used to legitimate their inaction in public life. Paying attention to the news and causing less harm were their ways of engaging with politics and, in their view, making Hong Kong a better place. Over their lifetime some older participants had experienced past turbulent political events. Inaction and moaning about puk gaai seemed to be a safer and more pragmatic strategy for them. "I was angry when the June 4 [Tiananmen Square] massacre happened," Wah said. "But I changed very soon because I saw through it. The game was over…. More than 20 years [have] passed. You all still continue to protest and hinder my business [as a taxi driver]." Shmily also referred to the past in explaining his view of the Umbrella Movement: "I have experienced a lot. At the time of June 4 and the 1967 riot, I did not take to the streets either. In my opinion, those who do not possess political wisdom should not participate in politics."

These political traumas constituted a major part of their beliefs. Most of our participants thought there was no such thing as "one country, two systems" (Wah, Tom, Joe, Chiu, Hei, Hing). Identifying with the rising power of mainland China, according to some, was the only

way to live a better life (Wah, Tom, Hing). At least one has plans to migrate elsewhere (Hei). For only a minority of our participants did resistance remain an important responsibility (Thomas, Keung). Keung was resisting his autocratic family as well as the state and saw personal responsibility as an important part of this resistance. In justifying his involvement in the protest against his family's wishes, he said: "I have my own opinions. I will take responsibility for what I do." Thomas was among the most active participants in the Umbrella Movement. When he explained his choice to take to the street, he talked of his experiences as a father. Although he shared in the general pessimism about Hong Kong's future, he saw it as his responsibility, as a man and protector of his family, to take action:

> Every day over those years I wanted to make more and more money.... I have never been to any protests in those years. I am not a registered voter. Therefore I apologized to my daughter. I did not do any of these things and let Hong Kong become what it is now. (Thomas)

Romance

There is a hegemonic culture of compulsory marriage in China where couples are burdened with conventional familial responsibilities (Farrer 2013) and romance takes a backseat. However, in extramarital relationships, men can find a space for romantic pursuits and personal autonomy (Ho 2014; Shen 2005). None of our participants went so far as to question the social institution of marriage and conventional family values. Instead, they were keen to discuss strategies of concealing or confessing their extramarital relationships. We noted how they portrayed political crisis and macrosocial problems as deserving more attention than minor faults, such as their search for romance outside their marriages. The narratives on romance were not directly related to the Umbrella Movement, but they were related to the wider context that

had given rise to the movement including corporate greed, useless politicians, and incompetent social movement leaders who were seen as leading people down the wrong path. Public figures who came in for criticism included Chief Executive Leung Chun Ying, seen contributing to the political crisis, real estate tycoon Li Ka Shing, as well as Benny Tai, Kin Man Chan and other social movement leaders. Reference to such examples was often central to attempts to demonstrate the inconsequentiality of their own misconduct. The enthusiasm with which the men spontaneously discussed public immorality, even when our questions did not directly address politics, seemed to be a means of deflecting attention from their own sexual misdemeanors by referring to these bigger crimes.

Most participants thought that the distinction between a good guy and a puk gaai should not be solely based on what occurs in the private sphere, but should also include what one has done in the public sphere—whether one has committed crimes comparable to those of major political figures whose actions hurt other people (Tom, Joe, Chiu). By evaluating themselves against poor standards in the political sphere, some sought to emerge as good guys even though they could not fully meet the social expectations associated with being a respectable husband. Bad politics was a convenient cultural resource on which men drew to do gender.

For most of these men, there were no universal principles by which someone was judged to be an ideal man or, conversely, a puk gaai; men became puk gaai by being discovered doing things that defied social expectations or undermined their own public claims to virtue. For example, they thought that it was acceptable for men to watch pornography at home. However, when Albert Ho, a respected legislator and solicitor in Hong Kong, was caught browsing photos of sexy young women on his tablet device during a Legislative Council budget meeting, he was considered a puk gaai because that was entirely inappropriate behavior. Therefore, masculine

ideals for them were not sets of objective criteria or ethical rules, but matters of presentation. In terms of extramarital affairs, Hei and Paul emphasized that the golden rule was "to never admit that you have had sex with another woman even if your wife points a gun at you" (Paul). Hei compared this rule to the current government:

> Admitting to your wife that you have cheated on her is just like the government admitting that the rain has damaged the High Speed Railway tunnel they are building now. They are real puk gaai to dare to make such confession! (Hei)

Hei's ideas of appropriate masculine marital conduct thus parallel how he perceives the ideal ways for politicians to deal with political scandals. Whereas most participants saw concealment as the best strategy, a few (Chiu, Thomas and Wah) believed it was more important to confess their own shortcomings. Throughout our conversation, these three participants kept claiming that they were bad guys, or just an "80-mark [80%] man" (Wah), although all of their co-participants attempted to convince them they were not as bad as they thought. Chiu said, "Of course I have to be honest with myself. Only fools would deceive themselves." Wah also saw the need to acknowledge one's shortcomings: "Right is right. Wrong is wrong. You cannot use some glamorous excuses to cover up…. My life-long pursuit is to be an 80/100 marks man, as a husband and a son." Chiu and Wah believed they were not perfect good men because they inevitably made occasional mistakes. They considered it was important to be honest about their imperfections to themselves and their intimate others. Wah believed all wives knew of their husbands' extramarital relationships: "Men think they can cover it up, but actually they cannot. Women are smart." Now he was satisfied with being an 80-mark man and maintained a 20% allowance for occasional misbehavior such as extramarital affairs and gambling.

Discussion

Our 10 research participants had differing orientations to the social movement that were related to different ways of affirming, negotiating, and contesting conventional gender prescriptions. We have illustrated how these diverse political stances and experiences were related to change and/or continuity in their identities, relationships, and how they see Hong Kong society. Only two men, Thomas and Keung, participated intensely in the occupation and certainly experienced significant changes in their self-perception. Two others, Joe and Chiu, were more peripherally involved and exhibited some change in that they were more willing to reflect on themselves and to question certain conventional beliefs about power and authority. Joe was critical of police violence and wanted to see justice done. However, he felt that he was too weak to do more because of his ill health and unemployed status. Chiu, although supportive of the struggle for democracy, disagreed with some of the tactics employed by movement leaders.

The six non-participants in the movement were differentiated by whether they supported its aims or not. Hei and Paul were supportive of the movement but had not been involved at all. They had aspirations for higher ideals but they did not want to take actions that were not effective in achieving goals. Hei, as a civil servant, could not be open about his political stance. He said that he wanted to be a yellow-ribbon at heart but would profess his patriotism "should the red-guards knock at my door." His inaction resulted from his desire to preserve his hard-won material success and, he implied, also his patriarchal privilege. The four who were unsupportive of the movement were more insistent about the need to preserve social hierarchy and harmony and were more inclined to accept China's authority over Hong Kong (Hing, Wah, Tom and Shmily).

In the end, most of the men maintained or reverted to the conventional logics of masculinity in terms of respectability and responsibility: as providers for and authority figures in

their families and obedient citizens. Whereas some had become more reflexive about these cultural logics, only Thomas and Keung explicitly redefined respectability and responsibility in continuing to question patriarchal authority structures within family and society. They also viewed the struggle for a more democratic future as part of their civic responsibility and their duty to future generations. Most of the men also clung on to the right to extramarital romance as their personal space, even if they admitted a degree of culpability. Thomas was the only one prepared to see his past affairs as making him a bad husband and father; the others justified or excused such behavior.

Theoretical Elaboration

Our findings suggest the need to theorize the interconnections between gender and politics, both in general and in relation to Chinese societies. We begin to answer this need by thinking through the application of the concept of hegemonic masculinity to Chinese masculinities. It is now widely accepted that hegemonic masculine ideals in any given culture and context are almost impossible for men to achieve (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Johnston and Morrison 2007; Kimmel 2005). Rather, as shown in previous studies, "[t]heir negotiation of this tension define[s] them" (Hird 2016, p. 153). Our study illustrates the conceptual utility of thinking of hegemonic masculine ideals as socially prescribed exemplars against which men define themselves. Their masculinity might be subordinate in relation to hegemonic ideals, but it is not marginal or deviant. It is a masculinity negotiated in relation to the gap between the ideal and the possible; it is the way most men do masculinity in their everyday lives. To understand this view, it is first necessary to consider the modern Chinese context.

The Chinese form of hegemonic masculinity is bound up with China's economic ascendancy and is an entrepreneurial masculinity, a product of the post-socialist marketization of

the economy. The ideal is a man who is economically individualistic, wealth-seeking, and consuming, but also patriotic, loyal to the party-state, and obedient to higher authorities (Kleinman et al. 2011; Zheng 2015). He thus establishes his respectability. He should also demonstrate dominance over women while being a responsible husband and father and filial son. These family ties do not preclude extramarital relationships. In reform era China, the hegemonic masculinity embodied by wealthy men is constructed within a business environment involving "nightly carousing with business partners, mistresses, and paid hostesses" though which such men are "creating and enacting a particular version of masculinity that is associated with being a man of status and wealth in post-Mao China" (Osburg 2016, p. 163; see also Osburg 2013; Uretsky 2016; Zheng 2012). A husband's responsibility to his family, and thus his public respectability, should nonetheless be maintained within this ideal of masculinity, including support of wife, children, and elders. This balance involves maintaining a strict segregation between the social worlds of family and business.

Our data suggest that the Hong Kong version of hegemonic masculinity, although sharing some features with that in mainland China, differs in other respects. There is a similar emphasis on wealth, economic individualism, and attachment to a patriarchal, hierarchical family order (see Ho et al., 2017), but loyalty to the party-state is not so ingrained given that Hong Kong has a long established tradition of free speech. For the men in our sample, deference to Beijing was a pragmatic move because they were well aware of the power of the PRC government, which clear in Wah's statement about knowing that the game was up after the June 4 massacre. Patriotism could be evinced in a more muted form than on the mainland by acceptance of being Chinese or it could be a surface performance that belied their actual views

(Hei). For those who had been activists in the Umbrella Movement, however, patriotic attachment was to Hong Kong, not China (Thomas, Keung).

How do men define themselves in relation to this hegemonic masculinity? Self-definition, we argue, should be understood in terms of a conceptualization of the self as social and relational, constructed in relation to others and the wider socio-political context and as shifting over time and with context (Jackson 2010). This relationality is also associated with the reflexive properties of the self—the ability to reflect back on oneself (Mead 1934). Thus men draw on wider cultural meanings in making sense of themselves and their lives, and in justifying their conduct, they deploy local, socially acceptable accounts. In positioning themselves in relation to masculine ideals in the stories they recounted, the Hong Kong men orient themselves to each other, to family, and to the wider social contexts of Hong Kong and China.

The use of paired and focus group interviews enabled us to gain some insight into the way men related to each other and drew on shared understandings of the world in building a form of masculine camaraderie. The everyday masculinity deployed in this context can be seen, in part, as a form of disciplined protest masculinity (Walker 2006), whereby men create solidarity among themselves against hegemonic masculinity, as opposed to the anomic, destructive forms of protest masculinity often associated with working class young men (Broude 1990; McDowell 2002). The Hong Kong men's enactment of disciplined protest was accomplished through political contention rather the sexual banter described by Walker.

These men created a limited form of protest masculinity by demeaning the masculinities of important patriarchal figures. Our participants recognized their powerlessness in relation to the authoritarian Chinese state. In this situation they express a muted form of resistance and engage in a safe form of protest by voicing criticism of patriarchal figures against whom they can

evaluate themselves more positively. As Mouffe (2005, p. 2) noted, "othering" is an integral part of identity construction, which these men evinced by utilizing puk gaai as moving targets to construct their selfhood. Criticizing the behavior of men who might otherwise be seen as embodying hegemonic ideals of power and wealth allowed our participants to feel better about themselves. Through this discursive positioning of themselves in relation to flawed powerful men, they satisfied their affective, sexual, and material needs, and above all, the need for social recognition (Ho 2014; Rofel 2007). They thus reinforced in their interactions with each other a shared sense of being "almost good guys."

Personal failings, then, were represented as forgivable and negligible as compared to the public wrongdoings of politicians, capitalists, and social movement leaders. It is through this process of inclusion, exclusion, and displacement that our participants constituted themselves as moral subjects (see Kleinman et al. 2011), as basically respectable and responsible. It is notable, however, that the context in which powerful men were most often positioned as the "real" puk gaai was in men's justification of their extra marital romances. Thus, while they expressed resistance to hegemonic masculine ideals of power and wealth, they were simultaneously endorsing another aspect of hegemonic masculinity—male privilege—and backing each other up in so doing. Both strategies were conducive to the mutual reinforcement of each other's masculine selfhood. Of note here is that within Chinese masculine ideals, extramarital romance is acceptable only insofar as it does not compromise familial respectability and responsibility and does not disrupt the hierarchical harmony of the family. To be found out by one's wife, who might then challenge a man's authority, respectability, and responsibility, is to be a puk gaai, and then excuses become necessary, including the displacement of criticism onto the "bigger crimes" of powerful men.

The other strategy that men used to excuse marital infidelity, when found out, was to ask for a "discount" from their wives—here orienting themselves both to other men and to the family. It was in this context that Wah talked of receiving 80%, rather than 100%, to compensate for occasional "mistakes" as a husband, a view that Tom, his partner in the paired interview, happily endorsed. Most of the men saw extramarital romances as a fact of life. Only Thomas expressed regret for past affairs: He confessed his "wrongdoings" in his relationship with his second wife, seeking to save his marriage and renegotiate his masculine identity.

For these men, their most important responsibility to their families was material support and as long as they felt secure in their provider role, this also bolstered their sense of manhood. Here, as elsewhere in their orientation to their families, they adhered to Confucian family values, and thus the normative standards of Chinese hegemonic masculinity. They were, with the exception of Thomas and Keung, insistent on maintaining the patriarchal familial hierarchy in which each one was "the boss" in his own household. Maintaining hierarchical harmony was essential to maintaining the sense of responsibility and respectability so central to being a Hong Kong Chinese man.

Family hierarchy and harmony, through which senior men expect obedience from women and junior men, is central to Confucian principles and also to the revival of Confucianism in its political variant as a form of governance. The family has traditionally been seen as a microcosm of the state, with its head as a petty emperor, binding it in the overall power structure of society at large. In both Hong Kong and mainland China, "the family" is promoted as a source of social stability through which individualism is limited to economic striving, constraining its potential to challenge the authority of the state. Among the men in our sample, it was only the two who had been very active in the Umbrella Movement who challenged this

view, questioning both familial and wider political power hierarchies. The views of the others were imbued with traditional Chinese patriarchal values leading to the normative compliance expected from "good citizens." They might be critical of authority but they submitted to it nonetheless. Thus, views on the family mirrored to a large degree their political stances. However, even those who were pro-democracy but not active in the Umbrella Movement mostly endorsed familial hierarchies.

An understanding of Confucian patriarchal familialism was also evident in the way that the men we interviewed talked about the relationship among themselves, Hong Kong, and China, with China cast as father to Hong Kong and the Beijing government as paternal grandfather [Ah Yae] to themselves. These men did not, however, express the kind of absolute patriotic loyalty to the Chinese state observed in mainland China. Their primary allegiance was to Hong Kong, and this loyalty framed their identities as Hong Kong men. They valued Hong Kong's relative autonomy and wanted to preserve their way of life, but they also saw themselves as having little choice but to identify with or succumb to authoritarian communist rule. Many of them saw the democracy movement as divisive, as harmful to Hong Kong's future and their own prosperity, and as creating further threats to Hong Kong by angering grandfather. Those who were strongly opposed to the campaign for democracy saw identifying with a strong China as the only way to lead a better life. Most of them had become more pessimistic about Hong Kong after witnessing the negative consequences of campaigning for more democracy.

In orienting and defining themselves in relation to other men, family, Hong Kong, and China, there were inevitable inconsistencies and slippages through which they moved in and out of adherence to hegemonic masculine ideals, endorsing them in relation to their own families (with the exception of Keung and Thomas) while being critical of, but ambivalent about,

powerful men—men to be admired and emulated in some respects but who were also found to be flawed. They thus (re)produced their identity as men by flexible use of their different roles through a process of inclusion, exclusion, and displacement, recreating the local cultural logics of masculinity.

Practice Implications

That most of the men we interviewed were either opposed to the Umbrella Movement or did not want to be involved may be reassuring for those seeking to maintain the status quo and limit protest in Hong Kong. Conversely, men's reluctance to join the campaign for greater democracy is indicative of the obstacles faced by those seeking to widen participation in activism for change. From the point of view of activists, however, identifying the barriers to political participation may be helpful to future mobilizations. Some of the reasons for men's reluctance to be involved, such as lack of interest in politics or focusing only on their own and their families' immediate interests, are not limited to Hong Kong. Others, however, are specific to the local context and situation: the power that China has over Hong Kong, the Beijing government's opposition to what are seen as western democratic ideals, and its record of political repression. Most of the men we interviewed were, at least to some degree, critical of the local Hong Kong and mainland Chinese regimes, but either felt that resistance was futile, even counter-productive, or that they had too much to lose by protesting. Those seeking to promote the struggle for greater democracy therefore need to find ways of addressing both the acceptance of the status quo and fears of the consequences of resistance. More generally, understanding what fosters or inhibits men's political participation may offer insights into how men can be encouraged to be more productively engaged in civil society.

The experiences of the two men who were very actively involved suggest that there are positive gains to be made—as individuals—from political activism, particularly in terms of re-visioning, and potentially challenging and changing, hierarchical family relationships. These narratives of personal transformation highlight the connections between political Confucianism and the everyday Confucian-influenced principles that support patriarchal family structures and practices. Where both of the activist men sought change in their family lives, the rest were keen to maintain their positions within their families. The striking parallels between men's views of both the public politics of the Chinese and Hong Kong regimes and the private politics of home and family should provide food for thought for feminists in Chinese societies. So too should the potential tensions between men's desire to maintain their masculine privileges and the burdens, in terms of respectability and responsibility, that this places upon them. What we have learnt from the men we interviewed casts new light on the pressures Hong Kong men currently face as a result of gendered expectations. These are issues of importance both for feminist analyses of gender inequality and for activists seeking to challenge and contest male domination. They may also be relevant to counselors and other practitioners seeking to develop pro-feminist forms of support for troubled men.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although we have sought to cast light on the ways in which Hong Kong men do masculinity in troubled political times, we must recognize the limitations of our research and therefore that our findings can only be provisional. This project was not organized in a predetermined way because nobody had predicted that Hong Kong was about to experience a sustained mass social protest movement. Our method of collecting data emerged from the flow of events over which, by definition, we had no control and may not provide an ideal balance of

data from before and after the occupation. Moreover, no interviews were conducted during the Umbrella Movement, which limits our understanding of the immediate impact of social unrest on stability and/or change in each participant's construction of masculinity. Moreover, the data derive from a small sample and cannot lead us to firm generalizable conclusions, but they do suggest some new directions.

Our methodology, in giving participants the opportunity to discuss issues with each other enabling them to view and reflect on videos of previous interviews, proved informative in capturing responses to changing circumstances. This methodology might have wider applications to research on personal consequences of social and political change, particularly if it could, in less unpredictable circumstances, be operationalized more systematically. In terms of substantive issues, by articulating the relationship between the macro-political setting and the micro-politics of everyday life, our study suggests that politics can be a new arena for studying gender relations. The issues we have raised may help to frame future research questions about the interconnections between gender and politics. The under-theorized interplay between politics and gender clearly deserves further explorations. Bringing issues of politics and citizenship into the conceptualization of masculinity opens up questions of how political circumstances are implicated in gendered ideals and performances and, conversely, how gender informs individuals' understanding of and engagement with political events. Further investigation into the interconnections between politics and the everyday doing of gender would clearly require research on both women and men. Although our study was carried out in a specific and unique location with its own political and cultural particularities, our analysis might be useful in inspiring research elsewhere, especially in the many other parts of the world experiencing political turbulence in its many forms.

Conclusion

We set out to explore the consequences of political upheaval for men's performance of masculinity. It was inspired by the tension between Hong Kong and China regarding political reforms and universal suffrage, in particular the Umbrella Movement and its aftermath, which created a context for raising new questions about masculinity. We have discussed the ways in which recent events in Hong Kong have re-positioned men politically, economically, and culturally. Our research also has enabled us to identify change and continuity in participants' attitudes and their constructions of masculinity and to begin to draw some tentative conclusions on the relationship among masculinities, family life, and political disturbance.

Given the importance of Confucianism in both public and private life in Chinese societies, it has been central to our analysis. In studying the specific situation of Hong Kong, we have engaged with the ongoing theorization of the reshaping of Confucianism in contemporary China (Bell 2008; Jiang 2013) by relating this to the ways in which Confucian principles play out in both politics and family relationships and the interrelationship between them. In this context we have highlighted how, in doing gender, men make pragmatic adjustments in order to maintain a sense of their self-worth as members of families and their status as "good citizens" in the eyes of others.

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Table 1

Summary of Respondents' Demographic Details

Name (Pairing)	Age	Education	Occupation	Relationship Status	Political Orientation	Remarks
Tom (1)	44	Master's	Psychologist	Married	Pro-establishment	Newlywed
Wah (1)	58	Primary school	Taxi driver	Married	Pro-establishment	
Hei (2)	36	Master's	Fire station officer	Cohabiting	Pan-democratic	
Paul (2)	60	University	Village head/ businessman	Married	Pan-democratic	
Joe (3)	38	Middle school	Businessman	Married	Pan-democratic	Trans man
Chiu (3)	28	University	Journalist/ Administrative Staff	Married	Pan-democratic	Changed job after the movement
Thomas (4)	56	University	Banker/ Businessman	Divorced	Pan-democratic	Divorced due to a mainland mistress
Hing (4)	62	Middle school	Bus driver	Married	Pro-establishment	
Shmily (5)	70	Middle school	Retired	Single	Neutral	Gay advocate
Keung (5)	57	Sixth form[a]	Unemployed	Single	Pan-democratic	Recovered mental patient

[a]Sixth form: pre-university level, ages 16–18

Table 2

Themes, Descriptions, and Examples

Theme Subtheme	Description	Personal example	Political example
Respectability	How men relate to each other to gain respect		
Financial	Fulfilling the role of a family breadwinner	The insistence on paying means "you are a man." There is no doubt and not even worthy of discussion. (Wah)	When we go out for dinner, it's important to see who's paying… likewise, it's important to see clearly who sets the rules in politics. (Paul)
Cultural	The extent that traditional Chinese cultural values impact on their relationships	The whole culture is going astray. Youngsters do not respect teachers, headmasters, their fathers and grandpa. (Wah)	People think Hong Kong is an independent place. They don't need to listen to grandpa. But you cannot escape from grandpa's finger! (Wah)
Romance	Perceptions & practices of intimacy		
Marital	Marital satisfactions	I need to hold her hands when I sleep. This is what I call happiness. (Chiu)	I extend my love for you to people in this world, so I can help other people to love whom they love. (Paul)
Extramarital	Erotic experience relating to other women	When I go to mainland China, all my friends would hang out in nightclubs, how could I not go? (Wah)	No matter how powerful—Mao Zedong, Hitler or Clinton—in the end men will be trapped by their desire for women. (Wah)
Responsibility	Perceived obligations to family and society		
Assertive	The obligation to teach the younger generation and protect the family	Parents used to tell their daughters not to let anyone take advantage of them. It doesn't work anymore. (Paul)	Too many people believe in democracy. No one has taught them what is bad about democracy…. (Tom)
Ambivalent	The sense of powerlessness in face of authority and ethical dilemma	It is difficult to claim yourself as a "good guy." It is easier to claim yourself as a puk gaai [bastard, cad]. (Chiu)	I have come a long way to be able to enjoy life like this. … How can I give up my hard won happiness? (Hei)

Compliance with Ethical Standard

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Response to reviewer

Thank you for your comments! We have revised the paper and addressed all your concerns.