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Framing Occupy Central: A Content Analysis of Hong Kong, American and British Newspaper Coverage

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Framing Occupy Central:
A Content Analysis of Hong Kong, American and British Newspaper Coverage

by

Mengjiao Yu

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
School of Mass Communications
College of Arts & Sciences
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Wenli Li.

Thank you for comforting me when I'm sad,

lifting me up when I'm down,

and guiding me when I'm lost.

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First, I would like to thank my major professor, Dr. Scott Liu, for his excellent guidance and infinite patience throughout the entire research process. His advice not only gave me the needed impetus to complete the research, it also broadened my perspective on the issues involved.

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Abstract

Grounded in framing theory, this thesis presents a quantitative content analysis of newspaper reporting of the Hong Kong protests, also known as the Occupy Central Movement or the Umbrella Revolution, between September 28 and December 11, 2014. The political, economic and legal implications involved have made the protests one of the most newsworthy events in the history of Hong Kong since the transfer of its sovereignty from the United Kingdom to China in 1997. This study aims to examine the various frames used in the coverage of the protests in three major newspapers that operate within different political, economic and ideological boundaries: *South China Morning Post*, *The New York Times*, and *The Guardian*. Results of the content analysis supported the research hypotheses that significant differences existed in the newspapers in their framing of the protests, the protesters, the government, news censorship, and politically sensitive issues. While the frames used by *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* were in agreement with the Western democratic-liberal press system, the frames used by *South China Morning Post* reflected the authoritarian-liberal nature of the Hong Kong press system.

Chapter One

Introduction

Globalization of the mass media has greatly facilitated the flow of information around the world. Hot issues in each country are being reported speedily and often instantly by news organizations around the world. With around-the-clock stories and images across a wide range of news categories, newspapers, television channels, radio stations and other online or offline news organizations are making news more accessible to their audiences. Different news organizations, however, may apply their own criteria in “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or action” (Entman, 2004, p.5). In other words, an issue or event may be “framed” in a particular way when it is presented to the audiences in the form of a news story.

Of particular interest in this study is the frames used by news organizations in their coverage of events taking place in different geographic, cultural, political and economic settings. The recent protests in Hong Kong (or the Occupy Central Movement) present a robust opportunity for research not only because the event was broadly covered by major news media around the world, but also because the event took place in Hong Kong, the crossroads of democracy and authoritarianism, capitalism and communism, modernism and traditionalism.

Purpose of Study

The study has two goals. The first goal is to provide a theoretical framework for approaching the issue of news framing. A major argument derived from the theoretical framework is that framing is commonly applied in news reporting and it can affect or bias audiences' interpretation and evaluation of news events. The second goal is to describe a quantitative content analysis designed to test research hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework. It is hypothesized that foreign/western and domestic/Hong Kong news media applied different frames in their coverage of the protests. Specifically, western/foreign news media would place greater emphasis on the positive and beneficial aspects of the protests, while domestic/Hong Kong news media would emphasize the negative and detrimental aspects. It is further hypothesized that western/foreign news media would more likely frame the protests as a civil disobedience and democratic movement, whereas domestic/Hong Kong news media would highlight the anti-government and anti-social aspects of the event.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

To provide the theoretical framework of the study, a review of the framing theory and its applications in mass media research is presented first, followed by a description of the background of the Hong Kong protests.

Frame and Framing

In social-psychological research, a frame is a schema of interpretation, a collection of anecdotes and stereotypes that individuals rely on to understand and respond to events (Goffman, 1974). This concept was first introduced by Goffman (1974) in his book *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* which explains how frames are used to organize experiences and guide actions. According to Goffman, people tend to understand the issues that take place around the world on the basis of their own “primary framework” (1974, p. 21). Like a frame that can give a picture a greater sense of structure and meaning, the primary framework can be “seen as rendering what would otherwise be a meaningless aspect of the scene into something that is meaningful” (p. 21). There are two types of primary frameworks: natural and social. Natural frameworks seek to “identify occurrences that are undirected, unoriented, unanimated and unguided”; social frameworks tend to “provide background understanding for events that incorporate the will, aim and controlling effort of an intelligence, a live agency, the chief one being the human being” (p. 22). Moreover, Goffman points out that while the outcomes

of events identified by the natural frameworks cannot be guided by any physical efforts, the events of the social frameworks can generate outcomes that can be controlled by continuous physical actions. People use these frameworks as the basis of understanding, and the frameworks used can greatly influence their processing and interpretation of incoming information.

Frameworks are therefore essential tools for sense making and discovery.

The concept of frame was quickly adopted and extended in mass communication research whereby the focus gradually shifted from pre-existing mental schemata (frames) to the ways and means of creating or shaping the schemata (framing) through the process of communication. Framing, a process-centered conception thus began to replace frame, a representation-centered conception. In his 1993 essay titled *Framing: Towards Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm*, Entman elaborates framing as a theory of media effects. “To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). Framing thus involves two related processes: the “selection” process by which frames shed light on some specific topics of a certain event during the communication process, and the “salience” process by which more attention is paid to evaluating these selected topics than others. Entman (1993) further contends that framing may take place at four locations during the process of communication: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. A good example is the process of news coverage: The communicators (reporters and editors) play essential roles in deciding what frames can be used in news reports, regardless of whether they are making these decisions in a conscious or an unconscious manner. The text in news reports “contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images,

sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). The receiver’s (or the audience’s) attitude towards certain events can be influenced or guided by the frames that are contained in the text. The culture is “the stock of commonly invoked frames,” and it is usually regarded as “the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping” (Entman, 1993, p. 53). Being contained in these four locations, framing is able to generate effects on the structure of the news reports as well as the audiences’ attitudes and evaluations of the news events. In Entman’s view, framing can be used as a pivotal tool during the process of communicating, as it not only “offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text” (p. 51), but also exerts effects in forming or guiding one’s attitude toward certain issues.

In explicating the concept of framing, Scheufele (1999) drew the distinction between frame building and frame setting. Frame building is usually concerned with how frames create societal discourse about certain issues and how frames are being chosen by journalists in news reporting. Frame setting, on the other hand, deals with how frames exert their influence on audiences’ attitudes and opinions. There are three related areas of frame building: journalist norms, political actors, and cultural contexts. Additional factors that may affect frame building include pressures and constraints from within the newsroom; political affiliations or inclinations of journalists, and coercion and enticement from government enterprises and political or corporate elites. Some research, for example, has shown that the extrinsic factors (e.g., government and political members) can place strong influence on the framing of political issues when reported by journalists (e.g., Tuchman, 1978).

Frame building is often followed by frame setting, which involves “the interaction between media frames and individuals’ prior knowledge and predispositions” (de Vreese, 2005, p. 52). A number of studies have examined audience frames as the outcome or dependent variable, given specific kinds of media frames. The general finding is that media frames can affect the accessibility and perceived importance of frames in individuals’ minds (e.g., Iyengar, 1991; Nelson, Clawson & Oxley, 1997). As Reese (2010) points out, frames are built upon previous knowledge and existing cultural norms, so it is important to analyze whether the frames used within a news story are aligned with the beliefs and mood of the target audience on a key issue. This results in an interaction between the incoming message structure and the psychological characteristics of the receiver. Frame resonance occurs when media and individual frames are linked in congruency.

Closely associated with framing is the concept of agenda setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Some scholars argue that framing should be construed as an extension of agenda setting, as framing affirms the ability of the news media to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda, which in turn determines what the public thinks about, although not necessarily what they think. That is, the concentration of new media on a few issues and topics leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than others (Lane, 2001). Other researchers maintain that framing is different from agenda setting (e.g. Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). While agenda setting emphasizes the perceived importance of issues as a function of the amount of media coverage (or salience) the issues receive, framing is more concerned with the perceptions and interpretations of factual information as a function of the ways the information is presented. In other words, audiences’ reactions to issues and events are affected not only by the amount of

media coverage the issues and events receive (agenda setting), but also by the ways through which the issues and events are presented (framing).

In their recent article titled *News Framing Theory and Research*, Tewksbury and Scheufele (2009) traced the theoretical roots of framing back to psychology at the micro-level, and sociology at the macro-level. They indicate that framing, especially news framing, serves as an explanatory model in studying the effects of media content on audiences' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. Framing effects, they argue, should be distinguished from information effects, persuasion effects and agenda-setting effects, although all these effects can "result from exposure to news message" (p. 22).

It seems safe to say that framing has become one of the most influential theories in mass communication research. "Today, virtually every volume of the major journals features at least one paper on media frames and framing effects" (Scheufele & Iyengar, 2012). In the next section, we review some of the representative studies of framing in the news.

Framing the News

News framing research focuses on "the process by which people develop a particular conceptualization of an issue or reorient their thinking about an issue" (Chong & Druckman, 2007, p.2), with the assumption that the way that an issue is framed in news reports can influence the audiences' understanding and interpretation of the issue (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Much research on news framing examined the ways politicians, issue advocates and other stakeholders manipulate reporters and editors to convey their preferred meanings through news media (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). It has also been shown that critical news events can alter

the parameters of a policy debate, and political elites often use such events to influence public policy and mobilize public opinion in support of their objectives (e.g., Birkland, 1997; Cobb & Elder, 1983; Kingdon, 1984). Examples of these critical events are military actions, hijackings, assassinations and natural disasters. These events may also introduce new or additional frames which are inconsistent with or unrelated to previous frames and thus have the capacity to reshape public opinion on issues (Schnell & Callaghan, 2004).

When critical events took place, the news media become “massive search engines” looking for dramatic ways to frame the issues for audience consumption (Wolsfeld, 2003, p. 229). Lawrence (2010) further suggests that, in the context of foreign policy and national security, mainstream news media typically show less independence in framing critical events; instead, they tend to rely more upon high-level government officials to frame the news. Reporters and editors may see it as irresponsible to introduce perspectives that lie outside of what Hallin (1986, p. 116-117) described as the “sphere of legitimate controversy.” This trait manifests itself prominently in a reluctance to challenge high officials during wartime (e.g., Aday, Livingston & Hebert, 2005). This can also be traced to the idea that raising questions that challenge the official position on foreign affairs can call into question the patriotism of journalists (Lawrence, 2010). However, Entman (2004) challenges the position that the news media should “privilege some definitions at the expense of others” (Kinder & Sanders, 1966, p. 163) by focusing on the frames and interpretations of the elites and officials in power. Instead, “the media should provide enough information independent of the executive branch that citizens can construct their own counterframes of issues and events” (Entman, 2004, p. 17).

News framing has also been examined in the context of political communication. Jacoby (2000), for example, shows how framing is used as a propaganda tool in political campaigns through which advocates are able to “mobilize voters behind their policies by encouraging them to think about those policies along particular lines” (p.751). Arbour (2014) makes similar arguments that partisan framing exists in political campaigns to “activate the images and values citizens already possess” (p.608). McCombs and Reynolds (2008) also state that the government has been using the news media as an effective tool to exert control over the public opinion polls during elections, as voters tend to “use the media to help them sort through important issues before they vote” (p.1).

Several studies have shown that framing is often used in news coverage of such events as political or social movements. Different effects on public opinions on the movements often follow different news frames used. For instance, studies of valence framing have shown that factually identical news stories may result in opposite evaluations, depending on whether the stories are framed positively or negatively (e.g., de Vreese & Boomgaarden, 2003; Iyengar, 1991). A valenced news frame implicitly or explicitly highlights either the positive (gain, advantageous or favorable) aspects or the negative (loss, disadvantageous, unfavorable) aspects of factually identical news events, resulting in frame-cued evaluation and assessment among the audience.

De Vreese, C. & Boomgaarden (2003), for example, investigated how a key summit of the Council of the European Union was framed in the news and how the frames affected public support for the movement toward European integration. Through a content analysis of newspaper and television stories in three European countries, they observed that the summit was framed in

terms of political-institutional consequences and the overall valence of the news as disadvantageous toward the EU and EU integration. A subsequent experiment further confirmed that participants exposed to the advantageous “opportunity-framed” news stories showed higher levels of support for EU than participants exposed to disadvantageous “risk-framed” news stories.

Johnson, Maio and Smith-McLallen (2005) put forward the hypothesis that loss-framed messages are generally more persuasive than gain-framed messages. The hypothesis has received some support from studies showing that negative information is more persuasive than positive information (e.g., Rozin & Royzman, 2010) and that people are more inclined to take a risk in order to reduce losses than increase gains (e.g., Kuhberger, Schulte-Mechlenbeck & Perner, 1999). A meta-analysis of 165 loss-gain framing studies by O’Keefe and Jensen (2006), however, found no significant difference in persuasive effects between the two message frames.

More recently, Fu, Zhou, Zhang, Chan and Burkhart (2012) examined news coverage of natural disasters in China, and found that the Chinese government used the news media as a “watchdog” tool to watch over the citizens, especially during the time when disasters broke out. Of the news articles that covered natural disasters, few of them framed the stories by “commenting on the government negatively” or being “openly critical to the government” (p.81). Through news framing, the news media were able to successfully curb the negative attitudes toward the government.

The research reviewed above suggests that framing is rampant in the production of media content, including the reporting of factually identical news events. In the next section, we will

review the background of the 2014 Hong Kong protests, the focal news event examined in this study.

Background of the Hong Kong Protests

The Hong Kong protests were a historical event that took place in Hong Kong between September 28 to December 11, 2014. The protests occurred at the busiest sections of Hong Kong, the most preeminent financial center in Asia, and presented what many commentators considered the biggest challenge to the Chinese government since the 1989 Tiananmen protests (e.g., Tharror, 2014).

Also known as the Occupy Central Movement or the Umbrella Revolution, the event was triggered by the decision made by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (SCNP) of the PRC on issues relating to the selection of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong by universal suffrage and on the method for forming the Legislative Council of Hong Kong in 2016. Officially announced on August 31, the decision in effect ruled out a fully democratic election for Hong Kong leaders because only candidates approved by Beijing would be allowed to run.

To protest against the decision, thousands of students, teachers and scholars in Hong Kong gathered around the Hong Kong governmental headquarters building on the evening of September 20. They then occupied several major city intersections to show their dissent against Beijing's decision. Drawing attention from around the world, the protests dragged on for more than two months.

The protests brought about interruptions to Hong Kong's transportation, domestic commerce as well as international trade. As more and more students in Hong Kong became

involved in the protests, schools in the central and western areas in Hong Kong were suspended. The protests soon became a wedge issue that exacerbated social, economic and political divisions that had long existed in Hong Kong. Case in point: People formed into pro- and anti-protesters (or “yellow” and “red”) groups during the protests, resulting in more chaos and conflict in the society. The pro-protesters group insisted on the basic principles of democratic government and demanded less intervention from the Chinese government; however, the anti-protesters group argued that the protests should be curbed by the government because they were bringing Hong Kong’s economy to a halt. The student-initiated protests soon evolved into furious debates intermingled with occasional physical confrontations between people with opposing views, all of which were covered extensively by major news media around the world.

To better understand what triggered the Hong Kong protests, we turn to the political and economic factors involved.

Political Factors. Consisted of three main territories (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon Peninsula and the New Territories), Hong Kong was colonized by the United Kingdom for 156 years (1841 to 1997). Although they were never granted full rights and British citizenship, people in Hong Kong did regard democracy and the protection of human rights as issues of great importance. Consequently, in accordance with the “one country, two systems” policy, the Seventh National People’s Congress (NPC) of the People’s Republic of China adopted the Hong Kong Basic Law (constitution) in 1990 which went into effect in 1997, the year Hong Kong was handed over to the PRC. Of particular relevance to political rights are Article 45 and 68 of the Basic Law:

(Article 45)

- The Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be

selected by election or through consultations held locally and be appointed by the Central People's Government.

- The method for selecting the Chief Executive shall be specified in the light of the actual situation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. The ultimate aim is the selection of the Chief Executive by universal suffrage upon nomination by a broadly representative nominating committee in accordance with democratic procedures.

(Article 68)

- The Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be constituted by election.
- The method for forming the Legislative Council shall be specified in the light of the actual situation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and in accordance with the principle of gradual and orderly progress. The ultimate aim is the election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage.¹

The implementation of “universal suffrage” soon became one of the most controversial elements of the Basic Law. Since 1997, as Kan (2013, p. 73) indicates, Hong Kong has been “standing at a critical juncture in the struggle for universal suffrage toward realizing full democracy.” While Hong Kong citizens have repeatedly demanded that the Chinese government realize its promise, the Chinese authorities have successfully delayed the implementation of

¹ The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China (1990), ART. 45 and ART. 68, Chap. 1.

universal suffrage over the years: In 2004, the Standing Committee of the NPC (NPCSC) ruled out the possibility of universal suffrage in 2007 and 2008; in 2007, the Committee ruled out universal suffrage being introduced by 2012.

In September 2014 the NPCSC announced its decision on the selection of Hong Kong's Chief Executive in 2017. The decision stated that the selection of the Chief Executive might be implemented by the method of universal suffrage. However, it also stated that candidates for the Chief Executive position would be nominated by "a broadly representative nominating committee" formed "in accordance with the number of members, composition and formation method of the Election Committee for the Fourth Chief Executive." Public election would be held after the Chief Executives nominees have been selected by the Nominating Committee, *subject to the approval of the NPCSC*. According to Bush (2014), Director of Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies of the Brookings Institution and a Senior Fellow of Foreign Policy, the NPCSC decision insures that "candidate selection will be in the hands mainly of people who are sympathetic to Beijing. In addition, over half of the members of the nominating committee would have to approve each candidate, which means that no pan-democrat could get nominated if Beijing disapproved of him or her." Martin (2011), a specialist in Asian affairs at the Congressional Research Service, also stated that "It is generally thought that the transformation of the Election Committee into a nominating committee will provide the Chinese government with enough insurance that the elected Chief Executive will be approved by the NPCSC, thereby avoiding an embarrassing and unpleasant situation" (p. 13).

Public protests immediately broke out after the NPCSC announced its decision. Initially led by college students, the protests were soon joined by citizens and leaders from all sectors of

society. It should be noted that pro-democracy movements have had a long history in Hong Kong (Early, 2014). For example, demonstrations have been held on June 4 every year in Hong Kong to honor the memory of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests.

The NRCSC decision on universal suffrage might have triggered the 2014 Hong Kong protests, but beneath the surface the protests might be an expression of the humiliation and anger of more than 150 years of colonial occupation, the disappointment and distrust in the Chinese government, and the deep hunger of Hong Kong people for greater political freedom and democracy.

Economic Factors. It is generally known that Hong Kong has been experiencing an economic decline in recent years. On the macro level, Hong Kong is slowly losing its competitiveness, according to the International Institute for Management Development (Steinbock, 2013). In terms of economic performance, Hong Kong fell in 2013 from fourth to eighth place in world ranking. Furthermore, Hong Kong has performing increasingly worse in government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure, according to the same report.

In her recent article in *Foreign Policy*, Lu (2014) notes that Hong Kong has been a city that “is losing its edge as a global financial and commercial center” and its economy “will be overshadowed by China’s major cities in 2022.” She also points out that the economy of Hong Kong has grown at a slower speed compared to that of Beijing and Shanghai – Hong Kong’s GDP annual rate has been hovering around two percent in recent years, while the growth rates of major regional districts in Beijing and Shanghai have reached more than seven percent per year. Yglesias (2014) makes an interesting but no less significant observation about a particular problem in Hong Kong – the sales of luxury goods has kept declining in recent years – and

attributed the problem to “a Chinese government crackdown on corruption and conspicuous consumption.”

As one of Asia’s Four Little Dragons, Hong Kong has always been marked by a great sense of pride in its economic development which, almost miraculously, transformed the tiny port city into one of the world’s largest financial centers. Under a capitalist system, Hong Kong was able to economically outperform every major city in mainland China until recent years. Today, however, major Chinese cities like Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen have emerged as comparable financial and employment hubs that are attracting more investments from overseas. As Guy (2014) warns, “Economic and financial forces have been set in motion that will dramatically, but quietly, shift the operations and focus of international banks and asset managers to Beijing or Shanghai. And it will occur far faster than most people could have anticipated.”

The most direct consequence of Hong Kong’s declining economy is the widening wealth gap and a lack of future opportunities for younger people (Pau, 2015). Property prices are persistently too high and wages too low (the minimum wage is 30 HK dollars or \$3.87 an hour) for many Hong Kong residents to make a living. Although the overall unemployment rate in Hong Kong has remained steady at about 3.3 percent, the unemployment rate for residents aged 15 to 24 is at a much higher rate of 9.4 percent. About 1.3 million people, or 19.6 percent, of the population were deemed to be living below the poverty line in 2012, according to the Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report. Figures from the Hong Kong Council of Social Service showed the poverty rate for the 15- to 24-year-olds to have increased to 17.7 percent, which means nearly 200,000 youngsters are officially living in poverty (Kao, 2013). In Hong Kong, the first

generation whose future living standard may be worse than that of their parents is coming of age (Pau, 2015).

Today many Hong Kong residents fear Hong Kong will become economically marginalized. The economic fear is compounded by the political fear of the Chinese authoritarian government. The increasingly economic and political uncertainty finally reached the breaking point on September 28, 2014 when downtown Hong Kong turned into a battlefield of tear gas and seething crowds after the police attempted to crack down a student-led democracy protest, inciting public fury that brought tens of thousands of people onto the streets of a city long known as a stable financial center.

For more background information, please refer to Appendix A: Timeline of Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement and Appendix B: Hong Kong Profile.

Chapter Three

Research Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to examine the frames used in news coverage of the Hong Kong protests in 2014. To that end, news stories on the protests from three different newspapers – *South China Morning Post*, *The New York Times*, and *The Guardian* – were selected and analyzed.

With a history of 112 years and a daily circulation of 104,000, *South China Morning Post* is the number one English-language newspaper published in Hong Kong. The newspaper enjoys a steady reading circle and has long been one of the most influential newspapers in the region. It should be noted that both English and Chinese are official languages in Hong Kong and children start learning English and Chinese at the age of three.

First published in 1851, *The New York Times* is perhaps the world's most respected and influential newspaper that enjoys more than two million total print and digital circulation. The paper has won 141 Pulitzer Prizes, more than any other newspaper in America (Rainey and Garrison, 2012).

Founded in 1821, *The Guardian* is a British newspaper with a daily circulation of 189,000. The paper's readership is generally on the center-left of the British political spectrum. In 2014, the paper was named newspaper of the year by the British Press Awards for its reporting on government surveillance.

The three selected newspapers are likely to follow similar daily routines of journalism, with reporters covering established beats and relying on government sources for regular information to reinforce prevailing norms and state-society relationships (Tuchman, 1978). Thus, all three papers practice routine news coverage which “legitimizes the existing political order by disseminating bureaucratic idealizations of the world and by filtering out troublesome perceptions of events” (Fishman, 1980).

It also seems likely that the three newspapers might have different journalistic values and geopolitical characteristics that are reflected in their framing of factually identical news events like the Hong Kong protests. For example, while upholding objectivity as a journalist norm, American news media tend to cater to the existing elite consensus on a given issue (Powlick & Katz, 1998). British journalists, on the other hand, find greater appeal in notions of truth, independence and “fair play” than objectivity (Maras, 2013). Both countries (U.S. and U.K.) are fully democratic and known around the world for their respect and tolerance of free speech. In contrast, Chinese news media generally serve as a servant of the party as well as the state. The practice of strict news censorship dating back to the Mao era still persists, although market-oriented reforms since the 1970s have created a “partially liberalized authoritarian media system” (Chan & Qiu, 2002; Daniel, 1999).

As a result, when it comes to the Hong Kong protests, the news reports from *South China Morning Post*, under the pressures of the Chinese government, are more likely to stress the anti-social and negative consequences of the protests (e.g., transportation chaos caused by the protest and its economic costs to the city), while *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* are more likely to highlight the pro-democracy and positive aspects of the protests (e.g., protesters’

demand for political freedom and resistance against the rule by an authoritarian government).

Therefore, the first research hypothesis is:

H1: In reporting the Hong Kong protests, the *South China Morning Post* would be more likely to focus on the negative effects or costs of the protests than *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*.

For the Hong Kong protesters, they had also been likely to be framed as playing negative roles (e.g. the protesters' attacks on the policemen and the inconveniences that were brought forward to the Hong Kong citizens) by news reports from the *South China Morning Post* when compared to news articles from *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. Therefore, the second hypothesis comes forward:

H2: In reporting the Hong Kong protests, protesters are more likely to be framed in a negative way by the *South China Morning Post* compared to news reports from *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*.

It came as no surprise that government officials in Hong Kong and in Beijing uniformly denounced the protests as illegal, and Chinese state media and officials claimed repeatedly that the West had played an instigating role in the protests. The camaraderie between Hong Kong and Chinese officials could place strong influence, if not pressure, on local journalists in their reporting of the protests. The reasoning leads to the third hypothesis:

H3: The news articles in *South China Morning Post* would be more likely than those in *The New York Times* and *the Guardians* to frame the Hong Kong government and its officials as playing positive roles during the protests.

It is well known that the Chinese government has been playing a strict scrutinizing role over the news media. As a servant for the Chinese central government, few Chinese news agencies tend to cover the censorship issue in their news articles, as any report containing the issue is scrutinized and restricted from publishing. Not surprisingly, the 2014 Hong Kong protests were severely censored in mainland Chinese news media. On the surface, there seems to be no censorship in Hong Kong – freedom of the press in Hong Kong is theoretically guaranteed by a bill of rights. As a “special administrative region” of China, however, the Hong Kong government faces mounting pressure from China to have more control over its press. The pressure results in indirect or self-imposed news censorship in Hong Kong, a region that had once enjoyed unfettered Western-style press freedom under British rule. It would therefore be more likely for British and American news media to cover censorship-related issues in stories of the protests than Hong Kong news media. The fourth hypothesis is:

H4: In news coverage of the Hong Kong protests, news censorship would be less likely reported in *South China Morning Post* than in *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*.

Since the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997, government restrictions on access to information have persisted and violent attacks against journalists and media executives have increased significantly (Freedom House, 2014). Out of 180 countries, Hong Kong’s World Press Freedom Index slid from the 18th place in 2002 to the 61st place in 2014. Furthermore, many of Hong Kong's media outlets are owned by local tycoons who have significant business ties in the mainland, so nearly all of them have adopted self-censorship at some level and have mostly maintained a conservative editorial line in their news coverage. Citing Article 23 of the Basic Law which prohibits crimes against national security and sedition, the Hong Kong

government declared it illegal for the news media to be seditious by disclosing “national secrets.”

The ambiguous definition of national secrets led to concerns that the law might be used as a tool for silencing dissidents’ voices, as has happened in mainland China. Thus the fifth hypothesis:

H5: In news coverage of the Hong Kong protests, politically sensitive topics such as human rights, democracy, civil disobedience, references to the Tiananmen Square Movement and criticism of Chinese communism would be less likely reported in *South China Morning Post* than in *The New York Times* and *he Guardian*.

Chapter Four

Methodology

A quantitative content analysis of news stories on the Hong Kong protests was used to test the research hypotheses. Harwood and Garry (2003) describe content analysis as “a technique that enables analysis of ‘open-ended’ data to be structured for purpose of diagnosis” (p. 479). The method allows for the systematic and objective analysis of messages in all types of documents, speeches, media releases, scripts, and interviews (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2008). It has also become a popular research method in analyzing media content, including news stories (Neundorf, 2002). Considering the proposed research hypotheses, content analysis is an appropriate method of research for this study as it can demonstrate how different newspapers construct stories about a historical event.

Data Sources

News reports of the Hong Kong protests examined in this study were collected from three newspapers: *South China Morning Post*, *The New York Times*, and *The Guardian*. A total of 249 news stories of the protests published during September 29 and December 18 in 2014 were selected from the online news archive of each newspaper (see Table 1). The selection was conducted through a search process involving the use of such keywords as “Hong Kong protests”, “occupy central”, “Hong Kong students”, “Hong Kong government”, “Hong Kong police”, “Hong Kong public opinion”, “democratic movements in Hong Kong”, “news censorship”,

“Hong Kong economy”, “Hong Kong politics”, “Chinese government”. Of the 249 articles selected, 96 (38.6%) were selected from *The New York Times*, 77 (30.9%) from *The Guardian* and 76 (30.5%) from *South China Morning Post*.

Table 1
Distribution of Newspaper Stories

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
New York Times	96	38.6	38.6	38.6
The Guardian	77	30.9	30.9	69.5
South China Morning Post	76	30.5	30.5	100.0
Total	249	100.0	100.0	

Coding Scheme

Each news article was used as the primary unit of analysis. The coding categories ranged from basic structural elements (e.g., time, dateline, byline and story type) to more complex coding of news frames. To test the research hypotheses presented earlier, the 249 news articles were content analyzed in terms of five different news frames listed below:

1. Valence Frames of the Protests

Consistent with prior studies on valence framing, four coding alternatives were developed: positive, neutral, negative and unclear frame. The news articles that contained positive or beneficial aspects of the protests (e.g., protests as part of a larger democratic movement,

exemplification of civil-disobedience, progress toward greater political freedom, nonviolence or peaceful resistance) were coded as positively framed stories, while articles presenting negative or detrimental aspects of the protests or showing passive attitudes toward the protests (e.g., interrupting social order and commercial practice, fostering social and economic instability, perpetuating of social and political divisiveness, upsetting the Chinese communist regime) were coded as negative frames. News articles that presented both positive and negative aspects of the protests at the same time were coded as having a neutral frame. News articles that presented neither positive nor negative aspects of the protests were coded as unclear.

2. Valence Frames of the Protesters

Four coding alternatives were used to analyze the news articles' frames of the protesters: positive, neutral, negative, and unclear. The news articles that contain positive or supportive descriptions of the protesters (e.g., freedom or human rights fighters, leaders of democracy, intelligent or responsible citizens) were coded as positively framed stories, while articles presenting negative or detrimental aspects of the protesters (e.g., troublemakers, separatists, anarchists, opportunists, naïve and irrational citizens, Western sympathizers) were coded as using a negative frame. News articles that presented both positive and negative aspects of the protesters at the same time were coded as a neutral frame. News articles that presented neither positive nor negative aspects of the protests were coded as unclear.

3. Valence Frames of the HK Government

The news article's frames of the Hong Kong government (including its officials) were categorized into four alternatives: positive, neutral, negative, and unclear. News articles that expressed support, justification or defense for the government and its actions and reactions

during the protests (e.g., rationalizing the necessity of police violence, defending the use of delay tactics in negotiations with protesters) were coded as positive. News articles that expressed criticism, disapproval or dissent against the Hong Kong government (e.g., questioning the excessive use of police force, the lack of sincerity in conflict resolution or expertise in crisis management) were coded as negative. News articles that expressed both supportive and critical views of the Hong Kong government were coded as neutral, and articles that did not address the Hong Kong government were coded as unclear.

4. Framing of News Censorship

Four coding alternatives were applied when coding the news articles' framing of news censorship: positive, neutral, negative and unclear. News articles that regarded news censorship in Hong Kong and China as necessary or justifiable were coded as positive. News articles that contained both criticism of news censorship or deemed it unjustifiable were coded as negative. Articles that contained both positive and negative elements of censorship were coded as neutral, and those that did not address censorship at all were coded as unclear.

5. Mentioning of Politically Sensitive Issues

There are a number of politically sensitive issues in China. Coding of this content category was largely based on the presence or absence of certain "blacklisted" keywords, including "Tiananmen Square protests", "political dissidents", "human rights", "authoritarian government", "dictatorship", "anti-democracy", "anti-communist", "media censorship", "Internet content blocking", "freedom of speech". News articles that included the use of any of the keywords were coded as Yes, while articles that contained none of the keywords were coded as No.

Appendix A provides examples of news content coded into the categories defined above.

Chapter Five

Results

Intercoder Reliability

In content analysis, intercoder reliability refers to the extent to which independent coders agree on the coding of the content of interest with an application of the same coding scheme. The following procedure was taken to assess intercoder reliability of the present study. First, the author (coder 1) coded the 249 Hong Kong protests news articles that appeared in *South China Post*, *The Guardian* and *New York Times* according to the coding scheme presented earlier. Using the same coding scheme, two graduate students (coder 2 and coder 3) in mass communications at USF were then invited to code 46 stories randomly selected from the pool of 249. The three coders are citizens of China, Taiwan and the U.S. respectively. Table 2 presents two sets of intercoder reliability measures: Percentages of coding agreement between coders and Krippendorff's alphas. According to Neuendorf (2002, p. 145), percentage agreements "of .90 or greater are nearly always acceptable, .80 or greater is acceptable in most situations, and .70 may be appropriate in some exploratory studies for some indices." All but one percentages of agreement in this study were greater than .80, indicating acceptable agreement among the three coders.

Krippendorff's alpha (α) is generally considered the most reliable measure of intercoder reliability. The general form of the measure is: $\alpha = 1 - D_o/D_e$, where D_o is observed disagreement and D_e is expected disagreement based on an interpretation of chance. According to Krippendorff (2011, p. 1), "when observers agree perfectly, observed disagreement $D_o=0$ and

$\alpha=1$, which indicates perfect reliability. When observers agree as if chance had produced the results, $D_o=D_e$ and $\alpha=0$, which indicates the absence of reliability.” To interpret alpha, Krippendorff (2004, p. 241) suggests that “It is customary to require $\alpha \geq .800$. Where tentative conclusions are still acceptable, $\alpha \geq .667$ is the lowest conceivable limit.” Table 2 shows that all but one of the five coding categories generated alphas greater than or equal to .80, with an overall alpha of .85 among the three coders.

Table 2
Intercoder Reliability

Coding Category	% Agreement among 3 Coders	% Agreement between Coder 1 & 3	% Agreement between Coder 1 & 2	% Agreement between Coder 2 & 3	Krippendorff's Alpha
Protests	85.9	91.1	80%	86.7	.80
Protesters	82.6	86.9	78.3	82.6	.75
HK government/police	93.5	91.3	95.7	93.5	.90
Censorship	91.3	91.3	91.3	91.3	.82
Politically sensitive issues	89.9	86.9	93.5	89.1	.80
Overall	88.7	89.6	87.8	88.7	.85

Hypotheses Testing

All hypotheses in this study were tested with the following two-step procedure. First, Pearson’s Chi-square (X^2) test was used to test against the null hypothesis that the frequency of content distribution is the same across all three newspapers. If the Chi-square test results in a p-value smaller than .05, then there is strong evidence to state that there is a difference between at least two of the newspapers. Second, following a significant Chi-square test, a pairwise z-test of difference in proportions was performed to determine which two newspapers were different in

a specific content category. All pairwise z-tests were performed with Bonferroni corrections to hold the overall type I error level at 5% or less.

H1. Valence Frames of the Protests

The first hypothesis states that the *South China Morning Post* would be more (less) likely to focus on the negative (positive) effects or costs of the protests than *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. Chi-square test results (Table 3) indicated that such hypothesized difference did exist among the three newspapers ($X^2=73.12$, $df=6$, $p<.001$). Pairwise z-tests provided additional support for the hypothesis. As Table 4 and Figure 1 show, *The New York Times* ($n=38$, 39.6%) and *The Guardian* ($n=27$, 35.1%) published significantly more positively framed stories about the protests than South China Morning Post ($n=8$, 10.5%), whereas *South China Morning Post* ($n=44$, 57.9%) published more negatively framed stories of the protests than both *The New York Times* ($n=13$, 13.5%) and *The Guardian* ($n=7$, 9.1%). Together, the results provided strong support for Hypothesis 1.

Table 3
Chi-Square Test: Valence Frame of the Protests

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	73.133 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	72.436	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	19.339	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	249		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.41.

Table 4

Crosstab: Valence Frame of the Protests

		Newspaper			Total	
		New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post		
Valence frame of the protests	Positive	Count	38 _a	27 _a	8 _b	73
		% within Newspaper	39.6%	35.1%	10.5%	29.3%
	Neutral	Count	33 _a	41 _b	17 _a	91
		% within Newspaper	34.4%	53.2%	22.4%	36.5%
	Negative	Count	13 _a	7 _a	44 _b	64
		% within Newspaper	13.5%	9.1%	57.9%	25.7%
	Unclear	Count	12 _a	2 _a	7 _a	21
		% within Newspaper	12.5%	2.6%	9.2%	8.4%
Total		Count	96	77	76	249
		% within Newspaper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Newspaper categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

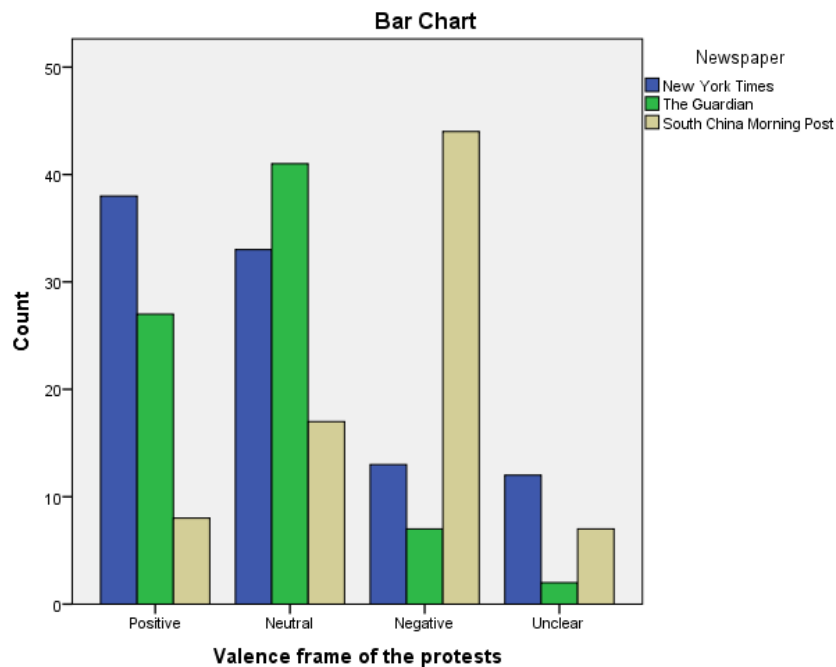


Figure 1. Valence Frame of the Protests

H2. Valance Frames of the Protesters

Hypothesis 2 postulates that Hong Kong protesters were more likely to be framed in a negative way by the *South China Morning Post* when compared to news reports from *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. Chi-square test (Table 5) showed the differences among the three newspapers attained statistical significance ($X^2=60.24$, $df=6$, $p<.001$). Pair-wise t-tests (Table 6) further revealed that *South China Morning Post* framed the protesters negatively in more news stories ($n=17$, 22.4%) than the *New York Times* ($n=8$, 8.3%) and *The Guardian* ($n=1$, 1.3%). On the other hand, the protested were framed positively more often in *The New York Times* ($n=49$, 51.0%) and *The Guardian* ($n=56$, 72.2%) than in *South China Morning Post* ($n=12$, 15.8%). Hypothesis 2 was thus supported.

Table 5

Chi-Square Test: Valence Frame of the Protesters

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	60.244 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	65.280	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	19.889	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	249		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.94.

Table 6

Crosstab: Valence Frame of the Protesters

			Newspaper			Total
			New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post	
Valence frame of the protesters	Positive	Count	49 _a	56 _b	12 _c	117
		% within Newspaper	51.0%	72.7%	15.8%	47.0%
	Neutral	Count	25 _a	15 _a	23 _a	63
		% within Newspaper	26.0%	19.5%	30.3%	25.3%
	Negative	Count	8 _a	1 _a	17 _b	26
		% within Newspaper	8.3%	1.3%	22.4%	10.4%
	Unclear	Count	14 _a	5 _a	24 _b	43
		% within Newspaper	14.6%	6.5%	31.6%	17.3%
Total		Count	96	77	76	249
		% within Newspaper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Newspaper categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

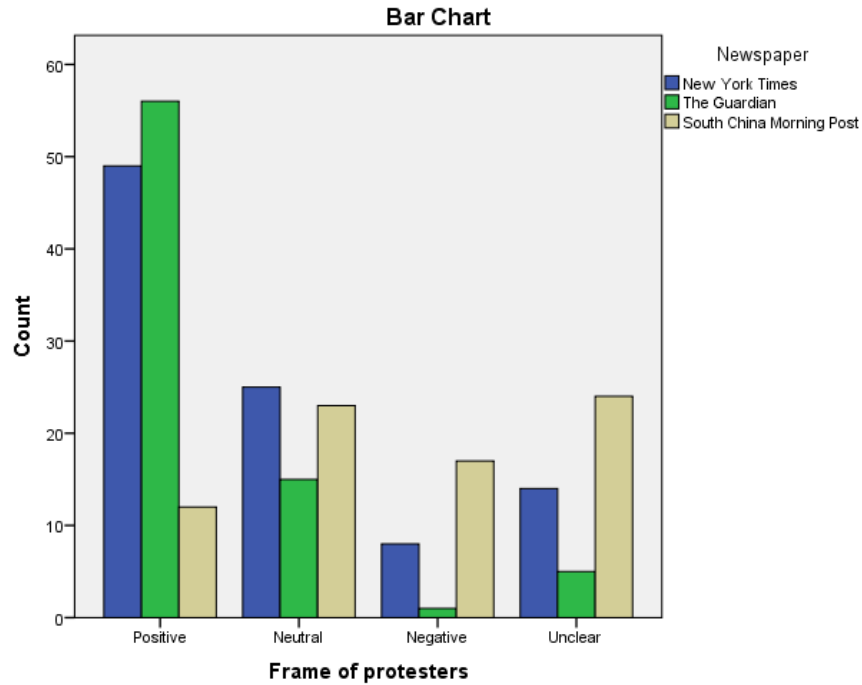


Figure 2. Valence Frame of the Protesters

H3. Valence Frames of the HK government

The third hypothesis states that the news articles in *South China Morning Post* would more likely than those in *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* to frame the Hong Kong government and its officials as playing positive roles during the protests. Results presented in Table 7 provided initial evidence that differences existed among the three newspapers ($X^2=41.68$, $df=6$, $p<.001$).

Pairwise z-tests further confirmed that *The New York Times* ($n=42$, 43.8%) and *The Guardian* ($n=47$, 61.0%) reported more stories that framed the Hong Kong government in negative terms than *South China Morning Post* ($n=15$, 19.7%), whereas *South China Morning Post* ($n=14$, 18.4%) framed the Hong Kong government more often in positive terms than *The New York Times* ($n=2$, 2.1%) and *The Guardian* ($n=2$, 2.6%). Hypothesis 3 was thus supported.

Table 7

Chi-Square Test: Framing of HK Government

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.676 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	41.704	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.264	1	.039
N of Valid Cases	249		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.49.

Table 8

Crosstab: Framing of HK Government

			Newspaper			Total
			New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post	
Framing of HK government	Positive	Count	2 _a	2 _a	14 _b	18
		% within Newspaper	2.1%	2.6%	18.4%	7.2%
	Neutral	Count	15 _a	12 _a	13 _a	40
		% within Newspaper	15.6%	15.6%	17.1%	16.1%
	Negative	Count	42 _a	47 _a	15 _b	104
		% within Newspaper	43.8%	61.0%	19.7%	41.8%
	Unclear	Count	37 _a	16 _b	34 _a	87
		% within Newspaper	38.5%	20.8%	44.7%	34.9%
Total		Count	96	77	76	249
		% within Newspaper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Newspaper categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

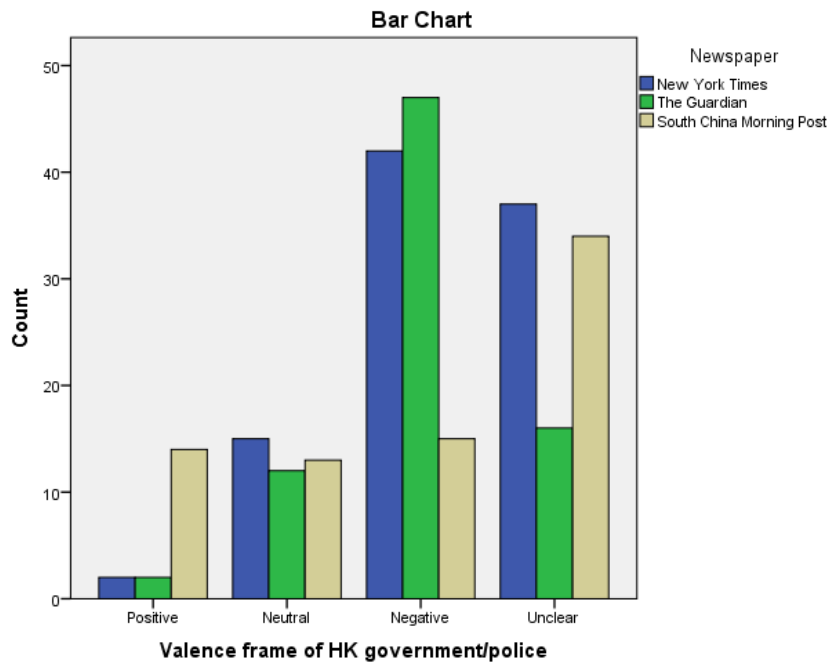


Figure 3. Framing of HK Government

H4. Framing of news censorship

The fourth hypothesis stipulates that news censorship in Hong Kong and China would be less likely reported in *South China Morning Post* than in *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* in their coverage of the Hong Kong protests. The hypothesis was supported by the overall Chi-square test ($X^2=24.76$, $df=6$, $p<.001$) and pairwise t-tests results showed in Table 9 and 10 respectively. Specifically, critical statements and sentiments about news censorship in Hong Kong or China were more often presented in stories from *The New York Times* ($n=35$, 36.5%) and *The Guardian* ($n=28$, 36.4%) than from *South China Morning Post* ($n=7$, 9.2%). Interestingly, none of the three newspapers reported any supportive views of news censorship in their stories. Hypothesis 4 was therefore supported.

Table 9

Chi-Square Test: Framing of News Censorship

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	24.761 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	29.039	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	17.250	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	249		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .61.

Table 10

Crosstab: Framing of News Censorship

			Newspaper			Total
			New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post	
Framing of News censorship	Positive	Count	0 _a	0 _a	0 _a	2
		% within Newspaper	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
	Neutral	Count	2 _a	0 _a	1 _a	3
		% within Newspaper	2.1%	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%
	Negative	Count	35 _a	28 _a	7 _b	70
		% within Newspaper	36.5%	36.4%	9.2%	28.1%
	Unclear	Count	57 _a	49 _a	68 _b	174
		% within Newspaper	59.4%	63.6%	89.5%	69.9%
Total		Count	96	77	76	249
		% within Newspaper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Newspaper categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

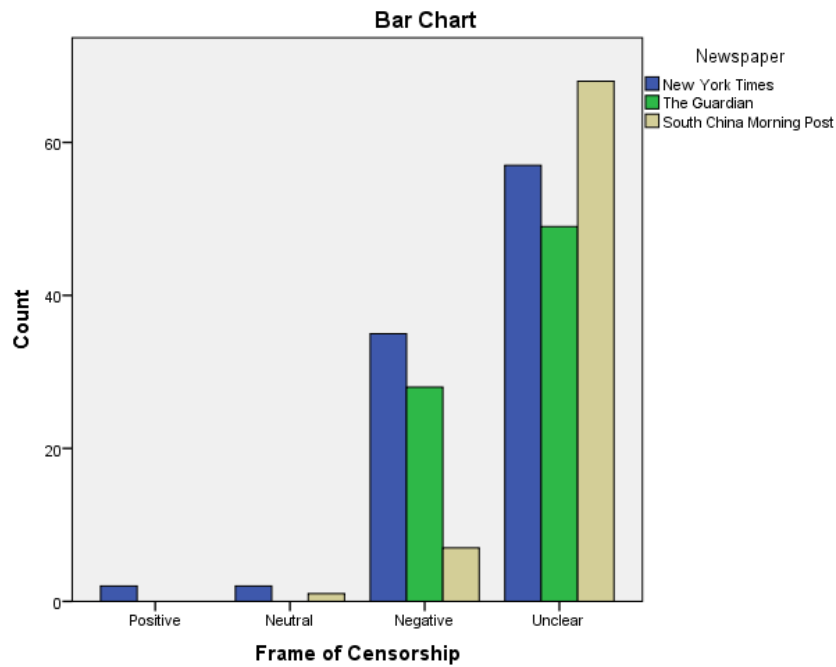


Figure 4. Framing of News Censorship

H5. Mentioning of Politically Sensitive Issues

According to the fifth hypothesis, politically sensitive topics such as human rights, democracy, civil disobedience, references to the Tiananmen Square Movement and criticism of Chinese communism would be less likely reported in *South China Morning Post* than in *The New York Times* and *The Guardian*. The Chi-square test results shown in Table 11 indicated that the hypothesized difference among the three newspapers reached statistical significance ($X^2=53.10$, $df=2$, $p<.001$). Pairwise z-tests results presented in Table 12 lent more support to the hypothesis: Significantly more stories in *The New York Times* ($n=59$, 61.5%) and *The Guardian* ($n=54$, 70.1%) mentioned the politically sensitive issues than *South China Morning Post* ($n=12$, 15.8%).

Table 11

Chi-Square Test: Politically Sensitive Issues Mentioning

	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	53.098 ^a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	56.986	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	31.939	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	249		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 37.85.

Table 12

Crosstab: Politically Sensitive Issues Mentioning

			Newspaper			Total
			New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post	
Politically sensitive issues mentioning	Yes	Count	59 _a	54 _a	12 _b	125
		% within Newspaper	61.5%	70.1%	15.8%	50.2%
	No	Count	37 _a	23 _a	64 _b	124
		% within Newspaper	38.5%	29.9%	84.2%	49.8%
	Total	Count	96	77	76	249
		% within Newspaper	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of Newspaper categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.

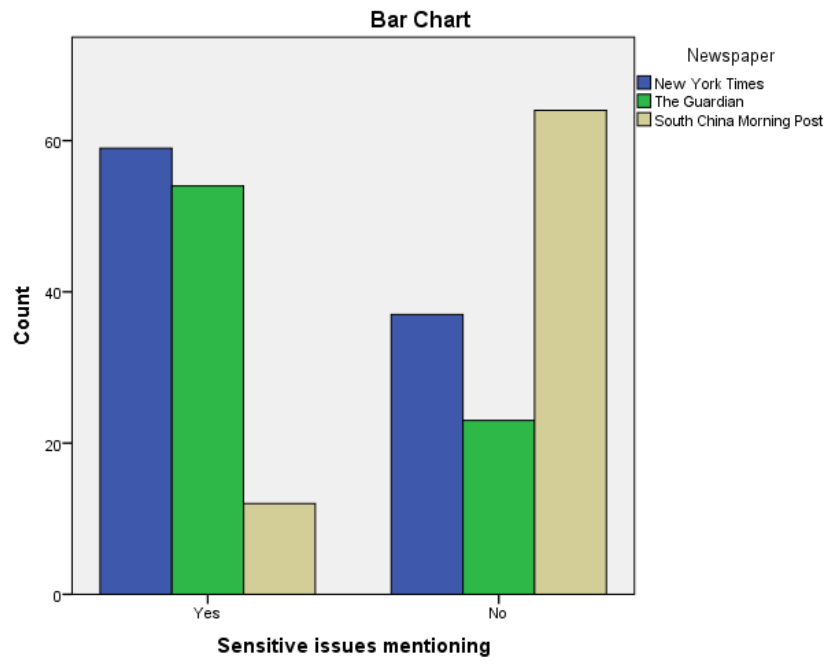


Figure 5. Mentioning of Politically Sensitive Issues

Chapter Six

Discussion

Results of the content analysis clearly supported the general hypothesis that different frames were used in the coverage of the 2014 Hong Kong protests. Specifically, few news articles from the *South China Morning Post* mentioned such politically sensitive issues as human rights or democracy (15.8%), and most of the stories in the same paper tended to frame the protests as economically or politically detrimental to Hong Kong (57.9%). In contrast, more news reports from *The New York Times* and *The Guardian* related the protests to the political sensitive issues (61.5% from *The New York Times* and 70.1% from *The Guardian*), and both papers showed a higher tendency to frame the protests as beneficial to the Hong Kong society at large (39.6% from *The New York Times* and 35.1% from *The Guardian*). Additionally, more news articles from the *South China Morning Post* would frame the protesters negatively (22.4%) when compared to news reports from *The New York Times* (8.3%) and *The Guardian* (1.3%). While *The New York Times* (43.8%) and *The Guardian* (61%) tended to portray the Hong Kong government negatively, the *South China Morning Post* presented more stories (18.4%) portraying the Hong Kong government as playing a positive role during the protests.

Taken as a whole, results of the present study provided additional evidence for the notion that foreign/western and domestic/Hong Kong news media applied different frames in their coverage of the 2014 protests. Specifically, western/foreign news media would place greater emphasis on the positive and beneficial aspects of the protests, while domestic/Hong Kong news

media would emphasize the negative and detrimental aspects. Furthermore, western/foreign news media would more likely frame the protests as a civil disobedience and democratic movement, whereas domestic/Hong Kong news media would highlight the anti-government and anti-social aspects of the event.

It would be tempting to summarily attribute the differences in framing observed in this study to the differences in political systems under which the three newspapers operate (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956). For example, the more positive and supportive frames used by *the New York Times* and *the Guardian* may be attributed to their libertarian traditions whereby the press serves as an “extralegal check” on government, exposing corruption and free from excessive central governmental control. Additionally, the media served in the role of educator, providing the general populace with information and discussion on matters of public interest. The more negative frames shown in *South China Morning Post*, on the other hand, reflect the authoritarian tradition whereby the state is the highest expression of group organization and that an individual should be dependent on the state to achieve his/her logical means and ends. When applied to explaining press-state relations, the authoritarian tradition holds that the press should serve as the mechanism to “support and advance governmental policies and ideals” (Seibert et al., 1956, p. 18).

A closer look at the results of the present study, however, suggests that such a dichotomized (libertarian vs. authoritarian) system account might be incomplete, especially when used to explain the framing of the protests by the *South China Morning Post*: Of the 76 articles from the *South China Morning Post*, 7 (10.5%) did frame the protests positively, 12 (15.8%) framed the protesters positively, 15 (19.7%) framed the Hong Kong

government negatively, 7 (9.2%) framed government-imposed censorship negatively and, perhaps more tellingly, 12 (15.8%) of the articles did refer to politically sensitive issues.

A more complete and valid explanation of the results should therefore take into account the political system as well as journalistic values. In their comparative study of Hong Kong, Japan, People’s Republic of China, and U.S. news media, Ostini and Fung (2002) provided an alternative and more timely view by classifying national press systems as democratic-conservative, democratic-liberal, authoritarian-conservative, or authoritarian-liberal.

“Democratic-conservative media systems are those in which the political system is democratic but the professional values of the majority of journalists are conservative—that is, the professional system(s) in which they operate emphasize support of societal status quo. Conversely, in a democratic-liberal system, dissent and free speech are values supported by both the political system and the individual journalists within that system. Authoritarian-conservative systems officially control press content and professional values within media organizations support such constraints. Authoritarian-liberal systems are those in which official policies suppress dissent, but individuals within media organizations support social reform and display such support in their practice of journalism” (p. 48).

Based on empirical data, Ostini and Fung (2002) conclude that countries may “share similar structural factors in which individual journalists operate under different levels of professional autonomy” (p. 55). Japan and the U.S., for instance, are structurally similar in that they both operate within a democratic-liberal system. The authoritarian-conservative press system in China, however, is different from the authoritarian-liberal press system in Hong Kong.

As stated earlier, Hong Kong is a semi-autonomous district in China and it is governed under the principle of “one country, two systems.” Such structural constraints, however, cannot prevent Hong Kong citizens from expressing their liberal and critical thoughts, largely as a result of over 150 years of British rule. It should further be noted that, under Article 27 of the Hong Kong Basic Law, Hong Kong residents enjoy freedom of speech, press, and publication, and these rights are generally upheld by the territory’s independent courts. And ironically, Article 35 of the current Chinese Constitution also stipulates that “Citizens of the PRC have freedom of speech, publication, assembly, association, procession and demonstration,” despite the government’s severe restrictions on freedom of speech and expression.

The authoritarian-liberal press system in Hong Kong thus creates a conflict between the political structure and journalistic values, and the conflict was clearly manifested in the frames used by *South China Morning Post* in its reporting the 2014 Occupy Central protests. On the face of it, there seems to be no censorship in Hong Kong – freedom of the press in Hong Kong is theoretically guaranteed by law. As a “special administrative region” of China, however, the Hong Kong government faces mounting pressure from China to have more control over its press. The pressure results in indirect or self-imposed news censorship in Hong Kong, a region that had once enjoyed unfettered Western-style press freedom under British rule.

The co-existence of authoritarian and liberal views of the press in Hong Kong, and the resultant self-imposed news censorship thus provide the best available explanation of the mixed use of positive and negative frames found in the present study. The explanation is corroborated by a recent report from *Reporters Without Borders* (2014). According to the report, many Hong Kong news organizations have been imposing news reporting restrictions since the 1997

takeover. Even though there had been scant news reports in Hong Kong newspapers on political sensitive issues like human rights, these reports would generally show favorable attitudes toward the government and condemn the instigators who openly violate the state policy.

It is worth noting that self-censorship in Hong Kong has gradually spilled from news to other speech-related industries. For example, bookstores in Hong Kong are also exercising self-censorship by refusing to sell books or magazines that contain unfavorable comments toward the Hong Kong or Chinese government. A recent article (Sala, 2015) in *the Guardian*, for instance, reports that several bookshops in Hong Kong refused to sell books that reveal government scandals in exchange for a more favorable property rent.

An open question is when and to what extent Hong Kong is able to maintain its authoritarian-liberal press system before succumbing to the authoritarian-conservative press system in mainland China under which all news stories on the Hong Kong protests, online or offline, before or after 2014, were strictly prohibited – with the only exception of the official Xinhua agency that conveniently and conclusively framed the protests as “illegal.”

Chapter Seven

Conclusions

In this thesis, a content analysis was done on the newspaper coverage of the Hong Kong protests, one of the most newsworthy events in 2014. Results of the analysis proved that different news frames did exist in news reports from different newspapers that embodied different professional values and structural constraints. The most noteworthy finding is the co-existence of authoritarian and liberal views of the press in Hong Kong, as reflected in the types and valence of the frames used in reporting the protests.

Like all empirical research, the present study has its limitations. Although the study tried to capture the essence of the protests by investigating news articles published during September 29 and December 18, 2014, the protests continued afterwards. Indeed, the movement the protests embodied shall continue for years, if not decades. Case in point: CNN (2015) recently reported that the Chinese government's decision on the Hong Kong electoral reform, the main trigger of the protests, was rejected by the Legislative Council on June 18, 2015. Likewise, *China NewsAsia* (2015) reported on the silent rally outside Hong Kong government headquarters on September 28, 2015, to mark the first anniversary of the start of the Occupy Central pro-democracy protests. Other stories convey the same message: Hong Kong citizens will never stop calling for greater democracy. More research is therefore needed to cover the movement

after the 2014 protests to document the continuing struggle between the government and the press, as well as the undying hope for more freedom.

Future research should also build on the present study by examining additional media sources (e.g., weblogs and social media) and their frames of the movement. Quantitative research methods (e.g., surveys) should be employed to provide additional insight pertaining to the changes in public mood or opinion as the result of framing. In doing so, a comprehensive picture of frame building (how frames are being chosen by journalists in news reporting) and frame setting (how frames exert their influence on audiences' attitudes and opinions) may eventually emerge.

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Appendix A

Timeline: Hong Kong's Pro-Democracy Movement

Thu, Sep 11 2014

(<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/11/us-hongkong-china-democracy-timeline-idUSKBN0H60NK20140911>)

(Reuters)

December 1984 - Britain and China sign Joint Declaration on the conditions under which Hong Kong will be handed over to Chinese rule in 1997, including a "one country, two systems" formula.

June 1989 - A crackdown on pro-democracy activists in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square prompts calls for more democratic safeguards to be introduced in Hong Kong.

April 1990 - Beijing ratifies Hong Kong's Basic Law as a mini-constitution which states for the first time that "universal suffrage" is the ultimate aim for Hong Kong.

July 1997 - Hong Kong is handed back to Chinese authorities after more than 150 years of British control. Tung Chee-hwa, a Shanghai-born former shipping tycoon with little political experience, is hand-picked by Beijing to rule the territory following the takeover.

February 2001 - Hong Kong's number two official, Chief Secretary Anson Chan, who opposed Chinese interference in the territory's affairs, resigns under pressure from Beijing.

July 2003 – Half a million people spill onto Hong Kong's streets to protest against proposed anti-subversion laws. The government shelved the proposed legislation and they have not been re-introduced since, even though they are required under the Basic Law.

April, 2004 - China controversially rules out the possibility of universal suffrage in Hong Kong in 2007 and 2008, further slowing the pace of political reform. China also rules that its approval must be sought for any changes to Hong Kong's election laws, giving Beijing the right to veto any moves towards more democracy.

December 2007 - Beijing says it will allow the people of Hong Kong to directly elect their own leader in 2017 and their legislators by 2020.

July 2012 - Leung Chun-ying takes office as chief executive, succeeding Donald Tsang whose last months in office were dogged by controversy over his links with wealthy businessmen.

January 2013 - Occupy Central with Love and Peace campaign is initiated by law professor Benny Tai.

June 2014 - China's Cabinet issues a "white paper" policy document on Hong Kong underscoring China's sovereignty and ultimate authority over the city.

June 2014 - Nearly 800,000 people cast votes in an unofficial referendum calling for open nomination of candidates for the 2017 election, part of campaign branded illegal by the Hong Kong government and senior Chinese officials.

July 2014 - Hundreds of thousands of pro-democracy protesters march through Hong Kong, calling for a genuinely democratic vote in 2017. Police arrest over 500 protesters who stage an overnight sit-in in the main business district.

August 2014 - Tens of thousands of pro-Beijing supporters stage a massive counter-protest against the Occupy Central civil disobedience campaign.

August 2014 - Anti-corruption officers raid home of Jimmy Lai, a media magnate and outspoken critic of Beijing who has supported pro-democracy activists through his publications and with donations.

August 2014 - The Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress rules out a fully democratic election for Hong Kong leader in 2017, by imposing tight rules on nominations of candidates who want to run in the poll.

(Compiled by Anne Marie Roantree. Editing by Bill Tarrant)

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Appendix B

Hong Kong profile

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-16526765>

A chronology of key events:

1842 - China cedes Hong Kong island to Britain after the First Opium War. Over the decades, thousands of Chinese migrants fleeing domestic upheavals settle in the colony.

1898 - China leases the New Territories together with 235 islands to Britain for 99 years from 1 July.

1937 - With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, Hong Kong becomes a refuge for thousands of mainland Chinese fleeing before the advancing Japanese.

1941 - Japan occupies Hong Kong. Food shortages impel many residents to flee to mainland China. The population drops from 1.6m in 1941 to 650,000 by the end of the Second World War.

1946 - Britain re-establishes civil government. Hundreds of thousands of former residents return, to be joined over next few years by refugees fleeing the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists in China.

1950s - Hong Kong enjoys economic revival based on light industries such as textiles.

1960s - Social discontent and labour disputes become rife among poorly-paid workforce.

1967 - Severe riots break out, mainly instigated by followers of China's Cultural Revolution.

Late 1960s - Living conditions improve and social unrest subsides.

1970s - Hong Kong is established as an "Asian Tiger" - one of the region's economic powerhouses - with a thriving economy based on high-technology industries.

Countdown to handover

1982 - Britain and China begin talks on the future of Hong Kong.

1984 - Britain and China sign Joint Declaration on the conditions under which Hong Kong will revert to Chinese rule in 1997. Under the "one country, two systems" formula, Hong Kong will become part of one communist-led country but retain its capitalist economic system and partially democratic political system for 50 years after the handover.

1989 - The massacre of pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing's Tiananmen Square leads to calls for the introduction of further democratic safeguards in Hong Kong.

1990 - Beijing formally ratifies Hong Kong's post-handover mini-constitution or Basic Law.

1992 April - Chris Patten becomes last British governor of Hong Kong, with a brief to oversee the colony's handover to China.

1992 October - Chris Patten announces proposals for the democratic reform of Hong Kong's institutions aimed at broadening the voting base in elections. China is outraged that it has not been consulted and threatens to tear up business contracts and overturn the reforms after it has taken control.

1992 December - Hong Kong stock market crashes.

1994 June - After nearly two years of bitter wrangling, Hong Kong's legislature introduces a stripped-down version of Chris Patten's democratic reform package. The new legislation widens the franchise but falls far short of providing for universal suffrage.

1995 - Elections held for new Legislative Council (LegCo).

One country, two systems

1997 July - Hong Kong is handed back to the Chinese authorities after more than 150 years of British control. Tung Chee-hwa, a Shanghai-born former shipping tycoon with no political experience, is hand-picked by Beijing to rule the territory following the takeover.

1998 May - First post-handover elections held.

2001 February - Deputy Chief Executive Anson Chan, a former deputy to Chris Patten and one of the main figures in the Hong Kong administration to oppose Chinese interference in the territory's affairs, resigns under pressure from Beijing and is replaced by Donald Tsang.

2002 June - Trial of 16 members of the Falun Gong spiritual movement arrested during a protest outside Beijing's liaison office in the territory. Falun Gong remains legal in Hong Kong, despite having been banned in mainland China in 1999, and the trial is seen as a test of the freedoms Beijing guaranteed to respect after the handover. The 16 are found guilty of causing a public obstruction.

2002 September - Tung Chee-hwa's administration releases proposals for controversial new anti-subversion law known as Article 23.

2003 March-April - Both China and Hong Kong are hit by the pneumonia-like Sars virus. Strict quarantine measures are enforced to stop the disease spreading. Hong Kong is declared free of Sars in June.

Calls for reform

2003 July - A day after a visit to the territory by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, 500,000 people march against Article 23. Two Hong Kong government members resign. The bill is shelved indefinitely.

2004 April - China rules that its approval must be sought for any changes to Hong Kong's election laws, giving Beijing the right to veto any moves towards more democracy, such as direct elections for the territory's chief executive.

2004 July - Some 200,000 people mark the seventh anniversary of Hong Kong's handover to Chinese rule by taking part in a demonstration protesting Beijing's ruling against electing the next chief executive by universal suffrage.

2004 September - Pro-Beijing parties retain their majority in LegCo elections widely seen as a referendum on Hong Kong's aspirations for greater democracy. In the run-up to the poll, human rights groups accuse Beijing of creating a "climate of fear" aimed at skewing the result.

2004 December - Chinese President Hu Jintao delivers public rebuke to Tung Chee-hwa, telling him to improve his administration's performance.

Change of guard

2005 March - Amid mounting criticism of his rule, Tung Chee-hwa resigns, citing failing health. He is succeeded in June by Donald Tsang.

2005 May - Hong Kong's highest court overturns the convictions of eight of the Falun Gong members who were found guilty of causing an obstruction in the territory in 2002.

2005 June - Tens of thousands of people commemorate sixteenth anniversary of crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. Hong Kong is the only part of China where the 1989 events are marked.

2005 September - Pro-democracy members of LegCo make unprecedented visit to Chinese mainland. Eleven members of the 25-strong pro-democracy group had been banned from the mainland for 16 years.

2005 December - Pro-democracy legislators block Mr Tsang's plans for limited constitutional reforms, saying they do not go far enough. Mr Tsang said his plans - which would have changed electoral processes without introducing universal suffrage - went as far as Beijing would allow.

2006 March - Pope Benedict XVI elevates Bishop Joseph Zen, the leader of Hong Kong's 300,000 Catholics and an outspoken advocate of democracy, to the post of cardinal. China warns Cardinal Zen to stay out of politics.

2006 July - Tens of thousands of people rally in support of full democracy.

2007 January - New rules aim to restrict the number of pregnant women from mainland China who come to Hong Kong to give birth. Many had been drawn by the prospect of gaining Hong Kong residency rights for their children and evading China's one-child policy.

2007 April - Chief Executive Donald Tsang is appointed to a new five-year term after winning elections in March.

2007 July - Hong Kong marks 10th anniversary of handover to China. New government under Chief Executive Donald Tsang is sworn in. Plans for full democracy unveiled.

Timetable

2007 December - Beijing says it will allow the people of Hong Kong to directly elect their own leader in 2017 and their legislators by 2020. Mr Tsang hails this as "a timetable for obtaining universal suffrage", but pro-democracy campaigners express disappointment at the protracted timescale.

2008 September - Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp wins more than a third of seats in legislative elections, retaining a key veto over future bills.

2009 June - Tens of thousands of people attend a vigil in Hong Kong on the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre. The territory is the only part of China to mark the anniversary.

2009 December - Hong Kong authorities unveil proposals for political reform in response to pressure for greater democracy, including an enlarged Legislative Council; critics say the moves do not go far enough.

2010 May - Five opposition MPs are returned to their seats, in by-elections they triggered by quitting - a move intended to pressure China to grant the territory full democracy.

Opposition Democratic Party, traditionally hostile to Beijing, holds its first talks with a Chinese official since the 1997 handover.

2012 July - Leung Chun-ying takes office as chief executive, succeeding Donald Tsang whose last months in office were dogged by controversy over his links with wealthy businessmen.

2012 September - Pro-democracy parties retain their power of veto over new laws in Legislative Council elections, but perform less well than expected. Turnout, at over 50%, was higher than in 2008.

2013 June - Hundreds march in support of whistleblower Edward Snowden, who fled to Hong Kong after exposing secret US surveillance programmes.

2014 June - More than 90% of the nearly 800,000 people taking part in an unofficial referendum vote in favour of giving the public a say in short-listing candidates for future elections of the territory's chief executive. Beijing condemns the vote as illegal.

Pro-democracy protests

2014 July - Tens of thousands of protesters take part in what organisers say could be Hong Kong's largest pro-democracy rally in a decade.

2014 August - Chinese government rules out a fully democratic election for Hong Kong leader in 2017, saying that only candidates approved by Beijing will be allowed to run.

2014 September-November - Pro-democracy demonstrators occupy the city centre for weeks in protest at the Chinese government's decision to limit voters' choices in the 2017 Hong Kong leadership election. More than 100,000 people took to the streets at the height of the Occupy Central protests.

2014 December - Authorities take down Mong Kok protest camp, leaving a few hundred protesters at two camps at Admiralty and Causeway Bay.

Appendix C

Content Coding Scheme

I. General

Coded By _____

Date Coded _____

Story Number _____

Newspapers:

The New York Times The Guardian South China Morning Post

Publication date of the article: _____

Dateline (where the story was written or filed):

The United States The United Kingdom Hong Kong

Byline (Written by):

Staff/Writer Correspondent Economic analysts or academic scholars

Unidentifiable/Not provided

Type of story:

- Editorial News story

II. Story themes

Please code each article into one of the eight theme categories. Only the primary theme of the article should be taken into consideration, while other themes that may appear in the article should be neglected.

- the status of the protests,
- the causes of the protests,
- the suppression of protesters by the police,
- the impact of the protests on the daily lives of Hong Kong residents,
- the reactions of Hong Kong and Chinese governments officials,
- the public opinion and sentiment of the protests,
- the reactions of foreign countries.
- other

III. Story frames

Please code each story into the alternative categories according to instructions presented below.

1. Valence frames of the protests

- Positive -- The news article contains positive or beneficial aspects of the protests (e.g., protests as part of a larger democratic movement, exemplification of civil-disobedience, progress toward greater political freedom, nonviolence or peaceful resistance).

Negative – the article presents negative or detrimental aspects of the protests or showing passive attitudes toward the protests (e.g., interrupting social order and commercial practice, fostering social and economic instability, perpetuating of social and political divisiveness, upsetting the Chinese communist regime).

Neutral – The article contains both positive and negative aspects of the protests at the same time.

Unclear – The article presents neither positive nor negative aspects of the protests were coded as unclear.

2. Valence frames of the protesters

Positive -- The article contains positive or supportive descriptions of the protesters (e.g., freedom or human rights fighters, leaders of democracy, intelligent or responsible citizens).

Negative – The article presents negative or detrimental aspects of the protesters (e.g., troublemakers, separatists, anarchists, opportunists, naïve and irrational citizens, Western sympathizers).

Neutral – The article contains both positive and negative aspects of the protesters at the same time.

Unclear – The article presents neither positive nor negative aspects of the protesters were coded as unclear.

3. Valence frames of the Hong Kong government

Positive -- The article expresses support, justification or defense for the government and its actions and reactions during the protests (e.g., rationalizing the necessity of police violence, defending the use of delay tactics in negotiations with protesters).

Negative – The article presents contains criticism, disapproval or dissent against the Hong Kong government (e.g., questioning the excessive use of police force, the lack of sincerity in conflict resolution or expertise in crisis management).

Neutral – The article presents both supportive and critical views of the Hong Kong government.

Unclear – The article does not address the Hong Kong government.

4. Valence frames of news censorship

- Positive -- The article contains statements or sentiments that support news censorship in Hong Kong or China.
- Negative – The article contains statements or sentiments against news censorship in Hong Kong or China.
- Neutral – The article presents both supportive and critical views of the news censorship in Hong Kong or China.
- Unclear – The article does not address news censorship in Hong Kong or China.

5. Frames of politically sensitive issues

- Yes – The article contains wording, statements or references pertaining to any of the following words: Tiananmen Square protests, political dissidents, human rights, authoritarian government, dictatorship, anti-democracy, anti-communist, media censorship, Internet content blocking, freedom of speech.
- No – The article does not contain any wording, statement or reference pertaining to any of the following words: Tiananmen Square protests, political dissidents, human rights, authoritarian government, dictatorship, anti-democracy, anti-communist, media censorship, Internet content blocking, freedom of speech.

Appendix D
Coding Examples

1. Valence frames of the protests

	New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post
Positive	<p>"The Hong Kong protests present a huge challenge to China because everyone here speaks Chinese and there are so many close ties between Hong Kong and China," said Maya Wang, a researcher at Human Rights Watch in Hong Kong. "No matter how hard the government might try to stop news from getting in, the border remains porous." (Andrew Jacobs, Oct. 2nd, Detentions of Hong Kong Protest Sympathizers Reported</p>	<p>Vandana Chatrani, 31, recently moved from Hong Kong to London. He said he attended "just to show my support for pro-democracy and for the movement that everyone is fighting for in Hong Kong. "I really wish I could be there myself. In this way I can sort of be a part of it and show I am really committed to democracy and I think that is what the Hong Kong people deserve." (Aaron Walawalkar, Oct. 2nd, Hong Kong</p>	<p>He said the development of the pro-democracy protests (referring to the Hong Kong protests) went beyond his imagination and that of fellow Occupy co-founders ... (Gary Cheung, Oct. 11th, Occupy co-founder Chan Kin-man weighs up defiant disruption with need for public sympathy)</p>

	in Mainland)	democracy protests spread to Chinese embassy in London)	
Neutral	<p>But participants said sustaining the protests was becoming harder, and some said they would accept compromise short of their ultimate demands for free elections...</p> <p>"The current protests are good the way they are," she said. "As long as we persist, I believe the government will eventually have to face us."</p> <p>(Chris Buckley and Alan Wong, Oct. 27th, Pro-Democracy Movement's Vote in Hong Kong Abruptly Called Off)</p>	<p>"I believe for any country, for any society, no one would allow those illegal acts that violate public order. That's the situation in the United States and that's the same situation in Hong Kong." ... "As China knows, we support universal suffrage in Hong Kong, accordant with the Basic Law," Kerry told reporters, standing alongside Wang.</p> <p>(Agence France-Presse, Oct. 1st, Hong Kong protests: China warns US not to meddle in 'internal affairs')</p>	<p>Still, ANZ Banking Group estimates that the city lost HK\$2.2 billion in retail sales as a result of the protest zones blocking access to shops and a move by the mainland authorities to cancel tour groups during the week-long National Day holiday ... the stability of the city's credit rating was reaffirmed on Monday by ratings agencies Moody's and Fitch, neither of which sees the demonstrations affecting Hong Kong's economy in the medium term ...</p> <p>(Benjamin Robertson and Toh Han- Shih, Oct. 9th, HK's image little affected by</p>

			<p>protests; While one index ranks city's civil unrest level below Liberia and North Korea, other global ratings agencies say it is business as usual)</p>
Negative	<p>Later, another hunger striker withdrew, leaving two students still engaged in the strike. Efforts by the protesters to press the Hong Kong government into talks over the election process for the city's leader have become increasingly troubled in recent days, and public support for their actions has been waning. (Alan Wong, Oct. 2nd, Hong Kong Protester Ends Hunger Strike)</p>	<p>Parts of the Asian financial hub have been paralysed for weeks by rallies (referring to the Hong Kong protests) ... (Agence France-Presse, Oct. 21st, Hong Kong leader extends olive branch to pro-democracy protesters)</p>	<p>The protests (referring to the Hong Kong protests) have left at least a dozen roads blocked, some shops closed temporarily, about 160 bus routes cancelled or re-routed and some school classes suspended. (Alan Yu and He Huifeng, Oct. 1st, 'Golden week' loses; It's not just the fireworks that are missing. With blocked roads and shops closed, customers and tourists are too. To top it off, a storm is brewing)</p>

2. Valence frame of the protesters

	New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post
Positive	<p>Many protesters said they were angry about police methods on top of their demand for the fully democratic election of Hong Kong's leader ... officers squirted pepper spray at the front ranks of protesters, who tried to protect themselves with umbrellas... (Chris Buckley and Alan Wong, Nov. 29th, Hong Kong Clashes Flare as Protesters Return to Camp)</p>	<p>The resident saw something unique in the exuberance and spontaneity of the peaceful crowd (referring to the Hong Kong protests) – preempting plans to launch the civil-disobedience movement on Wednesday, a national holiday – combined with the tough tactics of the police. (Tania Branigan, Sep. 28th, Hong Kong surprises itself with the exuberance and spontaneity of protests)</p>	<p>Hong Kong's student demonstrators, on the other hand, have remained almost entirely peaceful throughout the course of their occupation. The images of Hong Kong police launching tear gas onto the streets of Admiralty on the evening of September 28 shocked many primarily because of the inoffensive nature of the student protesters. (Bryan Harris, Oct. 25th, HK police 'more tolerant than those in US or Europe')</p>
Neutral	<p>Crowds of pro-democracy protesters thinned noticeably by Thursday morning after the Hong Kong government adopted a more</p>	<p>Student leaders called off talks with the government – offered the previous night – accusing officials of allowing violence to be used against them ...</p>	<p>The analysts, who are familiar with Chinese politics and have called for a more open society on the mainland, are sympathetic towards the protesters' calls for</p>

	<p>conciliatory stance of trying to wait out the demonstrators ...</p> <p>Demonstrators were making a bigger effort by midmorning Thursday to minimize their disruption to commerce.</p> <p>(Keith Bradsher, Oct. 2nd, Hong Kong Government's Strategy on Protesters: Wait Them Out)</p>	<p>Officers warned the students repeatedly to leave Mong Kok, saying they were disturbing public order.</p> <p>(Tania Branigan, Oct. 4th, Hong Kong protesters beaten and bloodied as thugs attack sit-in)</p>	<p>more democracy, but say it is time for them to calm down and adjust their demands.</p> <p>(Teddy Ng, Oct. 3rd, 'Keep calm and adjust your demands')</p>
Negative	<p>Among the specific complaints of the police: that protesters have been allowed to shout at them and poke them with the umbrellas that have become a symbol of their protest. Officers are also upset that protesters have been allowed to block roads with more than 1,000 barricades that belong to the police.</p>	<p>Demonstrators calling for Beijing to grant full democracy to the former British colony have paralyzed parts of Hong Kong for more than two weeks, causing widespread disruption and prompting clashes between protesters and residents who opposed road blockades.</p> <p>(AFP in Hong Kong, Oct. 12th, Hong Kong</p>	<p>Protesters routinely hold open umbrellas in front of police officers' faces, anticipating pepper spray. Police officials have complained that some protesters have poked or pushed officers with them.</p> <p>(Fanny W.Y. Fung and Jeffie Lam, Nov. 10th, Love lost in the; Occupy organisers aimed to 'embrace</p>

	(Keith Bradsher, Oct. 5 th , Scrutinized for Handling of Pro-Democracy Protests, Police Have Own Troubles)	leader says pro-democracy protests will not change Beijing's stance)	equality, tolerance, love and care', but after scenes of violence and confrontation, is this ethos intact?)
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3. Valence frames of the Hong Kong government

	New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post
Positive	The police were forced to take a tougher stance with protesters last Sunday for fear that the crowd was about to topple barriers and cause a stampede that could injure protesters and officers alike, a police commander said ... A Hong Kong government official said on Friday night that the police had made an intensive effort to protect protesters in the face of a very large, hostile crowd.	Hong Kong's embattled leader has said he is open to creating a more democratic selection committee before elections in 2017, extending a potential olive branch to democracy protesters as crunch talks to end the demonstrations got under way ... Parts of the Asian financial hub have been paralyzed for weeks by rallies... (Agence France-Presse, Oct. 21 st , Hong Kong leader extends olive branch to	The renewed violence came after police had earlier warned of resolute action to prevent any such blockade ... In a statement at 10.20pm, police "strongly condemned" the "unlawful assemblies in Admiralty for storming police cordon lines and obstructing roads". (Danny Mok, Tony Cheung, Phila Siu and Shirley Zhao, Nov. 30 th , Occupy supporters and police clash as Hong Kong protests

	(Keith Bradsher, Oct. 5 th , Scrutinized for Handling of Pro-Democracy Protests, Police Have Own Troubles)	pro-democracy protesters)	escalate)
Neutral	"People came out because they're angry with the police," said Ben W. S. Lee, a 37-year-old teacher in the crowd. "I've lost all my trust in the police because they've used excessive force on Hong Kong people in the past few days." ... In the early hours of Saturday, groups of protesters scattered into nearby streets and continued testing the police by hurling insults... (Chris Buckley and Alan Wong, Nov. 29 th , Hong Kong Clashes Flare as Protesters Return to Camp)	A row of protesters sat on the curb wearing hard hats and goggles, ostensibly to defend against beatings and pepper spray (from the police) ... Dozens of police stood watch, occasionally herding away pro-Beijing counter-protesters who gathered on the sidewalks and heckled the sparse crowd. (Jonathan Kaiman, Oct. 17 th , Hong Kong police dismantle protest sites in dawn raids)	"Officials (referring to the Hong Kong government) made half a step and showed they were willing to talk," Chow said. "But unfortunately, they took us nowhere and their ideas offered no fundamental cure for the problems." (Gary Cheung, Joyce Ng and Shirley Zhao, Oct. 23 rd , Government sources hint at tougher line on Occupy; Hawks may trump doves in debate on tactics to deal with protests if deadlock remains, they say)

<p>Negative</p>	<p>(1) But by clearing the protesters and appeasing the Chinese Communist Party, the Hong Kong authorities could risk a bigger backlash from even more city residents... (Chris Buckley and Alan Wong, Sep. 27th, Pro-Democracy Group Shifts to Collaborate With Student Protesters in Hong Kong)</p> <p>(2) The heavy-handed police measures, including the city's first use of tear gas in years and the presence of officers with long-barreled guns, appeared to galvanize the public... (Chris Buckley and Alan Wong, Sep. 28th, Crackdown on Protests by Hong Kong Police Draws More to the Streets)</p>	<p>(1) Police used batons and pepper spray against protesters shielding themselves with umbrellas on a normally busy main road in the bustling Mongkok district, but were forced into a partial retreat as the sun began to rise, to cheers from the crowd. (Agence France-Presse, Oct. 18th, Hong Kong: violence flares again as protesters reoccupy streets)</p> <p>(2) The acting chief executive, Carrie Lam, also said there was no room for further dialogue with the student-led protesters, whom she said had hardened their position, raising the prospect of more violence as the government struggles to end the mostly</p>	<p>The Hong Kong Christian Council has released various statements over the past three weeks, including urging the government to listen to the "clear message Hongkongers and Hong Kong students are voicing", as well as condemning excessive force by the police. (Jennifer Ngo, Oct. 27th, Religion on the front line puts faith into practice; Christians, in pursuing equality and justice, have long been part of the city's fight for freedom)</p>
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		peaceful standoff. (Associated Press in Hong Kong, Nov. 11 th , Hong Kong protesters face arrest after court rules on evictions)	
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4. Frames of news censorship

	New York Times	The Guardian	South China Morning Post
Positive	<p>He (referring to Leung Chung-ying) backed Beijing's position that all candidates to succeed him as chief executive, the top post in the city, must be screened by a "broadly representative" nominating committee appointed by Beijing. That screening, he said, would insulate candidates from popular pressure to create a welfare state, and would allow the city government to follow more</p>		

	<p>business-friendly policies to address economic inequality instead.</p> <p>(Keith Bradsher and Chris Buckley, Oct. 21st, Hong Kong Leader Reaffirms Unbending Stance on Elections)</p>		
Neutral	<p>"Clearly, it's Beijing that is dominating the decisions about this movement," ... The Chinese leaders want to avoid bloodshed in Hong Kong...</p> <p>(Keith Bradsher and Chris Buckley, Oct. 18th, Beijing Is Directing Hong Kong Strategy, Government Insiders Say)</p>		
Negative	<p>The violent suppression by China's military of the Tiananmen Square movement shook the world ... Mr. Bao suggested in his commentary that China</p>	<p>A British colony until 1997, Hong Kong enjoys civil liberties not seen on the Chinese mainland, including freedom of speech and the right to protest. But</p>	<p>The Guardian reported that Beijing pressured the lawmaker to make a speech in Parliament to clarify his position before pursuing a visa to enter the</p>

	<p>was on the wrong side of history when the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress decided in late August to limit Hong Kong elections... (Didi Kirsten Tatlow, Oct. 5th, Bao Tong, Recalling Tiananmen, Calls on Hong Kong Protesters to 'Take a Break')</p>	<p>fears have been growing that these freedoms are being eroded (by the Chinese government). (Agence France-Presse, Nov. 30th, Hong Kong protesters and police face off as violent exchanges continue)</p>	<p>mainland ... The British parliamentarians are said to have felt Beijing was being too heavy-handed in its approach. (Danny Lee, Nov. 26th, British lawmakers' trip to China cancelled amid row over Hong Kong protests debate)</p>
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