

新聞媒體在社會運動中的 公眾屏幕功能和影響： 香港雨傘運動之「暗角事件」個案分析

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摘要

本文建構「局部審查下的公眾屏幕」(partially censored public monitor) 這概念，來概括及理解主流新聞媒體在大型社會運動發生時的功能和影響。主流媒體一方面深嵌在政治經濟結構中，是當權者進行社會控制的工具。在香港，回歸後的新聞媒體更出現頗為嚴重的自我審查問題。但另一方面，媒體系統內部的多元性和新聞工作者的專業理念等因素，使媒體仍然在一定程度上承擔著資訊傳播和監察社會的功能，而大型社會運動發生時，通過傳送一些震撼人心的影像，傳媒更可能引發民眾參與到運動中。因此，傳媒在社會運動發生時的角色和影響是複雜和矛盾的。本文以雨傘運動中一次警察毆打示威者的醜聞為個案。分析顯示，事件在電視台率先報導，相關資訊再從互聯網等渠道擴散後，香港市民對警察的信任度即時下降，這體現了傳媒的

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公眾屏幕功能。但同時，不少主流媒體有淡化事件的傾向，而日常使用主流新聞媒體頻率越高的市民，對警察的信任度亦較高，這些發現則展現了香港傳媒的局部審查狀態。總的來說，本文說明了主流媒體的公眾屏幕功能如何能在局部審查的狀態中發揮作用。

關鍵詞：公眾屏幕、自我審查、社會運動、新聞媒體、雨傘運動

News Media as the Public Monitor in a Large-scale Protest Campaign: The Case of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement

Francis L. F. LEE

Abstract

This article articulates the notion of “partially censored public monitor” to explicate the role and influence of the mainstream news media during large-scale protest campaigns. The mainstream media are agents of social control. In Hong Kong, political transformation also led to the problem of media self-censorship. But on the other hand, factors such as the internal diversity of the media system and journalistic professionalism have stopped the media from becoming mere servants of the powerful. This article uses a notorious incident of police violence during the Umbrella Movement as a case study. The analysis shows that public trust in the police immediately declined after the news of the incident broke out. This illustrates the public monitor function of the media. But at the same time, many mainstream news media did try to undermine the significance of the incident, and there is indeed a positive relationship between trust in police and mainstream media consumption at the individual level. On the whole, this article explicates how the mainstream media's public monitor function can be exercised even under the condition of partial censorship.

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導言

社會運動作為政治抗爭，目的是就一些公共議題，透過集體行動向所針對的對象、議題的持份者，和公眾傳遞某些觀點和信息，從而維護人民或個別社會群組的權益，以至推動社會和文化變遷 (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001)。傳統上，對社會運動組織而言，在資源緊絀的情況下，他們要依賴傳媒發放示威信息、擴大信息的接觸面，和進行動員 (Gamson, 2004; Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993)。不過，礙於各種因素，包括來自政經結構的壓力、機構規章和文化的約束、新聞生產過程的規律等，傳媒難以做到一個客觀中立的平台，在新聞選材和報道角度上往往帶有特定傾向 (McCarthy, McPhail, & Smith, 1996; Ryan, 1991; Smith, McCarthy, McPhail, & Augustyn, 2001)。上世紀70年代以來，不少社會學和傳播學研究均指出，大眾傳媒在報導示威活動時，立場通常偏向建制，例如報導採用官方消息多於示威者的觀點，傾向凸顯暴力衝突場面，或集中注意力在行為或裝束奇特的示威者身上。這種報導有意無意地把示威抗爭描寫成異常行為 (deviant behavior)。同時，媒體較少探究社會運動所關注的議題和表達的觀點。整體上，主流媒體的新聞報導傾向令社會運動和抗議行動顯得不合法和不合理 (Boykoff, 2006; Chan & Lee, 1984; Gitlin, 1980; McLeod & Hertog, 1998; Small, 1995)。

不過，這種在很大程度上建基於傳播政治經濟學的批判觀點，在過去十多年來受到了一些挑戰。一些論者指出，社會運動和集體行動在很多民主社會都變成了廣被接納的常規政治的一部分 (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998)。隨著社會運動的常態化 (normalization)，較近年的媒體研究顯示，傳媒對示威行動的報導往往是頗為複雜的 (Cottle, 2008)。一項香港研究亦發現，在過去十幾年來，主流報章對抗爭性集體行動的報導，整體而言越來越少負面傾向 (Lee, 2014)。除社會和文化轉變外，自由社會中的新聞工作者的專業理念，亦使媒體不會完全變成政治經濟權力的附屬品。媒體會否對一次社會運動作負面或偏頗的報導，可能取決於運動的性質、運動所採取的行動模式、民意對運動的議題的關注度、民意對運動的立場的支持度等多項因素。另外，由於新聞媒體受多種力量左右，媒體對一個社會運動的處理手法及其報導

對民意所產生的影響，也可能是多方面、甚至是互相矛盾的。

在這背景下，本文的主旨在探討和闡釋香港主流新聞媒體在雨傘運動期間的表現和對民意的影響。在概念上，本文視香港主流新聞媒體為「局部審查下的公眾屏幕」(partially censored public monitor)。亦即是說，新聞傳媒一方面承擔著公眾屏幕的功能，履行著訊息傳播和報導事實的基本責任，同時也扮演監察當權者的角色，尤其當運動過程中出現明顯的濫權行為時，傳媒的直擊報道就成了有力的佐證，讓公眾即時得悉相關事態，對權力擁有者構成壓力。但另一方面，主流媒體始終處身在政經架構之中，尤其是香港媒體，更是長期處於一種局部審查的狀態之下。這使得主流傳媒也很可能同時展現支持建制和反對運動的傾向。

文章以下先通過討論相關文獻，探討傳媒在社會運動中的公眾屏幕角色和香港新聞傳媒的局部審查特質。在闡釋了基本概念之後，文章會簡介研究個案的背景。具體而言，由於雨傘運動本身是一個長時間而且頗為複雜的抗爭運動，媒體在整個運動中的表現和影響難以在一篇文章內完全覆蓋。本文的經驗分析集中在雨傘運動中一次甚具代表性的警民衝突事件上。分析將分為兩部分。第一部分分析香港主流媒體如何呈現該宗警民衝突事件，第二部分則探討事件在經過傳媒報道後對民意的即時影響。文章在最後部分總結研究結果和討論研究的啟示。

文獻回顧和概念闡釋

傳媒的公眾屏幕角色

Deluca和Peeples(2002)在他們有關1999年美國西雅圖反世貿示威的研究中，提出了「公眾螢幕」(public screen)這個概念。有別於許多傳播學研究將傳媒構想成德國社會學家哈伯瑪斯所提出的一個強調理性溝通和追求民意共識的「公共領域」(public sphere)，Deluca和Peeples指出，傳媒在處理社會衝突事件中，透過傳遞相關資訊，尤其是一些具震撼性的影像，也能促進政治參與和驅動民意。如上所述，主流傳媒在

報導示威活動時，往往追求官能刺激，著重渲染暴力衝突場面。一般傳播學者會將此視為傳媒的保守傾向 (Chan & Lee, 1984; McLeod & Hertog, 1998) 或商業導向新聞學 (McManus, 1994) 的體現。但 Deluca 和 Peebles (2002) 認為，作為公眾螢幕，傳媒在傳遞這些影像時，未必抹殺了示威者的議題和訴求。相反，這些衝突影像能夠吸引觀眾的關注，因這些影像往往把熟悉的變成陌生，可能令公眾開始思考眼前的事情。隨著公眾關注度增加，傳媒亦會再加強報道，令公眾更有機會了解事件的來龍去脈及社會運動背後的理念。當然，這並不代表報導內容一定能夠充分和如實地反映示威者的訴求 (Batziou, 2015; Cammaerts, 2013; Cottle, 2008; McHendry, 2012)。不過，傳媒大篇幅的報導至少能為抗爭者開啟一扇與公眾溝通的窗口。

既然傳媒擁有作為公眾螢幕的影響力，社會運動中各相關單位，包括運動的訴求對象，都必須謹慎處理自己的傳媒形象。對當權者而言，傳媒是社會控制的工具，也是其監督者。尤其在民主國家，傳媒監督會令政府在行使權力時有所制約。不少研究指出，傳媒出現在抗爭現場會影響警察的執法手段。警察在傳媒鏡頭前會避免以武力對付示威者，免得頭破血流的畫面刺激民情，破壞當局的公信力 (Lawrence, 2000; Marx, 1998; Wisler & Giugni, 1999)。Howard 和 Hussain (2013) 在討論 2011–2012 年間發生的阿拉伯之春時也指出，不少示威者相信半島電視台的存在，使埃及政府不敢出動軍隊鎮壓。換句話說，傳媒的功能不只在於它在螢幕上播放了甚麼影像，亦在於它的監督功能如何影響不同人物和組織的行為和策略，使一些景象不會出現。

本文一方面建基於 Deluca 和 Peebles (2002) 的討論，但同時把公眾螢幕這概念修正為「公眾屏幕」(public monitor)。重點其實是在英文用詞上，以 monitor 取代 screen。兩者均具備顯示屏的意思，所以，換上了 monitor 一字，並沒去除對影像和公眾形象的重視。但同時，monitor 一字亦指向傳媒監察社會 (monitor the society) 的功能。在自由主義新聞理念中，理想的新聞媒體一向被賦予社會「第四權」(the fourth estate) 和「守門狗」(watchdog) 的角色，承擔監察當權者，防止其濫用權力的責任。因此，public monitor 一詞能更全面地和準確地反映傳媒的社會角色。

此外，monitor一字也關聯到Schudson (1999) 提出的「監察型公民」(monitorial citizen) 這個概念。Schudson認為，在急速和繁忙的現代社會，我們不可能要求每一位公民都對社會事務全面掌握和恆常不斷地參與。不過，這並不代表人們對公共事務全然冷漠。人們會透過傳媒跟進社會情勢，每當有重要情況發生，傳媒就會如警鐘一樣，提醒公民注意 (Zaller, 2003)。這個對公民的能力和傳媒與公眾之間的關係的理解，膾炙公眾屏幕的意涵：傳媒往往在報導如大型政治衝突等關鍵新聞事件時，最能吸引公眾關注，掀動他們的思緒。

值得指出的是，Deluca和Peeples (2002) 最初構想公眾螢幕這概念時，傳統大眾媒體如電視台、電台和報章仍是大眾的主要資訊渠道。但隨著科技發展，傳媒生態大大改變。社會運動也處身於新的媒介機會結構中 (Cammaerts, 2012)。社會運動團體和支持者不再純粹依賴大眾傳媒，而會靈活利用各種網絡媒體和社交媒體，發放有利自己的資訊，進行動員 (Deluca, Lawson, & Sun, 2012; Poell & Borra, 2011)。本文的重點在大眾傳媒的功能，所以不會全面地探討數碼媒體本身對社會運動和抗爭行動的影響。但有兩點是需要強調的。第一，主流媒體不只是傳播平台，它們也是資源相對充沛、專職生產媒體內容的龐複機構。當社會出現重大事件時，一些重要的資訊和內容仍然是要依靠主流媒體去發掘和報導的。主流媒體在公信力和受眾人數上的優勢，亦難以在短時間內消失。第二，數碼媒體和主流媒體並非互不相干的兩個領域。相反，兩者其實緊密連結在一起，構成一個整合的媒體環境 (Chadwick, 2011)。人們在數碼媒體上轉發和傳閱的東西，往往是來自大眾媒體的內容。數碼和社交媒體為大眾傳媒內容的流傳提供了額外的平台，而且人們通過在社交媒體中轉發和評論，身分由被動的內容接收者變為傳播過程的積極參與者，所以人們對轉發的內容可能會思考得更深入。因此，數碼和社交媒體應有助強化主流傳媒的公眾屏幕功能。

局部審查下的香港新聞傳媒

香港欠缺民主政制，卻有著新聞自由的傳統。在上世紀80年代至

90年代的「過渡期」間，因中英雙方的權力均衡狀態，香港傳媒更是享有著高度的自由。它們站在本土的利益和立場上，對中國政府和港英政府都抱著批判的態度(Chan & Lee, 1991)。不過，隨著九七回歸臨近，中英角力漸漸變得一面倒，中國政府亦開始嘗試籠絡香港的媒體擁有者。到了回歸後，除了如黎智英等非常少數例外，香港的媒體擁有者都是在香港以及中國大陸有龐大商業利益的大商家，其中不少更是各省市或全國級別的政協委員，甚至是政協常委(Ma, 2007)。¹

這結構性的格局使香港媒界漸漸向中國靠攏，新聞自由亦開始響起警號(Lai, 2007)。當然，在一國兩制之下，中國政府不能直接及公開地干預香港媒體運作或禁止媒體報導某些事件或議題。中國政府主要是通過籠絡媒體擁有者和其他間接手段，如公開批評某些傳媒的報導，或促使中資商業機構不在某些媒體上投放廣告資源等，引導香港媒體對敏感議題進行自我審查(Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2014; Lee, 2015)。事實上，回歸後香港傳媒的自我審查情況備受關注，新聞工作者普遍認為自我審查越來越嚴重(Lee & Chan, 2009)，支持民主的市民亦對傳媒有所批判。在網絡上，不少市民更慣常地把無綫電視戲稱為「CCTVB」，以諷刺該電視台在新聞報導中的一些保守風格和傾向。

不過，作為一個整體，香港的媒體系統並沒有完全放棄自己的專業職能和社會責任。這是因為有多種力量和因素促使媒體不會完全服膺在政治權力之下。首先，大部分香港傳媒都是一盤生意，故新聞機構不能完全為了政治效忠而過分偏離民意市場。第二，市場的重要性亦使香港仍然擁有個別具批判性的主流媒體(如《蘋果日報》)或一些讓民意得以自由表達的平台(如電台烽煙節目)。這些具批判性的主流媒體和民意平台為較保守的媒體帶來壓力，迫使後者不能過分偏頗當權者，當具批判性的媒體率先報導了某個敏感議題時，其他媒體亦不能不跟進。同時，具批判性的媒體的存在亦可減低其他媒體的政治風險，因為一般媒體不會成為政權打壓的頭號對象。

第三，香港在整體上擁有一個開放的資訊系統，包括一個高度開放的互聯網，來自世界各地的資訊都可以在香港自由流通。對於已經從不同渠道進入了公共領域的資訊，主流媒體不可能視而不見。近年香港更湧現了一批政治立場鮮明的網絡另類媒體(online alternative

media)，包括各式各樣的評論網站和網絡電台，衝擊著主流傳媒的話語權 (Leung & Lee, 2014)。網絡另類媒體的蓬勃發展，或多或少令主流傳媒對自我審查有所避忌。

第四，香港前線新聞工作者仍然奉行著自由主義新聞理念下的專業主義精神，強調傳媒應獨立於政治和經濟權力之外，同時強調傳媒的資訊傳播及監察社會的功能 (Chan, Lee, & So, 2012)。如政治經濟學者指出，在一個龐複機構中，高層擁有的主要是資源分配上的控制權，但他們難以控制日常運作的每一個細節。尤其是在前線工作時，記者仍有一定程度的操作性自由 (operational freedom) (Murdoch, 1982)。同時，專業主義仍然是新聞機構內部溝通時所運用的基本語言。所以，基於政治考慮的自我審查難以明目張膽地在新聞機構內出現。有經驗的新聞工作者，亦可以通過不同的方式對機構內部的自我審查行為進行策略性抵抗 (Lee & Chan, 2009)。

在以上各種因素的交織之下，香港傳媒身處一個「局部審查」的狀態。主流媒體的政治新聞在整體上可能會傾向政府，對敏感議題或事件亦可能會進行淡化，對有利政府的消息反而報導得較積極。一些媒體亦可採取去政治化的策略，盡量不觸碰政治議題。但主流傳媒不可能對已經發生的、對社會影響重大的事情完全不作報導，主流傳媒內部的(有限的)多元性以及前線新聞工作者的努力，也為批判性的資訊和聲音保留了(有限的)空間。換句話說，主流媒體的自我審查是選擇性的。它們不需要亦不可能對所有的政治新聞進行全面的審查，視乎問題的敏感程度和其他新聞機構的做法，媒體會對一些政治和社會新聞的報導，在報導量、主動和積極程度、報導手法、語言使用等方面作出調較。

這裡要補充的是，縱使是民主國家的媒體，也並非處身在絕對自由的境況之中。西方的主流媒體，同樣受政治經濟結構的影響 (Bagdikian, 2000; McChesney, 1997)，而在政治經濟結構下發展出來的新聞生產常規，也常導致一種親建制的傾向 (Tuchman, 1978)。在這意義下，大部分國家的媒體，都在不同程度上身處局部審查的狀態。香港跟西方國家相比，不同的地方在於媒體系統所受的政治壓力較大和較直接，新聞

工作者的理念和權力擁有者的意識形態亦有較大的和較明顯的衝突。這使得局部審查成為一個特別顯著的問題。

在局部和選擇性審查的狀態下，當重大政治爭議和社會抗爭發生時，我們可以預期，主流傳媒的報導和評論一方面會在整體上傾向政府，但傳媒同時仍然承擔著基本的資訊傳播功能，亦因此在一定程度上仍然扮演著監察者和公眾屏幕的角色。所以，傳媒的表現會有其內部複雜性甚至內部矛盾，而這種複雜性和矛盾亦可能體現在傳媒對民意的影響上。但在提出具體的研究問題和假設前，我們需要提供個案的背景。

研究個案：雨傘運動和「暗角事件」

為了促使中國政府容許香港落實普選行政長官，香港大學法律學者戴耀廷在2013年1月提出了「佔領中環」的構思，要旨是通過佔領金融中心中環的主要街道，實踐非暴力的公民抗命。佔領中環原是一種刻意事先張揚的構想，目的在嘗試提高中央政府不容許香港落實普選的社會及經濟成本，迫使中央政府讓步。但在2014年8月31日，全國人大通過了有關香港特別行政區行政長官選舉方法的決議，規限選舉只能有兩至三名候選人，而每位想參選的人士都要先得到提名委員會過半的支持，才能成為候選人。同時，決議通過提名委員會的基本構成不變。香港一些傳媒以「落三閘」來形容人大決議案。對支持民主的香港市民來說，人大決議案無疑為中央政府對候選人進行政治篩選預留了很大的空間，因此未能保障不同政見人士的「被選舉權」，不符合民主選舉的「國際標準」。

戴耀廷隨即宣佈佔領中環事在必行。到了9月28日，在一個星期的大專學生罷課和抗議行動後，佔領中環正式開始，但運動的形態因警方在傍晚對示威群眾發射催淚彈而急速演變，一日之間，原本強調紀律和行動一致性的佔領中環，轉化為多地區和到最後持續了79天的公民抗命運動。運動名稱也因形態的轉化和國際傳媒的報導而改為「雨傘運動」。

本文分析部分的焦點在運動中警察的表現和形像上。在運動過程中，各個政治勢力劍拔弩張，警察和示威者亦處於對立關係，雙方大大小小的肢體衝突的畫面，每日佔據著各大傳媒的主要新聞版面。綜觀警方在整場運動中的表現，有兩次最具爭議性的行動。第一次就是上面提及的，警方在運動首日向示威民眾施放催淚彈。根據鄧鍵一的分析(Tang, 2015)，警方的催淚彈不但未能成功驅散群眾，通過傳媒的直播影像，警方發射催淚彈的行徑甚至在民眾之間產生了媒介化的即時怨憤(mediated instant grievances)，推動更多人上街。以本文的理論概念來討論，傳媒播放警方發射催淚彈的影像，從而激發民憤，正體現了大眾媒體的公眾屏幕功能及其可能產生的影響。由於電視媒體當日的報導是直播進行的，媒體難以對直播影像進行任何修改或審查，這亦體現了主流傳媒的自我審查的局限。

除了放射催淚彈外，另一件和警察有關的最具爭議性的事件，就是所謂「暗角事件」。10月14日晚上，示威者嘗試佔據金鐘政府總部旁的一條街道。15日凌晨，警方進行清場，將示威者驅趕至附近的添馬公園。期間，七名警察將一名示威者抬到公園一個較暗的角落，向他施以暴力近四分鐘。整個過程被傳媒拍下，得知該示威者為公民黨成員、註冊社工曾健超。事件曝光後，群情洶湧。在15日晚上，數百名社工遊行到警察總部外，抗議警察濫權執法。

拍下事件過程的無綫電視，在凌晨時分於24小時新聞台播出了片段，並以「拳打腳踢」來形容警方的行為。但到了清晨，無綫在新聞中刪除了「拳打腳踢」的字眼。無綫的做法惹來自我審查的批評，更觸發了過百名新聞部員工以公開信的形式表達不滿。「暗角事件」於是變成了雙重意義的醜聞，這亦使「暗角事件」特別適合用來展示局部審查下的公眾屏幕的特徵和影響。

由於分析集中在社會運動中警察的行為和形像之上，我們在這裡亦可補充一些雨傘運動以外的相關背景。從歷史觀點看，自上世紀70年代廉政公署成立，成功解決警察長期的貪污問題之後，香港警察在社會逐漸建立起正面形象(葉健民，2014)。當時政府亦開始透過大眾傳媒去促進警民關係。²到了80和90年代，不少電影和電視劇更成功

塑造香港警察正義、剛毅和果敢的形象。³但這些正面的發展亦代表香港市民對警察的預期有所提高，認為警察必會公正和專業地執法，保障市民安全。廣義一點，在香港的政治文化中，法治是市民擁護的核心價值。而所謂法治，除了法院的獨立性和一般市民奉公守法外，警察執法的專業性也是重要的一環。

在這背景下，警民衝突的冒起，令不少市民開始對警察的態度和評價有所轉變。過去十多年，香港示威活動越趨頻繁，成為了日常政治的一部分(李立峯、陳韜文，2013)。⁴一直以來，香港大部分抗爭行動都採取和平非武力的行動模式，示威的籌辦者亦多願意在事前跟警方溝通及合作(Lee, 2008)。自2003年7月1日的50萬人大遊行成功令政府擱置《基本法》廿三條(國家安全法)立法之後，香港公眾更奉「和平理性」的抗爭模式為楷模(Lee & Chan, 2011)。香港警察的執法模式亦與不少民主國家看齊，傾向柔性處理示威活動(della Porta & Reiter, 1998)。但隨著近年香港政治紛爭越益劇烈，這「有商有量」的機制已逐漸失效。一些新興的激進政治組織和部分民眾越發鄙視過往的、被戲謔為「和理非非」⁵的抗爭模式(Cheng, 2014)。他們認為，在政府日益無視民意的情況下，唯有激烈抗爭才能向當權者施壓。同時，亦不能排除政府及警方對遊行示威的管理模式本身轉向強硬。在兩者互為因果的情況下，警民衝突升溫。

根據香港大學民意研究計劃，在1997年下半年，有71.2%香港市民表示滿意警察表現。至2003年下半年，滿意度是75.4%。但自2011年開始，滿意度開始下跌。在2014年下半年，即雨傘運動期間，滿意度只有56.1%。⁶而近年每次激烈示威活動後，互聯網都充斥批評警察執法不公的言論，譬如諷刺他們為「香港公安」和「黑警」。⁷在這背景下，雨傘運動和「暗角事件」的發生，令警民關係面對再進一步的挑戰。

研究問題和假設

本研究旨在探討在「暗角事件」中，香港主流新聞傳媒如何在「局部審查」的狀態下扮演「公眾屏幕」的角色，以及其公眾屏幕功能所產生的

影響。首先，分析會展示香港的主流媒體如何報導「暗角事件」。可以預期的是，由於雨傘運動和「暗角事件」均屬敏感題材，除少數例外，大部分香港主流媒體對「暗角事件」中警察的行徑都會有淡化的傾向，但由於事件已經發生而且被電視台記錄下來，主流媒體又不能完全忽視警方的濫權行徑。所以，主流媒體對「暗角事件」的選擇性報導，應可以反映出主流媒體的局部審查狀態。筆者於是提出以下研究問題：

研究問題：香港主流傳媒如何呈現「暗角事件」？主流傳媒的選擇性報導如何反映出主流媒體的局部審查狀態？

更重要的，本研究希望了解主流傳媒對「暗角事件」的報導對民意的影響。由於香港政治文化中對法治的重視，民眾對警察的專業水平寄望甚殷，「暗角事件」被傳媒清楚拍攝，明確曝露了警察執法的問題。本文預期，主流媒體在「暗角事件」中也展示了公眾屏幕的功能和效應。故筆者有以下假設：

研究假設一：「暗角事件」經傳媒報道後，即時削弱了公眾對警察的信任度。

需要強調的是，假設一與一般媒體效應研究的假設不一樣，自變項並非個人層次的媒體使用量或關注度。當震撼性的影像被傳媒播放後，可能從社交媒體等不同的渠道向外擴散。所以，這些影像的影響並不取決於個人在一般情況下或事件發生當日花多少時間使用大眾媒體。只要一位市民在事發當天從某種渠道接觸到相關影像，他便有可能受到影響。因此，假設一指的是事件發生當天，香港公眾對警察的信任度會即時下降。這裡，與分析相關的自變項是訪問日期：在事件發生當天或之後的受訪者，會比事件發生之前的受訪者對警察更不信任。

不過，並不是所有人在看到跟「暗角事件」相關的影像時都一定會同樣強烈的反應。在自由社會，民意通常是多元的，不同社群對警察使用武力可以有不同觀感。從心理學中動機性推理 (motivated reasoning) 的觀點看，人們在處理新資訊時會傾向維護自己的既有世界觀和價值觀，因此不同取向的人對同樣的資訊的詮釋可以大相逕庭

(Gelpi, Roselle, & Barnett, 2013; Meirick, 2012)。既然「暗角事件」牽涉雨傘運動中政府和示威者的衝突，我們可以預期公眾的政治取向和對警察的原有態度，會影響他們對「暗角事件」的反應。筆者因而提出以下假設：

假設二：「暗角事件」對警察信任度的負面影響，在（一）民主派支持者、（二）雨傘運動支持者，和（三）一直對警方處理雨傘運動的手法反感的人士之間，會較為顯著。

上面提到，雖然香港大部分主流傳媒偏向建制，但仍存有少數支持民主運動的媒體。另外，雨傘運動的一個特點是有很強的「自我動員」(self-mobilization) 元素，許多運動參與者和支持者都在他們的社交媒體平台，大量傳送資訊和參與政治討論 (Lee & Chan, 2016)。支持運動的報章的讀者和多於社交媒體進行政治傳播的市民，不單可能較多及重覆地看到跟「暗角事件」相關的影像，支持運動的報章以及網絡傳播亦可能提供相關的詮釋框架，強化警察濫權的解讀。因此本文提出以下假設：

假設三：「暗角事件」對警察信任度的負面影響，在（一）經常閱讀支持雨傘運動的報章的讀者，和（二）在雨傘運動期間常在社交媒體上參與政治傳播活動的人士之間較為顯著。

假設一至三聚焦在「暗角事件」對民意的影響。如上所述，跟假設一至三相關的自變項是訪問日期。但另一方面，如果香港的主流媒體的確存在於一個局部審查的狀態，因而新聞內容在整體上會傾向建制的話，那麼日常和長期的主流媒體使用，很可能會使人們對政府和警察有較正面的觀感。所以，本文的最後一個假設為：

假設四：在個人層次上，主流傳媒的使用頻率，跟對警察的信任度呈正相關。

一併考慮，假設一至假設四預期主流媒體對民意可以有看似互相矛盾的影響。一方面，主流媒體的局部審查狀態，使媒體傾向建制，因而一般的主流媒體使用可能使民意傾向警方 (假設四)。但當特定事

件明顯地展示當權者的不當行為時，傳媒哪怕只是作出基本的報導，都可能足以使民眾對當權者有所批判(假設一)。

研究方法

為回答問題一，本研究選取了七份中文報章在「暗角事件」發生後三天(10月16日至18日)的相關文章作文本分析。七份報章為親民主派的《蘋果日報》，強調專業中立、而在雨傘運動期間較為支持運動的《明報》，親建制的《星島日報》、《經濟日報》和《東方日報》，以及黨報《文匯報》和《大公報》。⁸ 文本分析以質化方法進行，負責分析的研究助理仔細閱讀文章，嘗試找出報導如何通過重點的選擇、語言的運用和觀點的陳述，建構出事件的再現(re-presentation)。另外，電視新聞在事件中有關鍵角色，當中無綫電視即日的新聞報道因涉嫌自我審查而惹起爭議。分析部分會進一步重構和闡釋事件。

有關媒體如何影響民意的數據，則來自一個於2014年10月8日至15日(即「暗角事件」當日)，由香港中文大學傳播與民意調查中心進行的電話調查。調查隨機抽樣訪問15歲或以上的香港居民。電話號碼數據庫由2005、2007和2009年的家居電話簿匯編而成，所有電話號碼最後兩個數字由00至99的100組雙位數字取代，讓所有家居也包括在樣本框之中。在調查進行時，電腦隨機抽出號碼。訪問員邀請受訪家庭中最接近生日的成員接受訪問。調查的樣本數目為802，回應率根據AAPOR RR3計算為37%。分析時，數據按香港人口的性別、年齡和教育程度分佈進行了加權。

以下闡述一些主要變項的測量方法：

對政府和警察的信任度。調查分別問及受訪者對香港警方、香港特區政府和中國中央政府的信任程度，量度尺度為0-10分(0分代表完全不信任；10分代表完全信任)。對警方的信任度為分析中最重要的依變項(平均數 = 5.49，標準差 = 2.85)，對特區政府和中央政府的信任度(平均數 = 4.17和4.14，標準差 = 2.75和3.09)則用作分析「暗角事件」的影響會否普及至其他變項上。

對警察處理「雨傘運動」的方法的意見。調查分別問及受訪者認為警方施放催淚彈的決定，以及處理佔領和反佔領人士之間的衝突的表現是否恰當。答案以李克特五等級量表來表達，1代表非常不恰當，5代表非常恰當。兩個答案的平均值代表受訪者對警方處理運動的意見 ($r = .74$ ，平均數 = 2.58，標準差 = 1.30)。

對雨傘運動的支持度。調查問及受訪者是否支持當時發生中的「佔領運動」。⁹答案同樣以李克特五等級量表來表達，1代表非常不支持，5代表非常支持(平均數 = 2.94，標準差 = 1.47)。

新聞媒體使用。調查分別問及受訪者在訪問前兩、三星期，每日平均花多少時間閱讀本地報章(報章的網站也包括在內)和收看本地電視新聞。答案選項由1 = 不看、2 = 1-15分鐘、3 = 16-30分鐘，到6 = 61分鐘或以上。兩項答案的平均數就是「新聞媒體使用」的指標 ($r = .29$ ，平均數 = 4.12，標準差 = 1.37)。

社交媒體使用時間。受訪者被問及在訪問前兩、三星期，每日平均花多少時間使用如Facebook、Twitter等社交網站。答案選項為1 = 不用社交網站、2 = 1-60分鐘、3 = 61-120分鐘，到5 = 181分鐘或以上(平均數 = 2.04，標準差 = 1.19)。

社交媒體上的政治傳播。對於有使用社交媒體的受訪者，調查問到他們在訪問前兩、三個星期中有否使用社交媒體來(一)接收時事和政治資訊和(二)表達自己對時事或者政治的意見。調查亦詢問受訪者(三)多不多在社交媒體上加入有關時事或者政治的群組、(四)有沒有通過社交媒體留意一些政黨成員、社運人士和時事評論員的動態，和(五)有沒有在社交媒體上加入一些政黨成員、社運人士和時事評論員為「朋友」。以上問題均以五級量表來測量，1代表完全無，5代表非常多。五條題目的答案的平均數，就是「社交媒體上的政治傳播」這變項 ($\alpha = .70$)。把不使用社交媒體的受訪者的數值設定為1後，變項的平均值為1.75，標準差為0.84。

個人政治取向。調查要求受訪者界定自己屬於下列哪個政治派別：激進民主派、溫和民主派、建制派、工商派、親中派、中間派、其他派別，抑或是無任何政治傾向/不屬於任何派別。在調查進行時，

香港政治光譜主要分為民主和建制兩大陣營，所以我們將前兩者歸類為民主派支持者，而建制派、工商派和親中派則統稱為廣義的建制派支持者。¹⁰「中間派」並非一個實際存在的政治派別，該答案是為不視自己為民主派或建制派支持者的市民提供另一個選擇。為簡化分析，中間派、「其他派別」，和無傾向者歸納為同一組別。

所使用媒體的政治取向。調查問及受訪者在訪問前兩、三個星期中最經常閱讀哪一份報章。香港有約18份主要報章，但立場鮮明地支持民主派的只有《蘋果日報》。不過，強調專業和中立的《明報》，在報導政治議題時也往往有支持自由民主的傾向。相比之下，其餘報章的政治取態均較為保守。故此，以下的分析使用一個二分的「支持運動的報章」的變數，《蘋果日報》及《明報》的讀者為1，其餘則為0。這亦符合一些過往香港政治傳播效應研究的做法(Lee & Chan, 2011)。

控制變項。除了上述主要變項外，在以下多變項數據分析中用作控制變項的還包括四項人口特徵(性別、年齡、教育程度，和家庭收入)、人際政治討論(受訪者是否經常跟家人或親友討論佔領運動)、政治興趣(受訪者是否同意兩條關於他們對政治及公共事務的興趣的命題)、抗議行動參與經驗(受訪者參加過多少抗爭性集體行動，由五條題目測量)、內在效能感(即受訪者是否認為自己有能力理解和參與公共事務，由受訪者是否同意兩條相關命題測量)、外在效能感(即受訪者是否認為現行政治制度能有效地回應民意，測量為受訪者是否同意兩條相關的命題)，和集體效能感(即受訪者是否認同民眾作為一個集體行動者可以對社會產生影響，測量為受訪者是否同意兩條相關的命題)。文章空間所限，控制變項的操作化細節在此省略。

主流傳媒中的「暗角事件」

我們首先分析主流媒體如何報道「暗角事件」。傳媒作為「公眾屏幕」，電視新聞的影像效應至為關鍵。在「暗角事件」中，無綫電視拍攝到整個警察拖行和毆打示威者的片段，長約四分鐘，一段相關報導隨即在24小時新聞台播放。在整個凌晨的新聞報導中，旁白形容：「警員將他(曾健超)抬起，帶到添馬公園一個暗角位，將他放在地上，對他

拳打腳踢。期間兩名警員離開，留下的警員，繼續再用腳踢示威者。」但到早上七時，這段旁白被刪掉。到中午的新聞時段，才重新加入「期間懷疑警員對他使用武力」一句。新聞部主管其後解釋，「拳打腳踢」一詞屬主觀陳述，故修改內容純屬專業決定。不過，事件觸發內部員工不滿，當晚近60名記者和主播發出聯署信，公開反駁管理層，參與聯署的員工後來超越100人。在香港電視新聞界，此舉十分罕見。

除了內部員工，無綫新聞部對「暗角事件」的新聞的處理亦惹起同業和公眾關注。六個傳媒工會和組織發表聯合聲明，支持無綫前線記者，促請管理層勿自我審查。而負責監管電視台操守的政府部門通訊局，在10月15日亦收到250宗公眾投訴。雖然無綫嘗試刪改新聞內容，但在資訊開放的數碼時代，「原裝片段」早已被其他主流傳媒和網媒截獲。網民也紛紛在社交媒體瘋轉原來的報導版本，並把片段上載到YouTube。¹¹總的來說，無綫對該段新聞的處理，一方面有自我審查的強烈嫌疑，但另一方面卻弔詭地刺激公眾更加關注事件，並投入到有關事件的討論和傳播中。

「暗角事件」由電視新聞揭發和作即時報導，但事件後續發展則要靠報章跟進和分析。香港報章的政治立場壁壘分明，親建制和親民主派報章對事件有不同呈現。親建制報章的處理手法旨在淡化事件或為涉事警員辯解，這可見諸於幾方面。第一，一些親建制報章未有大肆報道事件。在16日至18日間，以被警方毆打的示威者名字作搜查，《東方日報》只有4篇文章，《經濟日報》有6篇，而《星島日報》有8篇，數量比《蘋果日報》的28篇和《明報》的15篇少得多，而且親建制報章上的相關文章大都置於內頁。有趣的是，理論上應該更緊貼政府路線的黨報《文匯報》和《大公報》，比《星島日報》等對事件有更多報導和論述。《文匯報》有11篇相關文章，《大公報》則有12篇（稍後會闡述原因）。

第二，在敘述「暗角事件」時，親建制報章會著重敘述事件的前因後果。誠然，從電視新聞片段可見，在「暗角事件」發生前，一名貌似曾健超的蒙面示威者站在高處，將手持容器內的液體潑向地面的警察。事後曾健超沒有清楚表明這名蒙面示威者是否他本人。但親建制報章卻認定，是曾健超先有此挑釁行為，後才有七位警察抬他至暗角

毆打的舉動，當中有些文章更指那些液體是尿液、糞水，甚至可能是易燃液體(如《大公報》，2014年10月16日；《文匯報》，2014年10月16日；《星島日報》，2014年10月16日)。這個「先撩者賤」的論述，旨在使警員的濫權行為變得合理，或至少可以被體諒。同時，透過指責曾健超的行為，保守傾向的主流媒體實際上也是在抨擊雨傘運動已經偏離了和平非暴力原則。

第三，親建制報章會強調曾健超的政治背景。譬如，《文匯報》和《大公報》稱他為「公民黨長毛」(《大公報》，2014年10月17日；卓偉，2014年10月16日)。「長毛」是立法會議員梁國雄的暱稱，其激進示威行為經常惹起社會反響。將曾健超和「長毛」相提並論，意指他同樣是滋事分子。另外，建制陣營對雨傘運動的基本描述，就是雨傘運動其實並非一場單純由學生以赤子之心推動的民主運動。相反，雨傘運動背後有各種政治力量甚至外國勢力的介入和推動，學生只是在無知之下被推上前線。另一種類似的論述則把政黨人士的出現，視為運動已被政黨「騎劫」的指標。所以，強調曾的政黨背景，符合建制派對整個運動的負面描述框架。

最後，親建制報章會嘗試化解事件的政治影響。譬如，一些親建制報章會在文章標題直接引述政府和警方的觀點，指當局會嚴肅處理事件，呼籲公眾不要把事情「政治化」(如《東方日報》，2014年10月17日；《星島日報》，2014年10月17日)。另外，上述提到，黨報《文匯報》和《大公報》較多報道和評論事件，因為它們嘗試引導輿論，藉以轉守為攻。在事件發生後，兩報刊登一些評論文章，從政治陰謀角度詮釋事件。譬如，它們質疑事件是民主派的「苦肉計」，藉此抹黑警隊，為運動扭轉劣勢(徐明，2014年10月16日；黎子珍，2014年10月16日)。更有文章質疑事件是美國背後策劃的陰謀(李繼亭，2014年10月17日)。

相比建制報章，親民主派、反政府的《蘋果日報》則大肆報道事件和斥責警察的不公。事件發生翌日，《蘋果日報》以頭版作報道，並以〈7魔警圍毆示威者4分鐘〉為題，內文更披露涉事警員的身分。上面提到，近年有香港市民形容警察為「黑警」，而這裡「魔警」的指控更見嚴

重。期後數天，《蘋果日報》繼續在文章標題使用這兩個形容詞，包括〈「魔警」橫行，迎面噴椒兼踩頭〉（2014年10月16日）、〈多名市民捱打，魔警豈止七個〉（2014年10月17日）、〈黑警瘋狂打人，更多鐵證曝光〉（2014年10月18日）。18日的社評則指出「暗角事件」反映了香港政府已經被「赤化」，以及香港警察已經「公安化」（李怡，2014）。

至於《明報》則堅持一貫相對強調專業中立的報導風格，譬如製作「暗角事件」時序表，讓讀者了解當晚示威的來龍去脈。另外，記者在報導中訪問了專科醫生，引證曾的傷勢很大可能是警察毆打所致。此外，論及警方對事件的立場時，《明報》也嘗試平衡警方高層內部鷹、鴿兩派的觀點，其中後者承認涉事警員確實犯錯，警方必須依法辦理。但值得指出的是，由於事件性質本身涉及明顯的過錯，《明報》只要「客觀地」鋪陳多方面的事實和資訊，就已經足以使警察如何濫用私刑曝露到讀者眼前。

總結而言，在「暗角事件」中，不同媒體對事件有不同呈現。一方面，很多主流報章對事件的淡化處理，體現了香港傳媒的局部審查狀態，對敏感事件作選擇性報導和詮釋。但另一方面，電視台播放的影像覆水難收，個別報章亦作出了跟進報導，保守傾向的報章可以嘗試淡化事件或作另類詮釋，但不能完全無視事件的發生，從這些層面看，主流媒體大體上仍然發揮了公眾屏幕的功能。

「暗角事件」對民意的影響

這部分將探討「暗角事件」經傳媒廣泛報道後對民意的影響。在檢測研究假設前，表一顯示民意調查期間香港市民對警察的觀感。就警方在9月28日施放催淚彈，大部分受訪者（57.6%）認為不恰當，只有兩成多（23.7%）認為恰當。另外，就警方處理佔領和反佔領人士之間的衝突場面，45.9%的受訪者認為不恰當，多於認為恰當的29%。至於對警察的信任度，以0-10分作量表，平均值是5.49分，可算是僅僅及格的中等水平。可見，香港公眾整體而言並不太滿意警察在雨傘運動中的表現。

表一 市民對警察的信任度和處理運動的手法的意見

	非常不恰當	不恰當	一般	恰當	非常恰當	平均值
施放催淚彈是否恰當	41.1	16.5	18.7	9.0	14.7	2.40
處理佔領人士同反佔領人士之間的衝突是否恰當	24.4	21.5	25.1	15.7	13.3	2.72
	0分	1-4分	5分	6-9分	10分	平均值
對警察的信任度	9.5	19.7	25.8	32.3	12.7	5.49

註：數字為有效答案的百分比。

要了解民意在「暗角事件」發生後的即時變化，我們可將10月15日參與調查的受訪者和之前一星期內的受訪者作比較。表二顯示，在「暗角事件」發生即日，受訪者對警察的信任度顯著下跌，平均分由之前幾天的5.59跌至4.99 ($t = 2.44, p < .05$)。不過，事件沒有影響受訪者對之前已經發生的事情的觀感。有關受訪者對當局「施放催淚彈」和「處理佔領人士同反佔領人士之間的衝突」的態度，甚至在表面上趨向更正面。不過，兩個轉變均未達統計學上的顯著程度。此外，公眾對特區政府和中央政府的信任度也沒有統計學上顯著的變化。當然，這些結果並不出奇，一次個別警察濫用武力的事件，大概不足以使市民改變對先前已經發生的事情的判斷，也不足以使市民對政府整體產生不信任。不過，結果同時展示，「暗角事件」對市民對警察的信任度有即時和顯著影響。分析結果跟研究假設一脛合。

表二 「暗角事件」發生前後市民對雨傘運動、政府和警察的態度

	10月8-14日	10月15日	t值
對警察的信任度	5.59	4.99	2.24*
施放催淚彈是否恰當	2.36	2.58	0.68
處理佔領人士同反佔領人士之間的衝突是否恰當	2.71	2.78	0.30
對特區政府的信任度	4.20	4.03	1.65
對中央政府的信任度	4.16	4.07	0.55

註：* $p < .05$ 。

為了更嚴謹地檢測研究假設，筆者進行了迴歸分析，用政治態度和媒體使用等變項解釋市民對警察的信任度。從表三的模式二可見，在一眾控制變項中，教育程度越高 ($\beta = .10, p < .01$) 和外在效能感越高 ($\beta = .17, p < .001$) 的受訪者越信任警察。政治態度方面，對雨傘運動支持度越高 ($\beta = -.19, p < .001$) 和對警方處理運動越反感 ($\beta = .45, p <$

.001) 的受訪者越不信任警察。不過，在控制了對雨傘運動支持度和對警方處理運動的判斷之後，政治派別本身對警察信任度並沒有顯著的影響。

表三 對警察的信任度的迴歸分析

	模型一： 人口特徵和政治態度	模型二： 加上媒體使用及訪問日
性別	.02	.03
年齡	.04	-.02
教育程度	.11***	.10**
家庭收入	.04	.06
參與抗議行動經驗	-.07*	-.04
政治興趣	.03	.03
內在效能感	-.06*	-.05
集體效能感	-.01	.00
外在效能感	.18***	.17***
ΔR^2	.36***	
民主派支持者	.02	.01
建制派支持者	.02	.02
對雨傘運動的支持度	-.20***	-.19***
對警方處理運動的意見	.43***	.45***
ΔR^2	.19***	
新聞媒體使用		.09***
閱讀支持運動的報章		.00
社交媒體使用時間		.03
社交媒體上的政治傳播		-.11**
人際討論		-.05
訪問日期 (15日 = 2)		-.09***
ΔR^2		.02***
經調整的 R^2 值	.54***	.56***

註：數值為標準化迴歸係數。* $p < .05$ ；** $p < .01$ ；*** $p < .001$ 。

在媒體使用方面，結果顯示，使用越多主流新聞媒體（報章和電視）的受訪者，對警察的信任度越高 ($\beta = .09, p < .001$)。這結果支持了研究假設四，主流傳媒整體而言的保守傾向，的確對慣常使用主流媒體的市民產生影響。不過，最常閱讀支持運動的報章的受訪者對警察

的信任度，和其他受訪者沒有顯著差別 ($\beta = .00, p > .05$)。在社交媒體使用方面，純粹花多少時間在社交媒體上，亦沒有影響受訪者對警察的信任 ($\beta = .03, p > .05$)。但在社交媒體上進行政治傳播行為則有顯著影響：越多在社交媒體上進行政治傳播的受訪者，對警察的信任度越低 ($\beta = -.11, p < .01$)。這結果符合其他有關雨傘運動研究的結果 (Lee, So, & Leung, 2015)。

最後，表三顯示，縱使在眾多控制變項同時加到迴歸模型後，在「暗角事件」發生當天接受訪問的受訪者，對警察的信任度仍較其他受訪者低 ($\beta = -.09, p < .001$)。換句話說，先前的雙變項分析結果，在多變項分析中再次得到印證，為研究假設一提供了紮實的支持。

上述結果展示了「暗角事件」令公眾整體而言對警察的信任度趨向負面。但研究假設二及三預期，事件的影響可能在不同群組之中不一樣。就政治取向而言，假設二預期「暗角事件」會較程度地削弱以民主派支持者、雨傘運動支持者，和一直對警方處理雨傘運動的手法反感的人士對警察的信任。分析以樣本分割法 (split-sample approach) 進行，即把樣本依假設涉及的變項分為不同組別，然後在不同組別中進行同一個迴歸分析，分析重點在於用來表達「暗角事件」的影響的訪問日期變項，會否在不同組別的迴歸分析中對警察信任度有不同程度的影響，所以表四第一欄顯示的，是在使用表二的迴歸模型時 (只減去了用來分組的變項)，訪問日期在不同次樣本中所得的迴歸系數。

表四 訪問日期與警察信任度在不同組別裡的迴歸分析

	完整的迴歸模型中 訪問日期的迴歸系數	簡化的迴歸模型中 訪問日期的迴歸系數
政治傾向		
民主派支持者	-.10*	-.10*
中間派/無傾向	-.11**	-.11**
建制派支持者	-.04	-.08
對運動的支持度		
支持者	-.13**	-.16**
中立/無意見者	-.04	-.03
反對者	-.10*	-.12
對警方處理運動的意見		
支持者	.03 ^{ab}	-.02 ^a

表四 (續)

	完整的迴歸模型中 訪問日期的迴歸系數	簡化的迴歸模型中 訪問日期的迴歸系數
中立/無意見者	-.21* ^a	-.15
反對者	-.14*** ^b	-.17*** ^a
最常閱讀的報章		
不支持運動的報章	-.05 ^a	-.05 ^a
支持運動的報章	-.17*** ^a	-.17*** ^a
社交媒體上的政治傳播		
沒有	-.07	-.07*
有	-.11**	-.12***

註：數值為訪問日期變項在各次樣本中的迴歸分析裡所得的標準化迴歸系數。第二欄基於一個簡化的迴歸模型，只包括年齡、教育程度、是否支持雨傘運動、對警方處理運動的意見，和訪問日期。在同一欄裡，兩個迴歸系數有同一個英文字母上標，代表兩個相應的非標準化系數之間有統計學上的顯著差異。* $p < .05$ ；** $p < .01$ ；*** $p < .001$ 。

不過，由於在分組分析中，一些組別的實際樣本數較小，嚴格而言不適合進行有太多變項的迴歸分析，表四第二欄展示了運用一個簡化的迴歸模型所得的結果（模型只包括年齡、教育程度、是否支持雨傘運動、對警方處理運動的意見，和訪問日期）。表四兩欄的結果基本一致，所以我們可集中就第一欄的結果作討論。

首先，訪問日期對警察信任度的影響在民主派支持者中 ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .05$) 和在中間派或無政治傾向的受訪者中 ($\beta = -.11$, $p < .01$) 均達至統計學上的顯著程度。訪問日期對警察信任度的影響，在建制派支持者中雖然也屬負面，但系數並未達至顯著水平 ($\beta = -.04$, $p > .05$)。這符合研究假設的預期。不過，三個迴歸系數之間的差異並未達至統計學上的顯著水平，嚴格而言，結果未能為假設二提供充分支持。

同樣地，「暗角事件」在較大程度上削弱了運動支持者對警察的信任 ($\beta = -.13$, $p < .01$)，但就算是反對運動的受訪者，也受到事件一定的影響 ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .05$)。除此之外，如果受訪者對警方先前處理運動的手法持反對或中立的態度，他們對警察的信任度就會受到「暗角事件」的影響 ($\beta = -.14$ 和 $-.21$, $p < .05$)。相比之下，如果受訪者支持警方先前處理運動的手法，他們就不會受到事件的影響。這符合了假設二的預期。總結來說，分析結果部分地融合假設二的預期。雖然「暗角事

件」的影響似乎具一定程度的普遍性，但對民主派和運動支持者以及本身已經不滿意警方表現的市民中更明顯。

另外，就受訪者的媒體使用而言，假設三預期「暗角事件」會在較大程度上影響到以下受眾群體對警察的信任度：(一)經常閱讀支持雨傘運動的報章的讀者，和(二)有在社交媒體上參與政治傳播的人士。表四的結果顯示，事件只能顯著地影響到最常閱讀支持運動的報章的受訪者 ($\beta = -.17, p < .001$)，閱讀其他報章的受訪者則沒有顯著地受到影響 ($\beta = -.05, p > .05$)，兩個迴歸系數之間有統計學上顯著的差異。同時，「暗角事件」也只能影響有在社交媒體上進行政治傳播活動的受訪者 ($\beta = -.11, p < .01$)，沒有在社交媒體上進行政治傳播活動的受訪者則未顯著地受影響 ($\beta = -.07, p > .05$)。雖然後兩個迴歸系數之間沒有統計學上的顯著差異，但整體而言，研究結果和假設三呈現了高度的一致性。

結論與討論

在社會運動中，傳媒是不同勢力的政治角力場所 (Gamson, 2004)。面對資源充足的當權者，示威者往往在輿論戰中處於弱勢。主流傳媒雖然深嵌於政治經濟結構當中，但其專業理念和自身的運作邏輯，使它仍能承擔著一定的資訊傳播甚至是監察社會的功能，從而對社會運動的傳播和動員起正面作用。本文借用並修改 Deluca 和 Peebles (2002) 的分析，提出公眾屏幕 (public monitor) 的概念，但同時強調主流傳媒的局部審查狀態，嘗試以此概括主流傳媒在大型社會運動中的角色。

分析以香港雨傘動中的「暗角事件」個案，探討香港新聞媒體如何充當一個「局部審查下的公眾屏幕」。香港傳媒的這個角色反映在以下幾個層面。首先，我們可以從傳媒如何報導及評論「暗角事件」，看出大部分香港主流傳媒的親建制立場。一些親建制報章意圖淡化事件，黨報嘗試質疑事件背後的政治動機，而無綫電視更採取了極具自我審查嫌疑的手法修改已經播出的報導。不過，無綫還是披露了事件本身，而少數敢言和專業的傳媒仍堅守崗位，對警方加以批評，傳媒監察的力量仍能局部彰顯。

在傳媒機構內部，無綫電視的事件顯示，香港一些新聞傳媒高層

有自我審查的傾向，但前線記者當日凌晨所作的決定及得知高層修改報導內容之後的反應，卻反映了新聞審查的動力還主要局限在機構的中、上層，未完全滲透到下層。除此之外，在新聞傳送層面，新媒體科技是整個事件的關鍵之一。在某種意義上，「暗角事件」得以迅速曝光，蓋因24小時新聞台的運作爭分奪秒，警察施虐的片段從採訪現場傳送回新聞部，很快就播出。而事件剛巧發生在凌晨時分，亦令新聞部高層未能當場把關。而當影片公開後，網媒和社交媒體隨即扮演推波助瀾的角色，甚至成為原裝報導在被電視台修改後繼續流傳的平台。

基於上述各種因素，在「暗角事件」中，香港新聞傳媒難以作出粗暴和公然的審查行為（如完全不報道或顛倒事件真相），而只能作出技術性的局部審查和選擇性的報導，例如刪減新聞的篇幅或某些字眼，調配版面位置，和選取報道角度等等。這乃因警察濫權行為證據確鑿，就連親建制媒體也沒有否認，而且警方在執法時使用過分武力，違反了市民對警察公正和專業執法的期望。在政治文化層面，警察的行為甚至可被視為衝擊了法治的核心價值。所以傳媒不能對事件視而不見。總結而言，因分眾多元的傳媒市場、前線新聞工作者的專業主義、活躍的公民社會，以及蓬勃的新媒體，香港傳媒縱使在局部審查的狀態下，仍能在特定的時刻發揮公眾屏幕的功能。

從民調結果看到，「暗角事件」的影響是顯著的。公眾在得悉事件後，對警察的信任度即時下跌。當然，在個人層次上，市民仍然可對相關影像和報導有不同的詮釋，分析亦顯示，「暗角事件」的影響在運動的支持者、本身不滿警察對運動的處理手法的人士、支持運動的報章的讀者，和積極參與社交媒體政治傳播的網民中尤其顯著。這些都符合動機性推理的預期。但值得強調的是，對警察信任度下跌，並不完全局限於堅實的反政府人士。就連自認為中間派或沒有政治取向的市民、對警方處理運動手法持中立態度的市民，甚至是反對雨傘運動的市民，都受到事件影響。這大概是因為「暗角事件」本身的性質和涉及的影像，其實並沒有太大的另類詮釋的空間。

雖然本文的經驗分析只集中在「暗角事件」和市民如何評價警方，但局部審查下公眾屏幕這概念，應可以用來概括香港媒體在整場運動中的角色和功能。我們沒有理由認為大部分主流傳媒的親建制傾向只

局限於「暗角事件」，因為局部審查本身就是香港媒體身處的一種狀態 (Lee & Chan, 2009; Lee, 2015)。同時，雨傘運動中傳媒的公眾屏幕功能，也並非只體現在「暗角事件」中。文章早前就提及，傳媒在9月28日直播警方向示威者發射催淚彈，觸發更大義憤和更多人到街上參與行動 (Tang, 2015)，也是公眾屏幕效應的一次體現。而在「暗角事件」後，香港警方開始變得較為低調，直至運動最後階段部分示威者把行動升級之前，再沒有嚴重的警民衝突發生，一些論者就指警方吸取了催淚彈和「暗角事件」的教訓，行動變得謹慎，但這亦正體現了傳媒作為公眾屏幕，它的存在本身就可能促使當權者重新考慮其行動和策略。

本研究是香港個案，但研究提出的理論觀點和分析結果對其他地方也有一定啟示。正如概念部分已經指出，縱使在民主國家，傳媒與建制的緊密關係，亦使媒體不可能真正完全獨立於權力以外 (Bagdikian, 2000)。另外，環顧世界各地，享有高度新聞自由的社會其實只屬少數，許多國家都是處於半民主半自由狀態。在一些有局部新聞自由而法制不彰的地方，民眾一直要依賴主流傳媒和新媒體的結合來監察政府和警察濫權 (Bonner, 2009; Toepfl, 2011)。廣義地說，本文的出發點之一，是我們需要一些概念來形容和分析主流媒體如何在作為當權者進行社會控制的工具的同時 (Chan & Lee, 1984; Gitlin, 1980)，又可以在特定的情況和條件下對權力進行監察和批判。「局部審查下的公眾屏幕」指向的就是主流傳媒的這種雙重性格。在分析其他國家中主流媒體和社會運動的關係時，我們需要關注的也是這雙重性格：就算是在社會運動常態化的今天，主流傳媒的保守取向不見得會完全消失。但若我們假定主流媒體一定會對社會運動有負面報導和影響，大概會忽視媒體系統和實際運作的複雜性，也很可能會忽視了媒體對社會運動可能具備的複雜甚至矛盾的影響。

當然，不同地區的主流媒體所受到的「局部審查」程度不一樣，其公眾屏幕功能的程度和表現形式也可能不一樣。這都是比較研究可以處理的問題。另外，正如文章在討論個案背景時指出，「暗角事件」產生影響，有其社會和政治文化背景。事實上，重視自己的第四權身分的媒體，都會嘗試揭發當權者的不當行為，但在不同的社會中，甚麼算是不當行為，卻可能不太一樣。例如有關政治醜聞的研究，就指出

不同類型的醜聞在不同國家中的出現頻率並不一致 (Esser & Hartung, 2004)。傳媒如何在不同的政治文化中在社會運動發生時扮演公眾屏幕這角色，是值得進一步分析的題目。

從分析方法的角度看，本文的另一個啟示，是我們需要以多種角度思考如何分析媒體效應。傳統的媒介效應研究以個人層次的媒體使用頻率作自變項，背後的基本假定，是媒體使用量越大的人，越可能吸收到會產生某種影響的媒體內容或資訊。但媒體效應其實不一定要通過個人化的內容接收而出現，當媒體報導了某些事情和公開了某些資訊時，如果這些資訊有高度的重要性，它們可能在短時間內通過人際溝通或互聯網等不同渠道滲透到整個社會中。這種情況下，媒體產生了甚麼影響，就不在乎個人層次的媒體使用，因為是否經常使用新聞媒體和有沒有接觸到該些資訊沒有很大的關係。所以，本文分析媒體的公眾屏幕效應時，所用的變項是訪問日期。不過，如果主流傳媒沒有對「暗角事件」作出報導，香港市民對警察的觀感，就不會在一天之內突然有所轉變，所以結果顯示的仍是一種主流媒體報導所產生的效應。

本文雖然旨在分析主流媒體的功能，但亦同時強調新媒體科技的作用。如果沒有24小時新聞頻道，媒體報導出來的「暗角事件」，有可能一開始就是一個高度淡化了的版本。如果沒有社交媒體，「暗角事件」所產生的反響，很可能就失去一個表達和發酵的場所。所以，新媒體科技其實強化了主流媒體的公眾屏幕功能，這觀點並不把新媒體和傳統媒體視為對立。的確，新媒體的出現，在一些方面為傳統媒體帶來嚴峻的挑戰，如讀者人數和廣告量下降、進而帶來經營模式的問題等。但在特定的問題上，新媒體科技和傳統媒體可以相輔相成。在一個整合的媒體環境中，主流媒體某些方面的社會影響可能會變得更為顯著。

最後，值得指出的是，本文並不建基於一個事前設計的研究。這其實並不罕見——很多社會和政治事件都無法預測，只能嘗試事後搜集數據作分析。但如果研究媒體與社會運動的學者對媒體作為局部審查下的公眾屏幕有所關注的話，可以在一次社會運動開始時，就加緊關注媒體自我審查的蛛絲馬跡，以及在一些突發性事件發生時，即時

關注網絡討論和媒體內容如何在網上流傳，事後亦可進行更系統的媒體內容分析和跟新聞工作者作深度訪談。資源所限，這些工作超出了本研究的範圍，但未來的研究者可以考慮這些方法，以對媒體在社會運動中的角色作更深入和豐富的分析。

註釋

- 1 在2013年開始的第十二屆全國政協中，共有299名常務委員，其中16被列為香港地區人士。這16人中，跟傳媒關係密切的有鳳凰衛視董事局主席劉長樂、擁有的新城電台的長江和記實業集團聯席董事總經理李澤鉅、長期擔任九龍倉集團(即有線電視所附屬的集團)董事局主席的吳光正、星島新聞集團董事會主席何柱國，和亞洲電視前行政總裁陳永祺。
- 2 1973年，香港警務處成立公共關係科，並開始聯同香港電台製作名為《警訊》的電視節目，每週介紹警方如何打擊罪案，除暴安良(何家騏、朱耀光，2011，頁201-204)。同時，香港電台播放廣受歡迎的實況生活劇《獅子山下》，當中不少劇目講及警察如何和市民建立良好關係。
- 3 其中最具代表性的包括成龍的《警察故事》系列電影、梁朝偉主演的電視劇《新紮師兄》以及劉德華主演的電視劇《獵鷹》。
- 4 根據香港警務處統計，公眾遊行和集會數目，由2005年的1,900宗大幅增至2014年的6,818宗(http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_tc/09_statistics/poes.html)。
- 5 即和平、理性、非暴力和非粗口。
- 6 數據來自香港大學民意研究計劃網站：<http://hkupop.hku.hk>。
- 7 在中國大陸，警察傳統上被稱為「公安」。一直以來，香港警察都是中國內地警察制度的學習對象，尤其是它的現代管理制度和專業精神(Lo, 2012)。「香港公安」一詞出現在公共論述中，反映部分香港民眾對香港警察專業水平的質疑。另外，「黑警」一詞是指香港警察的行為與黑社會無異，更甚是指警察和黑社會勾結。
- 8 研究助理在慧科新聞搜索引擎輸入關鍵詞「曾健超」(即事件中被打的示威者)，獲取89篇文章，包括社評、新聞報道和評論文章。經仔細閱讀後，刪減無關的文章，最後獲得85篇文章作分析之用。
- 9 「雨傘運動」一詞多為國際傳媒和本地一些支持民主運動的傳媒和人士所採用，而若干建制傳媒和人士則貶斥運動為「非法(或違法)佔領(或堵路)行動」。這次調查問卷採用了較中性的「佔領運動」一詞。

- 10 自80年代過渡期間迄今，香港工商界一直是北京和香港政府籠絡的對象，故它是建制派的一員。有關香港的官商關係，可參見Goodstadt (2005)。
- 11 多條片段仍然存放在YouTube上，其中一條為<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvsrEF3gp-U>。截至2015年12月28日為止，該片段的觀看次數為520,028次。

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News Media as the Public Monitor in a Large-scale Protest Campaign: The Case of Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement

Francis L. F. LEE

Introduction

Social movements are aimed at advancing the interests and rights of specific social groups or the entire society through organizing collective actions and communicating information and viewpoints to targeted groups, stakeholders, and the public (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001). Traditionally, because of limited resources, social movement organizers have had to rely on the mass media to disseminate information, extend the reach of their messages, and mobilize people (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; Gamson, 2004). However, the media often have failed to provide an objective platform for such communications because of various constraints, including their structural linkages with political economic power, organizational policies and culture, and news production routines. Hence, the media coverage of protests often exhibits various kinds of “biases” (McCarthy, McPhail, & Smith, 1996; Ryan, 1991; Smith, McCarthy, McPhail, & Augustyn, 2001). For instance, media coverage tends to rely on official sources, highlight violent conflicts, and focus on protesters who behave and/or dress strangely. Less attention is paid to the substantive issues that motivate the protests. Consequently, social protests are portrayed as irrational, deviant, and illegitimate (Boykoff, 2006; Chan & Lee, 1984; Gitlin, 1980; McLeod & Hertog, 1998; Small, 1995).

Nevertheless, the changing political reality has led some scholars to reconsider the above critique of the mainstream media. In many democracies, social movements and collective actions have become accepted as components of the political process (Meyer & Tarrow, 1998). As social movements become normalized, media representations of protests become more varied (Cottle, 2008). In Hong Kong, Lee (2014) also showed that the media coverage of protests has become less negative over time. In addition to the broad social and cultural changes that might have led to higher levels of social acceptance of protests, journalists' professional norms prevent the media from becoming merely the servants of political and economic power.

Whether the media would exhibit biases against a specific protest would likely depend on numerous factors, including the nature of the protest, the form of actions undertaken, the level of public concern, the public's stance on the issue behind the protest, and so on. Because the media are overdetermined by various sources of influence, how they cover and affect a protest movement could also be complex and even contradictory.

Against this background, this study explores Hong Kong media's performance and its influence on public opinion during the Umbrella Movement. Specifically, the media's role is discussed as a "partially censored public monitor" in a large-scale protest movement. On one hand, the mainstream media serve as a public monitor by upholding the responsibilities of transmitting information, reporting facts, and monitoring the power holders to prevent or expose the abuse of power. On the other hand, the mainstream media are embedded in the dominant political economic structure. The Hong Kong media, in particular, have long existed under the condition of "partial censorship." Hence, the media may also generally exhibit a pro-establishment bias.

The following will first further explicate the public monitor role of the media and the partially censored character of the Hong Kong press. The article then discusses the case to be analyzed. Since the Umbrella Movement is an extended campaign, it is difficult to examine the performance and impact of the media in the movement as a whole. The empirical analysis of this article will focus on a prominent scandal of police violence during the movement. The analysis examines how the media covered the incident and how media coverage influenced public opinion. The concluding section discusses the implications of the findings.

Literature Review and Conceptualization

News media as a public monitor

Deluca and Peebles (2002) articulated the concept of the "public screen" in their study of the 1999 anti-WTO protests in Seattle. Differing from the emphasis on consensus and rational argumentation in the Habermasian notion of the public sphere, these authors emphasized the power of media images in shaping public opinion about and motivating participation in social conflicts. When covering protests, the media often exhibit a tendency toward

sensationalism through highlighting violent conflict. Many scholars have treated this tendency as an indicator of the media's conservative bias (Chan & Lee, 1984; McLeod & Hertog, 1998) or of market-driven journalism (McManus, 1994). Deluca and Peeples (2002), however, contended that protesters' issues and demands are not necessarily undermined when the media transmit sensational images. Instead, such images can capture people's attention and defamiliarize the familiar. As the public pays more attention to the issue, the follow-up coverage by the media could allow the public to understand the current events and the ideas that underlie the protests. Although the protesters' concerns may not be truthfully or fully reflected in the news (Batziou, 2015; Cammaerts, 2013; Cottle, 2008; McHendry, 2012), extensive coverage does offer a window of opportunity for protesters to communicate to the public.

Because of the power of the public screen, the various parties involved in a movement, including the movement's target, need to maintain their media images carefully. The media can be used as tools by the authorities to exercise social control. However, they can also monitor the authorities, which can constrain the government's exercise of power. For instance, previous studies have shown that the presence of media in sites of conflict can lead the police to refrain from using excessive physical violence in order to avoid the dissemination of images of injured protesters, which could arouse public outrage and undermine the legitimacy of the authorities (Lawrence, 2000; Marx, 1998; Wisler & Giugni, 1999). In their discussion of the Arab Spring, Howard and Hussain (2013) also pointed out that many protesters believed that the presence of Al Jazeera helped prevented the Egyptian government from sending troops to suppress the protests. In other words, the media's influence is realized not only through what images they show; the media's influence is also realized through how certain images because of how the media's presence has affected the actions of people and organizations.

This study was inspired by Deluca and Peeples (2002), but it extends the concept of public screen to include the concept of public monitor. The words monitor and screen both refer to a device used to present images. However, the term monitor directly indicates the media's role in monitoring both society and its power holders to prevent the abuse of power. The latter, of course, is tied to the media's role as watchdog and, in the liberal theory of the press, to the fourth estate. Hence, the term public monitor captures a broad and rich conception of the role of the media.

Moreover, the term monitor is associated with Schudson's (1999) concept of the "monitorial citizen." Schudson argues that, in hectic modern society, it is unrealistic to expect all citizens to have a full grasp of all public affairs or to participate in politics constantly. However, people are not completely apathetic but keep track of social events via the media. When important issues arise, the media act like a burglar alarm, calling people's attention to the matter (Zaller, 2003). This understanding of the public's capability and the relationship between the media and the public is consistent with the notion of former as public monitor: the media are the most capable of attracting public attention and arousing debate when they cover critical news events, such as large-scale social and political conflicts.

Notably, Deluca and Peebles (2002) developed the concept of public screen when traditional mass media institutions still dominated the media landscape. However, the media's ecology has profoundly changed because of technological advancements, and social movements have become entrenched in new mediation opportunity structures (Cammaerts, 2012). Social movement organizers and supporters no longer rely solely on the mass media. Instead, they strategically employ digital and social media to distribute information and conduct mobilization (Deluca, Lawson, & Sun, 2012; Poell & Borra, 2011).

Because this study focuses on the mass media, the influence of digital media on social protests will not be discussed in detail. However, two points should be noted. First, the term "mass media" refers only to communication platforms but also to resourceful organizations that specialize in content production. They have the advantages of credibility and audience recognition. To a significant extent, society still relies on these resourceful organizations to collect and generate relevant information and content when important social and political events occur.

Second, digital media and mass media are not disconnected domains. Instead, they are intertwined to form an integrated news system (Chadwick, 2011). Materials shared via digital media are often generated by the mass media. Hence, digital media communications can extend the reach of mass media contents. Moreover, because people can share and comments on mass media contents in social media, they are no longer passive content receivers but active participants in the communication process, which could encourage them to consider media content seriously and deeply. Therefore, digital media strengthen the mainstream media's role as public monitor.

The Hong Kong news media under partial censorship

Hong Kong enjoys a tradition of press freedom despite its lack of democracy. During the transition period between 1984 and 1997, the relative balance of power between China and Britain allowed the Hong Kong media to stand on the ground of local interests and criticize both sides of the political divide (Chan & Lee, 1991). However, as the handover approached, the balance of power became more and more uneven, and China started to coopt media owners in Hong Kong. Since the handover, with a few exceptions, most media owners in the city have vast business interests in the mainland. Some also hold formal political titles in China, such as being members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) (Ma, 2007).¹

Concerns about press freedom arose as the media began to shift toward a "pro-China" stance (Lai, 2007). Under the "one country, two systems" policy, the Chinese government cannot directly and openly control the Hong Kong press, but it can exert influence through the owners or other informal means, such as openly criticizing unfavorable coverage or urging corporations not to advertise on certain "uncooperative" media outlets. These strategies are aimed to induce self-censorship (Hong Kong Journalists Association, 2014; Lee, 2015). In fact, journalists regard self-censorship as an increasingly serious problem (Lee & Chan, 2009). Pro-democracy citizens also express negative evaluations of the press. For instance, TVB, the dominant free-to-air television broadcaster in the city, is labelled "CCTVB" (with CCTV referring to China Central Television) by disgruntled netizens.

Nevertheless, considered as a whole, the Hong Kong media system has not completely forsaken professionalism and social responsibility. Several factors have prevented the media from succumbing totally to political power. First, most Hong Kong media organizations are commercial enterprises. They cannot deviate too widely from public opinion. Second, market forces have ensured the survival of a few pro-democracy media outlets (e.g. *Apple Daily*) as well as media platforms that allow the public to voice their criticisms of the power holders (e.g. radio phone-in programs). When issues are publicized through these outlets and platforms, other media outlets are compelled to follow.

Third, Hong Kong has an open information system and an open internet that allows the free flow of information from around the world. When information has entered the public arena through different channels, the

mainstream media find it difficult to ignore them. Furthermore, in recent years, there has been a significant increase in online alternative media in Hong Kong, which challenges the dominant discourses of the mainstream media (Leung & Lee, 2014). To a certain extent, the rise of online alternative media could lead the mainstream media to refrain from unscrupulous self-censorship.

Fourth, most journalists in Hong Kong continue to adhere to the liberal conception of journalistic professionalism. They emphasize the independence of the media from political economic power and the media's role in transmitting information and monitoring the society (Chan, Lee, & So, 2012). As political economists have pointed out, within complex organizations, although the owners and senior managers have the power to allocate resources, they cannot control all the details of daily operations. Thus, journalists enjoy a certain degree of operational freedom in daily work (Murdoch, 1982). Furthermore, professionalism remains the common standard within news organizations. Attempts at self-censorship often need to be couched in professional or technical terms, which allows experienced journalists to employ resistance tactics in the face of suspected attempts at self-censorship (Lee & Chan, 2009).

For the above reasons, the Hong Kong media are under a condition of "partial censorship." Political news disseminated by the mainstream media may exhibit an overall pro-government bias. The media may minimize negative and sensitive news but be proactive in reporting news that favors the government. Some media may adopt the strategy of de-politicization. However, the media cannot ignore important events. The (limited) diversity of the mainstream media and the frontline journalist's efforts have helped retained the (limited) space for the expression of critical voices. In other words, self-censorship by the mainstream media is selective. They cannot and do not need to censor all political news. Depending on the degree of sensitivity of the topic and the actions of other media organizations, media outlets could adjust the prominence and style of the news coverage of certain social and political events, the use of language, and the degree to which they actively pursue the story.

It should be added that in democratic systems, the media do not enjoy absolute freedom. In Western democracies, the mainstream media are also embedded in the dominant political economic structure of the society (Bagdikian, 2000; McChesney, 1997). Moreover, the news routines

developed in democratic contexts also tend to be biased in favor of the establishment (Tuchman, 1978). Hence, in most countries, the media are subject to different degrees of censorship. Compared to Western democracies, Hong Kong faces a higher degree of direct political pressure, and there are more overt conflicts between the values of professional journalists and the ideologies of the owners. Hence, partial censorship is particularly conspicuous in Hong Kong.

Under partial censorship, when important political events occur, we can expect mainstream media coverage to exhibit an overall pro-government bias and to uphold the basic function of information dissemination at the same time. The latter allows the media to continue to play the role of the public monitor. Hence, we can expect internal complexities or even contradictions in the media's performance and influence.

Case Study: Umbrella Movement and the “Dark Corner” Incident

To pressure the Beijing government to grant Hong Kong “genuine democracy,” in January 2013, Hong Kong University law professor Benny Tai proposed the idea of “Occupy Central,” which was a non-violent civil disobedience campaign in which people would occupy the main roads in the financial district Central to disrupt the operation of the financial center. However, China stood firm on the matter of the democratization of Hong Kong. On 31 August 2014, the National People's Congress (NPC) announced the framework of the election of Hong Kong's Chief Executive in 2017. In the framework, only two or three candidates would be allowed to stand, each candidate should have the support of more than half of the members of the nomination committee, and the composition of the nomination committee would remain unchanged. Local media described the NPC's decision as “closing three gates.” For the supporters of democratization, the NPC decision effectively allowed China to pre-select the candidates for the popular vote. It failed to honor people's right to be elected and hence violated international standards of a “genuine popular election.”

In response to the NPC decision, Tai declared that Occupy Central would be implemented. On September 28, after a week of university class boycotts and student protests, Occupy Central was formally launched.

However, the form of the campaign took an unexpected turn when the police fired tear gas into the protesting crowd that afternoon. Within 24 hours, the protest evolved from the original idea of a highly disciplined collective action into the occupation of multiple districts. The campaign also received the new label of the “Umbrella Movement.”

The empirical analysis of this case focuses on the police’s performance and the images of the Umbrella Movement. The police and the protesters engaged in both major and minor conflicts throughout the occupation. There were also criticisms against the police’s handling of conflicts that took place between the protesters and the counter-protesters. However, two incidents stood out as the most prominent and controversial. The first was the aforementioned use of tear gas on September 28. As Tang (2015) pointed out, not only did the tear gas fail to disperse the crowd but also the mediated images of tear gas flying over the urban landscape generated “mediated instant grievances” among the watching public and mobilized more people to participate in the movement. The media coverage of the use of tear gas and its effect of mobilization constitute an example of the media’s function and influence as a public monitor. Because the protests were broadcast live on television, the media could not censor them. Hence, the incident also demonstrated the limits of media self-censorship.

The second major controversy surrounding the police was the so-called “dark corner incident.” On the night of October 14, a group of protesters attempted to occupy the roads outside the Central Government offices. When the police began to disperse the crowd and pushed the protesters back to a nearby park, seven police officers were caught on camera beating an activist in a “dark corner” of the park for nearly four minutes. The victim was later identified as a social worker and a member of a political party. The incident aroused a public outcry. In the evening of October 15, hundreds of social workers marched to the police headquarters to protest against the police officers’ abuse of power.

TVB, which captured the incident on camera, broadcast the footage on its 24-hour news channel in the early morning hours of October 15. In the original story, the script stated that the police “punched and kicked” the protester. A few hours later, however, TVB re-edited the story and removed the phrase “punched and kicked” from the script, which sparked criticism of self-censorship by both the public and the journalists within the organization. The “dark corner” incident thus became a double scandal. Hence, the case

of the Umbrella Movement is particularly suitable to explicate the role and influence of the media as a partially censored public monitor.

As the analysis focuses on the police in social movements, additional background beyond the Umbrella Movement can be provided here. Historically, the public image of the Hong Kong police was once quite positive after the establishment of the Independent Commission Against Corruption in 1973 (Yep, 2014). In the 1970s, the government began to employ the media as a means of building a relationship between the police and the public.² In the 1980s and 1990s, many popular movies and television dramas depicted police officers as just, courageous, and determined crime-fighters.³ However, these developments also raised citizens' expectations regarding the police: people generally believed that the police would be fair and professional in exercising power. Generally, the rule of law is a core value of Hong Kong's political culture. In addition to judiciary independence and the presence of law-abiding citizens, the professionalism of the police is also central to people's belief in the rule of law.

However, the changing political atmosphere turned the police into a target of public criticism. In the past decade, social protests have become a regular feature of the political process in Hong Kong (Lee & Chan, 2013).⁴ For a long time, most protests in Hong Kong were "peaceful and nonviolent." Organizers were willing to communicate and cooperate with the police (Lee, 2008). After the July 1 protest in 2003, in which 500,000 people participated and successfully forced the government to suspend national security legislation, the term "peaceful and rational" was hailed in public discourse as the normative ideal in protest actions (Lee & Chan, 2011). The police also adopted a largely soft-line approach to handling protests, not unlike protest policing in many contemporary democratic countries (della Porta & Reiter, 1998). However, in recent years, the police-protester relationship turned sour as political conflicts in society became increasingly heated and new and radical political groups emerged (Cheng, 2014). These groups argued that given the government's disregard of public opinion, only more confrontational tactics would exert effective pressure on the power holders. However, it is possible that the government and the police also had begun to favor a hardline approach toward protests. In consequence, police-protester conflicts became more frequent and serious, and the police's public image suffered.

According to Hong Kong University's Public Opinion Program, 75.4%

of Hong Kong people were satisfied with the performance of the police in the second half of 2003. However, the figure had dropped to 56.1% by the second half of 2014.⁵ On the internet, the police were even sometimes dubbed “Hong Kong’s *Gong An*” and “black cop.”⁶ In this context, the dark corner incident presented a further challenge to the already tension-filled relationship between the police and the protesters.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The objective of the empirical analysis is to determine how the Hong Kong mainstream media played the role of public monitor in the dark corner incident. The analysis will first examine how the media covered the incident. Because the incident was publicized on television, the mainstream media could not totally ignore it. However, because the Umbrella Movement and the dark corner incident were both politically sensitive matters, the partially censored media could be expected to minimize the brutality of the police in this incident. In other words, how the media reported the incident could indicate the degree and character of partial censorship. The first research question is therefore posed as follows:

RQ1: How did the Hong Kong media cover the dark corner incident? How did the media’s selective coverage illustrate the presence of partial censorship?

This article also examines the influence of the media coverage of the dark corner incident on public opinion. Because of the political culture’s emphasis on the rule of law, the public has high expectations regarding the police. However, the television images of the dark corner incident clearly exposed the scandalous acts of the frontline police officers. Such televised images could have had an immediate effect on people’s perceptions, which would then indicate the media’s influence as public monitor. Hence, the first hypothesis is stated as follows:

H1: Media reports on the dark corner incident led to the immediate lowering of public trust in the police force.

It should be noted that *H1* differs from a typical “media effects

hypothesis” because the independent variable is not media use at the individual level. After the appalling images were televised, they were diffused through different channels, such as YouTube and Facebook. Therefore, the effect of these images was not determined by individuals’ routine TV news exposure or the amount of TV news exposure on the day of the incident. The reason is that individuals can be affected by the images when they are exposed to them, and such exposure may come through channels other than television. Hence, the independent variable in *H1* is simply the “date of interview,” that is, the interviewees surveyed after the incident would exhibit lower levels of trust toward the police than those surveyed prior to the incident would.

However, not all people reacted equally strongly to the incident. Different groups may have had different perceptions regarding the police’s use of force. According to the theory of motivated reasoning, people tend to process information in ways that reinforce their existing beliefs. Hence, people with different pre-existing views interpret the same information differently (Gelpi, Roselle, & Barnett, 2013; Meirick, 2012). Specifically, it is expected that people’s political stance and pre-existing attitudes toward the police would affect their reactions to the dark corner incident. Hence, *H2* is the following:

H2: The dark corner incident has a stronger negative effect on trust toward the police among (a) supporters of the pro-democracy camp, (b) supporters of the Umbrella Movement, and (c) people who were discontented about the police’s handling of the Umbrella Movement.

As mentioned, although the mainstream media were expected to exhibit a pro-government bias, there were still individual outlets that adopted a pro-democracy stance. Moreover, throughout the Umbrella Movement, many supporters were active in information dissemination and discussions via social media platforms (Lee & Chan, 2016). Political communication via digital and social media may provide opportunities for the repeated exposure to relevant images as well as a distinctive framework for interpreting such images, which could strengthen the impression that the police abused their power. Hence, *H3* states the following:

H3: The dark corner incident had a stronger negative effect on

trust in the police among (a) readers of pro-movement newspapers and (b) people who engaged in political communication via social media more frequently.

H1 to *H3* concern the influence of the dark corner incident on public opinion, and the “date of interview” is the independent variable. However, if the media have an overall pro-government bias, a general pro-police bias can be expected in regular news content. Hence, frequent users of the mainstream media could be expected to hold more positive views of the government and the police. Therefore, *H4* states the following:

***H4*: On the individual level, the frequency of mainstream media consumption is positively related to trust in the police.**

Combined, these hypotheses suggest that the influence of the mainstream media on public opinion is contradictory. On one hand, the frequent consumption of the partially censored mainstream media may lead to more positive views of the police (*H4*). However, when an incident clearly reveals the authority’s misconduct, media coverage could also lead to public criticisms against the authority (*H1*), especially among certain groups of people (*H2* and *H3*).

Methods and Data Analysis

Textual analysis of media coverage

To address *RQ1*, articles were selected from seven local newspapers published from October 16 to 18, a period of three days after the dark corner incident. The seven papers were as follows: the pro-democracy *Apple Daily*, the professional- and liberal-oriented *Ming Pao*, the pro-establishment *Sing Tao Daily*, the *Hong Kong Economic Times*, the *Oriental Daily*, and the Communist Party-backed *Wen Wei Po* and *Ta Kung Pao*.⁷ A qualitative approach was used in the analysis. The articles selected from the news archive were read iteratively in order to identify the main themes, the discursive representations of the actors, and the arguments and assumptions in the coverage. TVB’s coverage of the incident was also examined. The aim of the textual analysis was to reconstruct the mainstream media coverage of the incident.

Public opinion survey: Sampling

To determine the influence of the media on public opinion, data were collected in a survey that was conducted between October 8 and 15, 2015, which happened to cover the incident. The survey was conducted by the Center for Communication and Public Opinion Survey at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The survey population comprised Hong Kong residents aged 15 years or older. To compile the sample, phone numbers were first drawn from residential directories for 2005, 2007 and 2009 through systematic sampling. The last two digits of all phone numbers were replaced by the 100 double-digit figures from 00 to 99 to include numbers that were not listed in the directories. During the survey, numbers were randomly selected by computers from the database. The next birthday method was used to select a respondent from a household. The final sample size was 802, with a response rate of 37% following AAPOR RR3. The data were weighted according to gender, age, and education.

Public opinion survey: Operationalization of key variables

Trust in government and police was measured by three 11-point scaled items (0 = no trust at all, 10 = complete trust) for the police, the Hong Kong government, and the Chinese government, respectively. Trust in the police ($M = 5.49$, $S.D. = 2.85$) was the key dependent variable. Trust in the Hong Kong and Chinese governments ($M_s = 4.17$ and 4.14 , $S.D.s = 2.75$ and 3.09 , respectively) was used in an additional analysis to determine whether the dark corner incident affected trust in entities other than the police force.

Opinion toward the police's handling of the Umbrella Movement was the average of the respondents' answers to two questions that were answered on a five-point Likert scale (1 = very inappropriate, 5 = very appropriate) regarding the respondents' views of the police's use of tear gas and their handling of clashes between protesters and counter-protesters ($r = .74$, $M = 2.58$, $S.D. = 1.30$).

*Support for the Umbrella Movement*⁸ was measured by the responses to a question on five-point Likert scale, where 1 = "strongly not support" and 5 = "strongly support" ($M = 2.94$, $S.D. = 1.47$).

News media consumption was the average of the amount of time the respondents' spent per day reading newspapers (including the newspapers'

websites) and watching television news in the two to three weeks before the interview. The responses ranged from 1 = “never” to 6 = “61 minutes or more” ($r = .29$, $M = 4.12$, $S.D. = 1.37$).

Time spent on social media was measured by a single question about how much time per day the respondents spent on “social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter” in the two to three weeks before the interview. The responses ranged from 1 = “never” to 5 = “181 minutes or above” ($M = 2.04$, $S.D. = 1.19$).

Political communication via social media was measured by the responses to five questions. The respondents who used social media were asked if they had, in the two to three weeks prior to the interview, used social media (a) to receive current news or political information and (b) to express their views on current news or political affairs. They were also asked (c) how frequently they joined groups related to current or political affairs on social media, (d) whether they followed the updates of political party members, activists, and commentators, and (e) whether they added any political party members, activists, and commentators as “friends.” All answers were registered on a five-point scale where 1 = “absolutely no” and 5 = “many / frequently.” The answers were averaged in an index of political communication via social media ($\alpha = .70$). After setting the scores of non-social-media users at 1, the index had a mean score of 1.75 and a standard deviation of 0.84.

Political orientation was measured by the responses to a question that asked the respondents if they supported the radical democrat, moderate democrat, the pro-establishment faction, the pro-business faction, the pro-Beijing faction, the centrist, or “others.” They could also indicate that they did not support any faction. The variable was simplified into three categories for the analysis: (1) pro-democracy citizens (radical democrats or moderate democrats), (2) pro-establishment citizens (pro-establishment, pro-business, or pro-Beijing),⁹ and (3) centrists (centrist, “others,” or no political orientations).

To measure the *reading of pro-movement newspapers*, the respondents were asked to name the newspaper they read the most frequently in the two to three weeks before the interview. Among all newspapers in Hong Kong, the *Apple Daily* was the most strongly pro-democracy and pro-movement. *Ming Pao* was also somewhat liberal-oriented in its political coverage. The other newspapers, in contrast, tended to be conservative. The analysis thus

employed a dichotomous variable in which 1 = “readers of *Apple Daily* and *Ming Pao*” and 0 = “others.” This coding simplified the newspaper landscape, but it was consistent with previous studies in Hong Kong (e.g. Lee & Chan, 2011).

The *control variables* included four demographics (sex, age, education and family income), interpersonal political discussions (whether the respondents discussed the movement with their family or relatives), political interests (respondents’ agreement with two relevant statements), protest participation experience (based on five questions about the respondents’ participation in different protests), internal efficacy, external efficacy, and collective efficacy (each was measured by agreement with two relevant statements). The details about the operationalization of these variables are omitted because of the limited space available.

The Dark Corner Incident in the Mainstream Media

This analysis first addresses how the mainstream media covered the dark corner incident. As mentioned, in the early morning hours on October 15, on its 24-hour news channel, TVB aired the four-minute footage of a group of police officers dragging and beating a protester. The voice-over stated, “the police picked up [the protester], dragged him to a dark corner at Tamar Park, put him onto the floor, and began punching and kicking him.” However, a few hours later, the line was completely deleted, and by noon, the voice-over was revised to “the police were suspected to have used violence on [the protester].” TVB’s news director insisted that the amendment was solely a professional decision because the phrase “punching and kicking” was deemed subjective. However, nearly 60 TVB reporters and news anchors signed an open letter questioning the decision. The letter would later obtain over 100 signatures.

The incident also provoked the concerns of other journalists and the public. Six media unions and organizations issued a joint statement in support of the frontline reporters at TVB, urging TVB’s senior newsroom managers to stop the self-censorship. The Communications Authority of the Hong Kong government received 250 public complaints on that day. However, it should be noted that although TVB revised the script of the story, the original story and footage had already been captured by other

mainstream and online media. The original story and footage were also widely shared via social media and uploaded on YouTube.¹⁰ Paradoxically, the self-censorship controversy had drawn even more public attention to the incident.

While the news about the dark corner incident was first broadcast on television, other media outlets disseminated follow-up stories and analyses. Newspapers with different political orientations represented the incident differently. Indeed, the pro-establishment papers tended to downplay the incident and/or defend the police in several ways. First, they simply published fewer and shorter stories about the incident. The keyword search revealed that from October 16 to 18, the *Oriental Daily* published only four articles that mentioned the name of the victim of the incident, whereas the *Hong Kong Economic Times* published six articles and *Sing Tao* published eight articles. These figures were substantially lower than for the *Apple Daily* (28 articles) and *Ming Pao* (15 articles). The pro-establishment newspapers tended to shunt the stories to the inside pages. Interestingly, the Communist-sponsored *Wen Wei Po* and *Ta Kung Pao* published relatively more stories on the incident in a combined total of 23. We will return to this point below.

Second, in narrating the incident, pro-establishment newspapers tended to emphasize the cause of the police action. In fact, the TV news footage had shown that right before the dark corner incident, a masked protester resembling the later victim of the incident was shown standing on high ground and splashing liquid on the police. The victim later would not confirm whether he was the masked man captured in the news, but the pro-establishment newspapers firmly maintained that the victim was the one who had provoked the police intentionally. Some stories even alleged that the liquid was urine, manure, or even flammable. These stories painted the victim as a “deliberate provoker,” and thus the police action was deemed understandable or even justifiable. Underlying this discourse is the cultural idea expressed in the common Chinese saying, “those who provoke are despicable and cannot blame anyone even if they are beaten to death.” By condemning the victim’s behavior, the conservative media were also simultaneously attacking the Umbrella Movement for deviating from its self-proclaimed principle of non-violence.

Third, the pro-establishment papers emphasized the victim’s political background. For example, *Wen Wei Po* and *Ta Kung Pao* dubbed the victim the “Long Hair of the Civic Party” (*Ta Kung Pao*, 2014, October 17;

Cheuk Wai, 2014, October 16). “Long Hair” is the nickname of the LegCo member and activist Leung Kwok-Hung, who used to be regarded as a radical in the social movement scene. Associating the victim with Long Hair thus represented the victim as a radical who threatened the social order. Moreover, the pro-establishment camp did not regard the Umbrella Movement as organized only by local activists and students. Instead, they regarded the movement as the result of the manipulation of political parties and even foreign powers. Highlighting the victim’s party membership thus coincided with the general discourse that the movement was manipulated by evil political forces.

Finally, the pro-establishment newspapers attempted to dilute the political influence of the incident. For example, they used quotations from the government and the police in headlines, emphasizing their efficacy and asking the public to avoid politicizing the incident (e.g. *Oriental Daily*, 2014, October 17; *Sing Tao*, 2014, October 17). As mentioned, the Communist-sponsored *Wen Wei Po* and *Ta Kung Pao* published even more articles on the incident than some conservative papers did, which indicates that these newspapers attempted to “guide” public opinion on the matter. Some commentaries in *Wen Wei Po* and *Ta Kung Pao* used a political conspiracy frame to interpret the incident, alleging that it was pro-democratic party trick to smear the police (e.g. Tsui Ming, 2014, October 16). Some even hinted that the incident was backed by the US (e.g. Lee Kai Ting, 2014, October 17).

In contrast to the pro-establishment papers, the *Apple Daily* provided wide coverage of the incident, reprimanding the police. On October 16, the *Apple Daily* printed the headline “Seven demonic police surrounded and beat protester for four minutes” across its front page. In the days after the incident, the *Apple Daily* continued to use the term “demonic police” in headlines to describe other cases of police violence, such as “demonic police run wild, spray pepper in face and step on people’s heads” (16 October 2014), “citizens beaten; there were more than seven demonic police” (17 October 2014). The newspapers also used other phrases, such as the aforementioned “Hong Kong *Gong An*” and “black cop.” For instance, on October 18, the paper’s editorial stated that the dark corner incident showed that the Hong Kong government had been “communized” and the Hong Kong police had become “gong an” (Y. Lee, 2014).

The professionally oriented *Ming Pao* adopted a factual approach to the incident. It added a timeline for readers to understand the events. It

interviewed medical specialists who offered the views that the victim’s injuries could be caused by the police beating. It also quoted both “hawkish” and “dovish” views from within the police, the latter admitting that the officers had committed mistakes. Because police misconduct was apparent in this case, simply displaying information from different sources “objectively” allowed *Ming Pao* to convince readers that the police had abused their power.

In summary, although the representations of the incident predictably varied across media, the fact that many mainstream media minimized the incident illustrated the condition of partial censorship in Hong Kong and the presence of selective reporting. However, because of the TV images and the follow-up stories by the critical newspapers, the conservative newspapers could not ignore the incident. At most, they attempted minimize the coverage and/or provide alternative interpretations of the incident. However, the mainstream media still functioned as public monitor to a certain extent.

Influence on Public Opinion

We now turn to how news about the incident influenced public opinion. Table 1 shows Hong Kong people’s perceptions of the police. Most respondents (57.6%) considered the police firing of tear gas on September 28 “inappropriate.” Only one-fifth of the respondents (23.7%) regarded it as “appropriate.” More respondents (45.9%) regarded the police’s handling of protester-counter-protester clashes as “inappropriate” than “appropriate” (29%). The mean score of the variable of trust in police was 5.49, which is only slightly higher than the mid-point of the scale. Overall, the public was not very satisfied with the police’s handling of the movement.

Table 1 Trust in police and views on the police’s handling of the movement

	Very inappropriate	Inappropriate	So-so	Appropriate	Very appropriate	Mean
Appropriateness of firing tear gas	41.1	16.5	18.7	9.0	14.7	2.40
Appropriateness of handling the clash between protesters and counter-protesters	24.4	21.5	25.1	15.7	13.3	2.72
	0	1-4	5	6-9	10	Mean
Trust in the police	9.5	19.7	25.8	32.3	12.7	5.49

Note: Entries are percentages based on valid answers.

To determine whether there was any immediate change in public opinion after the incident, the responses of those interviewed on October 15 were compared to the responses of those interviewed in the previous week. Table 2 shows that on the day of the incident, the respondents' trust in the police significantly dropped: the mean score fell from 5.59 to 4.99 after the incident ($t = 2.44, p < .05$). However, the incident did not affect the respondents' perceptions of the events before the "dark corner" incident. The respondents' attitudes towards "firing tear gas" and the "handling of clashes between protesters and counter-protesters" did not change significantly (and even rose nominally). In addition, although public trust in the Hong Kong government and the Beijing government also fell on the day of the dark corner incident, the decrease was not statistically significant ($t = 1.65$ and 0.55 respectively, $p > .05$ in both cases).

These results were not unexpected. It is not surprising that a single case of the police's abuse of power was insufficient to shift public perceptions toward prior events or induce distrust in the government. However, consistent with *H1*, the results showed that the incident had an immediate and significant influence on public trust in the police.

Table 2 Citizens' attitude toward the police and the government after the dark corner incident

	Oct 8 to 14	Oct 15	t-value
Trust in the police	5.59	4.99	2.24*
Appropriateness of firing tear gas	2.36	2.58	0.68
Appropriateness of handling the clash between anti-occupy people and occupiers	2.71	2.78	0.30
Trust in the HKSAR government	4.20	4.03	1.65
Trust in the central government	4.16	4.07	0.55

Note: * $p < .05$

A regression analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses. As Table 3 shows, among the control variables, respondents with higher educational levels ($\beta = .10, p < .01$) and higher external efficacy ($\beta = .17, p < .001$) tended to have higher trust in the police. The respondents who supported the Umbrella Movement ($\beta = -.19, p < .001$) and those who were dissatisfied with the police's handling of the movement ($\beta = .45, p < .001$) tended to place less trust in the police. After support of the movement and attitude toward the police's handling of the movement were controlled for, political

orientation did not significantly relate to trust in the police. The pro-democracy citizens did not distrust the police to a larger extent compared to the centrist citizens, nor did the pro-establishment citizens trust the police more than the centrists did.

Table 3 Regression analysis on trust in the police

	Model 1	Full model
Sex	.02	.03
Age	.04	-.02
Education	.11***	.10**
Family income	.04	.06
Protest experience	-.07*	-.04
Political interest	.03	.03
Internal efficacy	-.06*	-.05
Collective efficacy	-.01	.00
External efficacy	.18***	.17***
ΔR^2	.36***	
Pro-democracy citizens	.02	.01
Pro-establishment citizens	.02	.02
Support the Umbrella Movement	-.20***	-.19***
Views on the police's handling of the movement	.43***	.45***
ΔR^2	.19***	
News media use		.09***
Readers of pro-movement papers		.00
Times spent on social media		.03
Political com. via social media		-.11**
Interpersonal discussion		-.05
Interview dates (October 15 = 2)		-.09***
ΔR^2		.02***
Adjusted R^2	.54***	.56***

Note: Entries are standardized regression coefficients. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Regarding media usage, frequent users of mainstream media tended to exhibit higher levels of trust in the police ($\beta = .09, p < .001$), which is consistent with *H4*. The finding suggests a pro-establishment bias in the mainstream media. However, no significant relationship was found between trust in the police and whether a respondent read pro-movement newspapers ($\beta = .00, p > .05$).

Regarding social media use, sheer time spent did not relate significantly to trust in the police ($\beta = .03, p > .05$). However, political communication via social media was significantly related to trust in the police: those who

engaged in political communication via social media more frequently trusted the police less ($\beta = -.11, p < .01$). This result is consistent with the findings of other studies of the Umbrella Movement (Lee, So, & Leung, 2015).

Finally, Table 3 shows that, even after all the control variables were added to the regression model, the respondents interviewed in the wake of the dark corner incident still significantly trusted the police to a lesser extent ($\beta = -.09, p < .001$). The multivariate analysis thus confirmed the results of the earlier bivariate analysis. *H1* is solidly supported.

These results indicate that the dark corner incident had a negative impact on public trust in the police, but as *H2* and *H3* state, the effect of the incident may vary across different groups. *H2* predicts that the incident will lower trust in the police mainly among pro-democracy supporters, supporters of the Umbrella Movement, and people who were already discontented with the police's handling of the movement. The split-sample approach was adopted to test this hypothesis. The sample was divided into different sub-groups according to the variables included in the hypothesis. Following the model shown in Table 3 but with the grouping variable removed, a regression analysis was then conducted for each sub-group to see if the effect of the "date of interview" variable on trust in the police varied across the sub-groups. The first column of Table 4 shows the regression coefficients of the "date of interview" variable in the different sub-samples.

However, the actual sample sizes of some subgroups were small, and it was not appropriate to conduct a regression analysis because they had too many independent variables. The second column of Table 4 thus illustrates the results generated by running a simplified regression model, which only included age, education, support for the Umbrella Movement, views on the police's handling of the movement, and the dates of interviews. Because the results of the two columns are consistent, we only need to focus on the results shown in column 1 of Table 4.

First, the effect of the "date of interviews" on the pro-democratic respondents' trust in police was statistically significant ($\beta = -.10, p < .05$). The effect on the centrists ($\beta = -.11, p < .01$) was statistically significant, but the effect on the pro-establishment citizens ($\beta = -.04, p > .05$) was statistically insignificant. This pattern is consistent with the hypothesis, but the three coefficients did not differ significantly from each other. Therefore, *H2a* is not supported.

Table 4 Regression analysis on trust in the policed “trust in the police” in different subgroups

	Coefficients of “date of interview” in the complete regression model	Coefficients of “date of interview” in the simplified model
Political orientations		
Pro-democracy	-.10*	-.10*
Centrists / no orientation	-.11**	-.11**
Pro-establishment	-.04	-.08
Support the movement		
Supporters	-.13**	-.16**
Neutral / no opinion	-.04	-.03
Opponent	-.10*	-.12
Views of the police’s handling of the movement		
Positive	.03 ^{ab}	-.02 ^a
Neutral / no opinion	-.21 ^{*a}	-.15
Negative	-.14 ^{*** b}	-.17 ^{***a}
Newspapers most often read		
Conservative	-.05 ^a	-.05 ^a
Pro-movement	-.17 ^{***a}	-.17 ^{***a}
Political com. via social media		
No	-.07	-.07*
Yes	-.11**	-.12***

Note: Entries are standardized regression coefficients of the variable “date of interview” in the different sub-samples. The second column is based on a simplified regression model, including age, education, attitude towards the Umbrella Movement, views on the police’s handling of the movement, and date of interview. In the same column, two regression coefficients share the same superscript and have corresponding unstandardized coefficients that differ from each other statistically significantly at $p < .05$. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Similarly, the incident lowered the movement supporters’ trust in the police ($\beta = -.13, p < .01$). However, even the opponents of the movement were affected by the incident ($\beta = -.10, p < .05$). Hence, *H2b* is not supported. Nonetheless, the trust in the police of the respondents who were dissatisfied with the handling of the movement and those who were neutral about the matter was significantly affected by the dark corner incident ($\beta = -.14$ and $-.21, p < .05$). In contrast, the respondents who held positive views about the police’s handling of the movement were not affected by the incident. There

are also significant differences in the coefficients. Hence, *H2c* is supported, and *H2* is partly supported. Although only one of the sub-hypotheses was robustly supported, the effects of the incident were nominally stronger among the pro-democratic citizens, the movement supporters, and those who were already dissatisfied with the police.

H3 state that the incident will affect trust in police among (a) readers of pro-movement newspapers and (b) people who engage frequently in political communication via social media. The results shown in Table 4 indicate that the incident significantly influenced only the readers of pro-movement newspapers ($\beta = -.17, p < .001$). The effect of the incident was not significant on the readers of other newspapers, ($\beta = -.05, p > .05$). The difference between the two coefficients was also statistically significant. *H3a* is therefore supported. The incident only affected people who engaged actively in social media political communication ($\beta = -.11, p < .01$). The respondents who were not involved in political communication via social media were not affected ($\beta = -.07, p > .05$). The pattern was consistent with the expectation, although the difference between the two coefficients was not significant. However, overall, the findings support *H3*.

Concluding Discussion

The media constitute a field of political struggle (Gamson, 2004). Although the mainstream media are embedded in the dominant political economic structure, their professional ideals and operational logics still compel them to fulfil their functions of information communication and social monitoring. The media, therefore, do not always undermine social movements and protest campaigns. It remains possible for social movements to communicate their ideas to the public and mobilize people via the media. This article adopts and modifies DeLuca and Peebles' (2002) conceptualization and proposes the concept of the partially censored public monitor as representing the complex and contradictory roles and influence of the media in a large-scale protest campaign.

The "dark corner incident" during the Umbrella Movement was used as the case study. The Hong Kong media's role as a partially censored public monitor was evidenced in several ways. First, the analysis of media coverage and commentaries showed that many mainstream media organizations exhibited a pro-establishment bias. Some tried to minimize the incident,

whereas the communist-backed newspapers constructed theories of political conspiracies to explain the incident. TVB, the station that first broadcast the images of the “dark corner,” also became the target of public criticism because it apparently tried to censor the content of its own news stories about the incident. However, paradoxically, the incident was captured by TVB. Even though it attempted to self-censor, TVB functioned as a public monitor by being the first to broadcast the relevant images.

TVB’s treatment of the incident also illustrates that media self-censorship remains a contentious issue within the news organizations in Hong Kong. Top newsroom managers may tend to self-censor, but frontline journalists have operational autonomy and can resist self-censorship. Regarding the distribution and transmission of news, new media technologies played a key role in the incident. To some extent, the operation of 24-hour news channels provided the condition for the incident to be exposed in a rapid and uncensored manner. Because of the concern with speedy reportage, the footage about police violence was broadcast almost immediately when it reached the newsroom. Furthermore, the incident happened in the early morning hours when the top managers were not in the newsroom. Moreover, once the footage was aired, digital and social media platforms allowed the relevant images to circulate quickly and widely throughout the internet. Digital media platforms also became sites where the original uncensored version of the news story could be found after the TVB’s revision of the story.

The findings indicate that unscrupulous and extreme forms of media censorship, such as complete disregard for events or the publishing of fake news stories, are not possible in Hong Kong. Because of the emphasis on the rule of law in the society’s political culture, the misconduct of the police was particularly serious and condemnable in the eyes of many citizens. The mainstream media could self-censor only by making technical changes, such as trimming the length of the story, avoiding sensitive wording, adjusting the story’s placement, or selectively re-interpreting the story. However, there could be limits to how a story is reinterpreted convincingly. In the dark corner incident, because the police’s abuse of power documented in visual images, even the pro-establishment media could not deny that it happened. In summary, because of the diversity in the media market, the professionalism of the frontline journalists, the active civil society, and the booming new media environment, the mainstream media in Hong Kong can continue to

function as public monitor despite the fact that it is subject to the condition of partial censorship.

The survey results showed that the incident had a significant and immediate effect on public opinion of the police. Certainly, at the individual level, people had different interpretations of and reactions to the images and stories. The findings showed that the effect of the incident was more apparent among supporters of the movement, who were already dissatisfied with the police's handling of it, readers of pro-movement newspapers, and netizens who actively participated in political communication via social media. These findings are consistent with the theory of motivated reasoning. However, the results also showed that trust in the police fell among the centrists, respondents without clear political inclinations, those who were neutral toward the police's handling of the movement, and even opponents of the Umbrella Movement. The influence of the incident was therefore by no means restricted to supporters of the movement. A probable reason is that the images of police violence in the dark corner incident were straightforward and obvious. In this case, pre-existing attitudes did not obscure the "dominant meanings" of the images.

Although the empirical analysis focused only on the dark corner incident and the public evaluation of the police, the notion of a partially censored public monitor could characterize the media's role throughout the entire Umbrella Movement. The media's pro-establishment bias is manifested not only in the dark corner incident; partial censorship is the basic condition of the Hong Kong press (Lee & Chan, 2009; Lee, 2015). Similarly, the media's role as public monitor extends beyond in the dark corner incident. When the media broadcasted live images of the police firing tear gas into the protesting crowd on September 28, people were mobilized people to join the protest (Tang, 2015). In the aftermath of the dark corner incident, the Hong Kong police took a "low-profile" approach to handling the protests. No severe clash between the police and the protesters occurred until some protesters escalated their actions toward the end of the occupation campaign. Some commentators pointed out that the police adjusted their tactics after the two "mistakes" made in the early weeks of the movement (i.e., the tear gas and the dark corner incident). This tactic also illustrates the media's function as public monitor, which can cause authorities to adjust their actions and strategies.

Although this article focuses on the case of the Umbrella Movement

in Hong Kong, the concepts and analysis have implications for similar movements in other countries. Because of the close connections between the media and established institutions, the media cannot be truly independent from power (Bagdikian, 2000). In fact, few societies around the world enjoy a truly high degree of press freedom. Many countries are semi-liberal and semi-democratic. In some countries with limited media freedom and high levels of corruption, people rely on both the mainstream media and new media to monitor the government and the police's abuse of power (Bonner, 2009; Toepfl, 2011). Certain concepts are required to describe and analyze how the mainstream media serve as the agents of social control for power holders and monitor the power holders under certain circumstances. The concept of partially censored public monitor encapsulates the dual character of the media. In analyzing the relationship between media and social movements in other countries, we also need to pay attention to this dual character. Even in democratic countries, the mainstream media and established institutions are closely intertwined, which makes it difficult for the media to be truly independent from political economic power. However, as the case of Hong Kong shows, when certain basic conditions are fulfilled, the media can still function as public monitor even though they are not entirely autonomous.

Certainly, the degree of "partial censorship" that influences the media varies across countries. This topic requires comparative research. As discussed earlier, the dark corner incident occurred within a social and political context. In fact, professional media that treat their watchdog role seriously would attempt to expose the misconduct of the power holders. However, the perceptions of what constitutes misconduct vary across societies (Esser & Hartung, 2004). How the media play the role of the public monitor in different political cultures is worthy of examination in a future study.

The methodology used in this case study revealed that how we analyze media effects on society and public opinion should be reconsidered. Traditionally, individual-level media use constitutes the main independent variable in most media effects studies. The presumption is that the more an individual consumes media, the more s/he is affected by the message or information conveyed. However, media effects do not always depend on individual receptions of information. When highly significant information and images are transmitted by the media, the content can be diffused

throughout the society through other channels, such as interpersonal communication and the internet. In this case, no strong correlation would exist between an individual's media use and the reception of the information. Media effects would not be discernible if individual-level media use was the independent variable. This study uses the "date of interviews" as the main predictor in analyzing the effect of the media's function as public monitor. The assumption is that if the media had not exposed the dark corner incident, the people's perceptions of the police would not have changed within one day. The results, therefore, still show the influence of the media on society.

Finally, although this study aimed to analyze the role and influence of the mainstream media, the findings also indicate the importance of new media technologies. If there had been no 24-hour news channel, the dark corner incident might have been minimized even before it was first broadcast in the news. If there had been no social media, the key images would have not been circulated. Therefore, new media technologies have strengthened the public monitor function of the mainstream media. Alternatively, it could be argued that the public monitor function is indeed carried out by the integrated media system, which is composed of both mass media institutions and digital media platforms. However, the key is not to view new media and legacy media as being in competition. Within an integrated media environment, some social effects of the mainstream media may become more robust in the presence of new media technologies and platforms.

Notes

- 1 Of the 299 members of the Standing Committee of the 12th CPPCC (commencing from year 2012), 16 come from Hong Kong. Among these 16 members, those having close connections with media institutions include: (1) Liu Changle, the Chairman and CEO of Phoenix Satellite Television; (2) Victor Li Tzar-kuoi, the Group Co-Managing Director and Deputy Chairman of CK Hutchison Holdings Limited, who owns Metro Broadcast Corporation; (3) Peter Woo Kwong-ching, the ex-chairman of Wharf (Holdings), which holds 73.8% of i-CABLE Communications, which in turn operates Cable TV; (4) Charles Ho Tsu-kwok, the Chairman of the Sing Tao News Corporation Limited; and (5) Chan Wing Kee, the ex-CEO of Asia Television Limited.
- 2 The Hong Kong Police Force established the Police Public Relations Bureau in 1973 and began to cooperate with RTHK to produce the weekly television program *Police Magazine*, which presents how the police force fight against

- crimes (Ho & Chu, 2011, pp. 201–204). Moreover, popular TV programs such as *Below the Lion Rock Series* also feature stories about the establishment of positive relationships between the police and the public.
- 3 Prominent examples include Jackie Chan's *Police Story* film series, the TV drama *Police Cadet '84* starring Tony Leung, and the TV drama *The Emissary* starring Andy Lau.
 - 4 According to statistics of the Hong Kong Police Force, the number of "public processions" and "public rallies" had increased from 1,900 cases in 2005 to 6,818 cases in 2014. Retrieved from: http://www.police.gov.hk/ppp_tc/09_statistics/poes.html.
 - 5 The statistics are retrieved from the website of the University of Hong Kong's public opinion program: <http://hkupop.hku.hk>.
 - 6 The police is traditionally called *gong an* in mainland China. For a long period, the Hong Kong Police Force was thought to be the "model" of the Chinese police system (Lo, 2012). The phrase "Hong Kong gong an" thus represents people's doubts about whether the Hong Kong police have become as unprofessional as their Chinese counterparts are. In addition, the phrase "black cop" conveys the idea that the police are acting like gangsters and even the accusation that the police are colluding with the triads.
 - 7 *Wise News* contained 89 articles that used the name of the victim in the incident as the keyword. The materials include editorials, news articles, and commentaries. After removing irrelevant articles, 85 articles were included in the analysis.
 - 8 The terms Umbrella Revolution and Umbrella Movement were widely adopted by the international media, some pro-democracy local media, and the movement supporters, whereas some pro-establishment media or supporters of the government denounced the movement as "illegal occupation." This survey used the more neutral term, the "occupy movement."
 - 9 From the transition period in the 1980s until the present, the business sector of Hong Kong were the Beijing and Hong Kong governments' principal target of co-optation. For information about the relationship between the government and the business sector, see Goodstadt (2005).
 - 10 Many video clips are still on YouTube at the time this article was written. One of them is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvsrEF3gp-U>. As of 28 December 2015, the clip had received 520,028 views.

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