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## IDEOLOGICAL THEMES IN HONG KONG'S PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS: IMPLICATIONS FOR CHINA'S FUTURE

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For over 20 years, Hong Kong's Department of Information Services (DIS) has been producing public service announcements (called Announcements of Public Interest, or APIs, locally) on a variety of themes such as cleaning up Hong Kong, road safety, crime, drugs, and health issues. The announcements are televised daily during mandatory time slots within prime time commercial break periods, and approximately 30 to 35 different announcements are broadcast monthly (DIS, 1998a). Public service announcements are a familiar part of the Special Administrative Region's (SAR) media culture, and it would be safe to say that nearly all Hong Kong residents have viewed samples of them.

In addition to their public familiarity and media significance, these announcements represent the most important means by which the Hong Kong government has consistently communicated directly to the public. Accordingly, APIs are an important locus of civic discourse in the SAR, particularly in their role in the construction of an image of civil society. As Phelan (1991) notes, "the contemporary television public-service/community campaign raises questions of politics and culture and thus fundamental questions of values" (p. 91). This chapter examines significant ideological themes, including recent trends, and discusses possibilities for their further development in Hong Kong's future as part of China. It focuses on the relationships between Western and traditional Chinese values within a selected group of Hong Kong APIs.

The Department of Information Services, which designs and produces the announcements, makes decisions about their scheduling and content. APIs are produced in six major categories: ongoing campaigns, new policies and legislation, events, topical issues and problems, and recruitment of volunteers. According to the DIS, the APIs "provide information which the public needs to know" (1998a, p. 1), and they have four primary public functions: (a) to inform about government policies and public safety issues, (b) to educate about the "rights and responsibilities of citizens," (c) to enlist cooperation in dealing with contemporary problems, and (d) to help recruit volunteers for "duties of benefit to society" (pp. 1-2). Each of these functions is clearly related to the construction of an idea of civil society in Hong Kong. There are several formats for APIs, including films, still slides, and videos. This analysis includes films and videos, which are complex, varied, and numerous, but does not include still slides.

While we recognize that the APIs can be considered a type of propaganda, we wish to use this fact primarily to emphasize the ideological dimensions of APIs rather than to highlight any particularly insidious elements of them. APIs also fit into the category of communication campaigns, which convey value-laden definitions of social problems and suggestions for their elimination or cure (see Rakow, 1989). Perry (1996) notes that communication campaigns usually involve mass media and promote clearly expressed values. It is in this sense that the Hong Kong APIs can be considered ideological. They project images of the social good from a particular perspective (Salmon, 1989), yet may appear to convey neutral information. Communication campaigns, which deal with social values, necessarily convey ideology, "an unconscious set of values and beliefs which provide frames for our thinking and help make sense of the world" (Watson & Hill, 1994, p. 89). This chapter understands the Hong Kong APIs as a mild form of propaganda that can be better understood as a subset of communication campaigns or alternatively as social advertising, which employs the media of advertising for social benefit (Solomon, 1989). Here, we use the words *announcement*, *advertisement*, and *ad* interchangeably to refer to API examples.

## HONG KONG APIS AS DISCURSIVE PRACTICES

The role of Hong Kong's colonial government toward its people has been criticized as "basically leaving the society alone," and failing to "harbor many moral expectations" (Martin & Wilson, 1997, p. 1; see also Lau, 1997; Lau & Kuan, 1988). Such claims provide a clear rationale for the examination of the APIs. For although the observation that Hong Kong's colonial government did not promote certain types of political participation, individual expression, or questioning of governmental policy may be valid, API texts clearly do express a governmental perspective on values and goals for the Hong Kong people. They reflect duties, rights, and responsibilities and as such they convey moral expectations and help to construct an image of citizenship and the social good. Study of Hong Kong APIs can provide information on the discursive strategies of the British colonial government by revealing which values and ideologies were conveyed.

Original campaign themes consistently aired since the 1970s include crime prevention, cleaning up the environment, and road safety, while additional campaigns on such subjects as AIDS and Human Rights have been initiated in more recent years. This analysis focuses on the Fight Crime campaign, since, of the three original campaigns still active today, it is most clearly ideological and most clearly related to the construction of an image of a civil society and the civic person. We argue that Chinese values were used to encourage Hong Kong Chinese people to see themselves as active participants in a civil society created on a Western model. The use of Chinese values and a Western image of citizenship were instrumental, connecting specific traditional ideas to a restricted conception of the social good. Although Western concepts of citizenship include both duties and rights, the ideal civic person is defined exclusively in terms of duties and responsibilities in these APIs, and this emphasis on citizen duty has increased over time. Only in a new human rights campaign, begun in 1994, do APIs focus on the rights and benefits of citizenship rather than its duties and responsibilities. But even this newest campaign reflects only an abstract understanding of the rights and benefits of citizenship.

### THE CONTEXT OF THE EARLY FIGHT CRIME API CAMPAIGN

The Fight Crime (FC) API campaign was initiated in 1974, with the first ad aired on May 14 (DIS, 1998b). The campaign has been run consistently up to the present, with new announcements added every year between 1974 and 1998, for a total of over 100 announcements. The campaign has two primary strands, focusing on stopping crime as it occurs, and preventing crime before it happens. The first strand began with the very first API in 1974 and is present throughout the life of the Fight Crime campaign. The 16 announcements in this

category produced in the 1970s form the main body of Fight Crime APIs discussed here. The second strand, the prevention of crime, also began very early, but became the dominant theme in 1984 and is the focus of most of the ads in the following years. Nineteen such ads were produced from 1984 to 1988, with fewer additions in later years. Announcements of this type are discussed in the latter part of this chapter.<sup>1</sup>

The launching of the fight crime API campaign can be understood as one of "Britain's attempts to get people to identify with Hong Kong...after the riots of 1967" (Evans & Tam, 1997, pp. 13-14). During the period following these events, the government hoped to achieve better relations with the people. Mitchell (1998) establishes that between 1969 and 1976, the government was trying to eliminate overtly colonial elements of its rule. Measures included the renaming of the "Secretary of Chinese Affairs" as "Secretary for Home Affairs," the use of the word *territory* instead of *colony*, and the renaming of the "Colonial Secretary" to "Chief Secretary" in 1976 (p. 28). The government also "introduced in the urban areas City District Officers (CDOs) to close the gap between it and the governed" and to "market the services of government departments" (p. 37). The FC API campaign was another effort in this direction.

For many years, the Hong Kong police were more concerned with the suppression of political opposition than with the regulation of crime (Leung, 1996), and had a general reputation for corruption. Police activity has been described as "mainly concerned with public order, keeping the peace, and not so much with the suppression of conventional crime" (Lethbridge, 1980, p. 582). During the period after the 1967 riots, the police angered the public enough that some public relations work was required, and in the early 1970s, the government made concerted efforts to clean up its image. Leung reports that

the Government's social-control policies changed, beginning in the 1970s...[it] shifted the priority of social control from the containment of political opposition to the suppression of crime...by the launching of the...Fight Violent Crime campaign in 1973, and the setting up of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in 1974 to combat corruption in all branches...including the police. (1996, p. 193)

Thus, one important context for the first API Fight Crime advertisements was social strife, accompanied by justified suspicion about the potential helpfulness of the police.

Hong Kong's colonial government was also interested in preventing formal groupings that could consolidate power and organize against it. The first API campaigns, including the Fight Crime campaign, began in a context of little social coordination between family and government.

### IDEOLOGICAL THEMES IN FIGHT CRIME APIS: AN IMAGE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In the context of its deservedly poor reputation with the people of Hong Kong and an increasing need for public participation in the fight against crime, the government developed a campaign that drew on traditional Chinese values in order to address its desire for a better police image and a more active public that could identify positively with Hong Kong and its government. The resulting campaign is made up of three dominant ideological themes: (a) creating a sense of family for neighbors and co-tenants, (b) a self-interested teamwork with government, and (c) a placement of group interests ahead of personal well-being. While each of these ideological themes can be understood as drawing on traditional Chinese values, each was utilized within the FC campaign so as to reinforce a Western view of the civic person as an active participant in police functions. The Western conception of citizenship within the campaign is limited to a few simple actions connecting the individual to the larger society—stopping short of indicating the rights and benefits it entails. This focus on duties of citizens as limited actors in the public sphere increases during the life of the campaign.

#### Phase One: Three Reasons to "Do Your Part"

In its earliest phase, the Fight Crime campaign sought to encourage Hong Kong citizens to come forward as actors in the public sphere and to establish a positive image for the police. These goals were accomplished through three central appeals to the public to "do their part" in small ways such as reporting crimes, filling out forms, and serving as witnesses. The terms in which these appeals were made related directly to traditional Chinese values, while the behaviors urged as a result of them enacted an incomplete Western conception of citizenship. Ip (1996) defines the "civic person" as someone able to undertake

civic responsibilities and to assert his civic rights...[who]...has a keen awareness of his relationship to society and to his fellow citizens...and is committed to the considered values in the political and social arenas. Central to these values are the values of rights and equality. (p. 41)

Thus, the Western concept of the civic person involves a balance between duties and rights within a society. The FC APIs focus on duties and responsibilities, but not on rights and benefits.

*Extending the Family.* Ip (1996) explains how, in the traditional conception of the Confucian family, relationships were highly structured, and that behaviors in this social setting "would take the form of obligations and duties rather than rights," putting the group above the individual (p. 47). Discussions of traditional

Chinese society consistently note that while family ties were well developed and constantly strengthened, there was often little to mediate between the family and the state. An intermediate level of nongovernmental institutions that characterizes social life in the West is described as absent or poorly developed in traditional Chinese society. Ip's analysis of "Confucian familial collectivism" is helpful with the question of the interrelationships between family and society. He asserts that, although Confucianism "articulates a rich notion of a moral person, the notion of a civic person is, in comparison, tragically impoverished" (p. 39). Ip's analysis focuses on the interlocking influences of ideological and institutional factors. He notes that organizations and groups

fell far short of forming a civil society as we know it today.... Between the emperor and the ruled, there was no mediating institution which came close to a civil society...where the individual could have a status to identify himself with and find a role to play, and, more importantly, to develop his autonomy and identity as a civic person. (p. 50-55)

In traditional Chinese societies like Hong Kong, "family man dominated the social man to the extent that the latter was underdeveloped compared with the former" (Ip, 1996, p. 52). The state functioned as an extension of the family, while civic society was undeveloped. The social person was defined in a family-determined sense, not in the "civic-political sense" (p. 55).

Several of the FC APIs appeal to the individual through an analogy or extension of the notion of Confucian familism. The ads encourage people to view a community as a family, urging individuals to perform their civic duty and to thereby benefit the larger family conceived as the neighborhood or building. The duty of the individual is to come out of the (usual) family environment and act as a member of a larger collectivity, and the appeals use an expanded concept of family to make the protection of others appear normal and even desirable from the traditional Chinese perspective.

One example using this appeal features a man returning home with a bag of groceries in his arms. As he approaches his flat, he notices two men trying to break into another flat on his floor. Instead of ignoring the problem, he runs downstairs and calls the police. They arrive immediately and catch the thieves, who are still committing the robbery. The voiceover urges that the viewer should consider the whole building as home, and work to keep it safe. Other similar examples mention that there is "safety in numbers," also referencing the idea of a family larger than the one inside an individual flat. Yet another employs a montage showing various people working together to capture criminals in apartment buildings, intoning "help the police, help your family, help your neighbors." Taken as a group, these announcements suggest that a building or neighborhood can be thought of as a family that can be protected by its members.

In their study of traditional and Western values held by people in Hong Kong, Shively and Shively (1972, p. 37) note that a group of "deviates" in Hong Kong who held different and significantly less traditional values than other Hong Kong people were more likely to be "doers." They also note that while a Chinese orientation emphasizes harmonious relationships between people, authority, and nature, a more Western approach is to take action to remedy a perceived problem. The urging of individuals to take action in the public sphere can be viewed as an attempt to persuade Hong Kong citizens to follow a Western model. As described below, many FC APIs include the additional emphasis on self-interest in urging people to undertake actions helpful to the larger society.

*Self-Interested Teamwork.* There is evidence that the government recognized the reluctance of Hong Kong Chinese citizens to consider citizenship an important part of their identity, and the APIs make an overt and repeated effort to draw individuals into the public sphere as actors in the community. Perhaps because of this expected reluctance, the campaign stresses not that social groups be considered like families, but rather, that helping someone else benefits the individual's real family.

As already established, traditional Chinese society placed a high value on the family and its protection and preservation. These tendencies were made more extreme by the conditions of Hong Kong life, in particular because of the practice of discouraging the formation of social and political groups. Mitchell (1998) describes the lack of "social capital" in Hong Kong during the pre-1970 period, including "absence of close friends, social contacts with neighbors...and contacts with one's kinsmen" (p. 36). Indeed, "the Hong Kong brand of familism had the effect of creating a gulf between the individual and the larger society" because of "special political and economic circumstances" (Leung, 1996, p. 80) in which economic opportunities were always available but political opportunities were "non-existent." S. K. Lau (1981) notes that Hong Kong familism can be called "utilitarian familism," and asserts that its primary characteristic is the consideration of individual family interests above all others, including the interests of any other groups. Hong Kong families tended to cooperate for their material interests, even at the risk of ostracism and alienation. Under utilitarian familism, the tendency is to consider society insignificant except as a source to be exploited for utilitarian purposes. Lau also notes that Hong Kong people have tended to avoid participation in social groups, unless it would advance the individual's family interests.

In the context of flagging public confidence in police abilities and distrust due to corruption, the Hong Kong government sought to establish a competent and friendly image for the police by emphasizing teamwork between police and the public in the Fight Crime campaign. As described previously, the most common appeal relied on the idea of a "big family" as a motive for taking concrete action in calling the police whenever crimes were witnessed. This appeal

was combined with an emphasis on the likely positive outcome of such a call: reliable, efficient, and effective police would capture the criminal. In many ads, special note was made of the way in which witness/callers or victim/callers would benefit from their own actions. The traditional Chinese idea of self-interested action for the benefit of self and family was used in two ways to build teamwork between police and citizens, thus encouraging viewers to accept a Western idea of citizenship as an active and mutually beneficial alliance between the government and the governed.

The earliest Fight Crime announcements define a good citizen as one who acts for the common good, but usually because self-interest can also be served. Examples depict witnesses and victims of crimes calling in when they experience a problem, and voiceovers focus on the specific benefit to the witness/caller or victim/caller in avoidance of further crime. In one ad, thieves grab a young couple and steal the man's watch. The man follows the criminals to a noodle shop. When they stop to eat, the man runs to the police station and reports the theft. The police rush out immediately to the noodle shop, where they make the arrest and return the watch. In the previous example of the man with groceries, the voiceover also emphasizes the idea that it is important to call the police because the next time there is a problem, it might be in your flat. Other examples feature victims of crime who report quickly so that the criminals can be caught before property is successfully stolen, while some depict citizens receiving awards for their bravery and assistance in fighting crime.

In a more developed example, two versions of a story are depicted. The versions were aired separately, so the second one appeared as a correction to the first. In the first version, a man is at home alone when he hears a strange noise outside his door. He sees that his neighbor is being robbed, but decides not to call the police. When the robbers are finished with his neighbor, they rush out of the apartment, encountering the man's wife on the stairs. They shove her to the ground, steal her purse, and escape. Hearing his wife's scream, the husband runs out of his apartment and leans over his wife, in obvious regret for his lack of action.

In the second version, the man calls the police when he notices the robbery across the hall. This time, the police arrive just as the robbers are leaving, and make the arrest. (The wife's arrival is omitted in the second version.) The contrast between the two versions highlights the element of self-interest in calling the police to help others. The husband's failure to call in the first version, an action that would clearly benefit his neighbor, results directly in the attack of his wife by the robbers. In the second version, the police capture the criminals, with the wife absent from the scene. Thus, the primary reason why the man should call the police is for his own self-interest rather than for some abstract concept of citizenship or for the altruistic help of his neighbor. The voiceover reinforces the behavior of calling the police with a more conceptual logic, noting that "a crime not reported is a crime supported," thus referencing the man's role as a part of a larger collectivity in which his behavior affects others. The vision of a collectivity here

is limited, however, consisting of a telephone call and an understanding of how one's actions can benefit family and neighbor.

**Group Before Self.** Although looking out for self-interests with relation to the protection of one's family can be considered a significant traditional Chinese value, another somewhat contradictory value involves the denial of personal needs in order to benefit the larger group. This value is more related to political and public relationships than with family-related issues. With regard to relationships between individuals and various social groupings, Yang (1959) has noted that

self-cultivation, the basic theme of Confucian ethics traditionally inculcated in the child's mind from an early age, did not seek a solution to social conflict in defining, limiting, and guaranteeing the rights and interests between individuals. It sought the solution from the self-sacrifice of the individual for the preservation of the group. (p. 172)

Similarly, Mitchell (1998) notes that "Asian values give central importance to consensus, obedience, and stability over individual political, civil, and economic rights" (p. 12). Thus, some of the FC APIs entreat people to come forward and report crimes for the benefit of the larger society, even if it is unpleasant or troublesome to do so. Several examples depict people undertaking actions that are not easy and that require the person to exert extra bother to do the right thing. Ads using this appeal of self-sacrifice are quantitatively the least well-represented among the three ideological themes described here, and they usually focus on inconvenience rather than actual harm to the crime witness/caller. However, one example does result in personal injury.

In the example featuring personal injury, a man witnesses a thief stealing a woman's purse. The woman yells for help, and he attempts to stop the thief. At first, he is shoved into the wall, bumping his head. Though obviously dizzy from the blow to his head, he traps the thief until police arrive. A follow-up scene shows the man in a hospital with his head bandaged. His son enters and congratulates him for his heroic actions. Thus, this example references self-interest or family-interest (making your son proud) and suggests that going out of your way to fight crime at risk of personal injury is a proper civic action. In a second ad, a man witnesses a robbery and getaway while he waits for his wife to do errands. He drives off without his wife, in pursuit of the getaway car, stopping to alert some police, who climb into the car and later make the arrest. In this unusual example, the man's considerable efforts do not result in any immediate personal gain.

In a third example, two young boys are playing ball together when they hear a loud noise. They interrupt their game and witness some suspicious activity inside a car. They note the license plate number and run to get their mother to call the

police, who quickly arrive on the scene and make the arrest. Both the boys and their mother have interrupted their usual activities and gone out of their way to report criminal activity. The boys are rewarded with public recognition of their actions. Finally, a montage-style ad shows clips from previous FC APIs and ends by listing the variety of duties that define the proper citizen with respect to crime. It urges citizens to call the police and "raise a hue and cry" when a crime is in progress, serve as a witness, fill out crime report forms, and "be prepared to go to court." The emphasis is on citizen duties and personal effort rather than on the rewards or benefits due to a citizen, such as the right to live free of the fear of crime.

### Phase Two: Establishing Authority

The earlier Fight Crime APIs focused exclusively on the viewer as a potential witness or victim of crime, following several formulaic patterns such as the eager witness pursuing a robber with the help of the police, or the helpful neighbor taking a moment to dial the police. In a second wave of FC APIs begun in 1984, emphasis shifts from catching criminals to preventing crime from happening in the first place. These brief but numerous ads feature families locking their doors, single women installing and using window locks, and young couples locking their cars while out having a good time. This second phase of FC APIs highlighted citizen duties and responsibilities, placing more and more of the burden of fighting crime on the shoulders of the citizen. Viewers are exhorted to lock windows, install proper locks and doors, and leave lights on when going out of the house. Women are urged to think carefully about the dangers of talking to strange men, since "perverts...come in all shapes and sizes." These ads focus on the duties of individuals, but do not involve the individual's participation in the larger society. Rather, they offer behaviors that are arguably in the individual's self-interest and that will also help to reduce the time police spend dealing with petty crimes. Some ads in this phase include an additional level of urgency in their appeals to citizen duties and responsibilities through a new characterization of citizens as potential criminals and the police as authority figures with the power to catch and punish wrongdoers.

Early API examples emphasize the friendliness, humanity, and competence of the police, urging the public to become allies in the fight against crime, and many of the later (1990s) ads feature the same characterization of the police. Only in the later phase do ads treat the viewer as a potential perpetrator of crime. Having worked to develop a relationship with the public for over a decade, the FC API campaign shifted their approach a bit in the late 1980s, suggesting a new, potentially antagonistic relationship between viewers and the police. Although the number of announcements employing this technique is small, the move in this direction placed further emphasis on the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. Seen in combination with the 1980s trend, which was geared away from the

"neighborhood as family" approach and toward crime prevention strategies of personal protection, this technique can be seen as creating further distance between the government and the governed.

One early antishoplifting announcement aimed at children, for instance, pictures a young girl stealing a toy. At the end of the sequence, the voiceover intones "Shop theft can ruin your future. Don't do it," as a firm hand is placed on the girl's shoulder. Although the government does not enter these announcements explicitly (as it would in phrasing more like "If you are convicted of shoplifting, you could be sentenced to 10 years in jail"), its presence is at least felt in a punitive sense. Two antitriad announcements, one targeted at girls and one at boys, picture an actual jail with government employees carrying out punishment. In addition to the shoplifting announcements (one targeted at young boys and three targeted to girls and women of different ages) and the antitriad examples, one API dealing with "youth hooliganism" addresses the viewer as a potential perpetrator of crime. The announcement depicts a group of teenagers engaged in mildly destructive behavior, such as scratching a car door with keys. A voiceover notes that "unruly behavior like this is illegal," while a police officer approaches the teenagers, gruffly asks them what they are doing, and shines a light in their eyes. Again a fear appeal is used, placing distance between the viewer as a potential criminal and the government as a potential enforcer. This approach represents a further move away from the rights and benefits of citizens with relation to crime, placing greater burden on citizens to prevent it.

### THE HUMAN RIGHTS API CAMPAIGN: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Throughout its history, the Fight Crime API campaign has focused on duties and responsibilities in the relationship between the individual and the state, but provided little suggestion of the benefits and rights of the individual with relation to crime. The campaign examples through the 1970s relied on three dominant ideological themes to encourage individuals to cooperate with the police by undertaking simple actions such as calling when a problem was observed. These themes focused on traditional Chinese values to secure help in bringing about a limited conception of Western civic society. By asking viewers to consider their neighbors as a part of a larger "family," by emphasizing self-interested teamwork to encourage helping neighbors, and by depicting scenes in which individuals sacrifice their own well-being for the benefit of others, the early ads implicitly defined citizenship as the performance of specific actions for the social good. Citizen groups, rights, and the benefits of membership in society were not emphasized. Through the 1980s and 1990s, crime increasingly becomes the responsibility of the individual rather than of the police, as the second wave of the campaign emphasizes crime prevention through individual efforts such as locking doors and

windows, leaving lights on in the house, and installing special locks and doors. Finally, some recent ads address the viewer as a potential perpetrator of crime and include suggestions of negative state sanctions rather than effective teamwork. Only in a separate Human Rights campaign, begun in 1994, do benefits of citizenship receive attention in Hong Kong APIs. However, even in this limited campaign, the conception of what the society provides to the individual remains on the abstract level and gains very little concrete definition.

Contemporary conceptions of human rights have been evolving to include an expanding array of rights, such that they can be seen "not only as protecting of a citizen's safety and interest, but also as regulating...relationships" (Feng, 1995, p. 119), including relationships between state and society, and between state and individuals. Such a conception of human rights highlights the areas of social interaction that have been seen as contradicting Chinese values, and as particularly absent in Hong Kong society. Thus, more than any other API campaign, the human rights campaign can be expected to involve expectations regarding interactions among different levels of social entities. However, the human rights campaign includes primarily abstract representations of rights and does not enter into the realm of relationships between the government and the governed.

The human rights campaign, launched in 1994, has included a series of fewer than a dozen announcements, most of which employ animation to illustrate their point. Announcements in this campaign have simply named several human rights, such as the right to free speech, thought, and religion, and asserted that rights should be observed for everyone. In most announcements from this campaign, no concrete actions, organizations, or methods of observing rights have been included. One frequently aired example depicts a cartoon family inside their apartment exercising their rights symbolically. The father closes the window shades to shut out an enormous eye that is looking in the window, while the son uses scissors to cut barbed wire that is encircling his thought balloon. In the end, the problems are resolved and the family joins together happily while a voiceover urges that viewers know their rights and respect the rights of others for a better Hong Kong.

Two other animated examples are similar. In one, two groups of figures engage in a tug-of-war while a voiceover notes that "we all have our differences" and that those differences should be respected. In the other, two animated sunflowers reach skyward, but as one grows taller it blocks the rain from the other. To illustrate the voiceover's claim that everyone deserves room to grow and develop, the taller flower leans away and allows rain to fall on the other. Both flowers smile and continue to grow. These announcements are informative and positive, encouraging people to know their rights and providing a list of basic rights. However, only rarely do these ads go beyond naming rights to encourage that they be respected for everyone.

The one example that gives some specificity to the idea of equal rights is an animated announcement featuring toy boy and girl characters. After a voiceover asserts that everyone has the right to choose an occupation and work to their potential, the girl asserts that she wants to be a doctor. Her idea is rejected by the boy, who announces that she cannot be a doctor, but he can. This ad provides some concrete idea of what a violation of rights would entail and even gives an example of a way of thinking and talking that is considered wrong. For the future of Hong Kong APIs, it would be encouraging to see more announcements that concretize human rights and give examples either of how they can be utilized or of what would constitute a violation. However, given the lack of attention to these elements in the past, it seems unlikely that human rights APIs will move further in this direction in the post-1997 era.

The civic person is nearly absent from the Fight Crime and human rights API campaigns in Hong Kong. In the former, the civic person is narrowly defined as someone who is willing to consider their building or neighborhood as a family, or as someone who is willing to call the police to report a crime they have witnessed. In only one example is the definition of a civic person extended to include several tasks together, such as filling out crime report forms, acting as a witness, and going to court. Although it began when the relationship between the Hong Kong government and its people was at an acknowledged low point, the campaign does not focus on the benefits and rights of citizens with respect to police and governmental protection. Rather, from the start it focuses on the duties and responsibilities of citizens, and later examples increasingly develop in the direction of citizen responsibilities as the "friends of the police" appeal is diminished. Given that the concept of a civil society, as Ip (1996) observes, is primarily a Western concept and has been underdeveloped or "impoverished" in traditional Confucian thought, it would be surprising to see this concept becoming more fully developed in post-1997 APIs.

As contemporary human rights literature indicates, Hong Kong will have to develop its own conception of human rights. Davis (1995) is optimistic, noting that "one can expect that the use of diverse sources...will produce a hybrid" in Hong Kong, which may be "a unique model for securing human rights" (pp. 180-181). In this context, APIs will be a key place to look in Hong Kong media for discursive evidence of China's struggle to define how "new forms of cultural alignment can take shape in the future" (Wong, 1995, p. 392).

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Many announcements fit neither of these primary categories. Such ads include those that feature a "talking head" with a brief message about crime or those that simply inform



viewers about particular time-bound efforts, such as a "triad hotline" or the "compulsory carrying of identity cards."

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